

MEET MS. COURTNEY:

Ms. Courtney is excited for the girls to return to face-to-face programming. Although she has been going above and beyond to meet the needs of the girls, she is really missing the girls and their hugs.

Ms. Courtney has been instrumental in Girls Inc.'s outreach during the pandemic. Through her picking up the Bar Louie lunches served at the Rolling Heights campus and then delivering meals to Girls Inc. families who are unable to make it to the site, she has been connecting daily with families to find out their immediate needs.

"The hardest part is knowing that some of our families are struggling but they are not letting us know," she said.



She is connecting through phone calls, texts, safe home visits and emails, along with creating videos for social media. She has held Zoom meetings with her staff to see what other outreach can be added and has been working with donors to connect them with families in need.

It is Ms. Courtney's caring and compassion that has kept her at Girls Inc. for 21 years.

Originally introduced to Girls Inc. at age six and continuing until she was 13, Ms. Courtney returned to Girls Inc. in 1999 as a staff member after seeing the girls and interacting with them during her interview.

"I knew this was the place for me," she said.

Ms. Courtney began as the Preschool Facilitator when the program existed, then became the K-2 Facilitator, Volunteer Operations Manager, 5th grade through teen Facilitator, and for the last 16 years, the Campus Manager at the Rolling Heights campus.

Ms. Courtney loves when she is with a girl "from start to finish" in the Girls Inc. program as a mentor, and she is still in contact with many former members who have since graduated college, started families, are working on graduate programs or gotten married.

"I look forward to being a part of every girl story," she said. "I always say I can't leave until I find out the end of each girl's story. It's not me, it is the organization I am able to work for that provides the skills, knowledge and attitudes for the girls and tools for staff to be able to continue to help inspire girls to be strong, smart, and bold."

Ms. Courtney said that the Healthy Sexuality program, Informed & In Charge, is the program she finds most valuable to teach. She trains the other staff as a Trainer of the Trainer.



"Most parents and girls are not willing to talk sometimes in this area," she said. "I want the girls to have the correct information and to feel comfortable asking and talking about this sensitive subject."

Girls Inc. provides many opportunities for the girls they do not get anywhere else, and Ms. Courtney said they are "so much more" than an after school program and summer program because of the care the staff provides for each girl and their families.

"The Girls Inc. model works," she said. "I'm proof and so many other girls are, too."