



News Release

For Immediate Release

Julie Parker, Senior Director of Marketing and Communications | press@girlscoutsww.org

Activating the Economic Potential of the 3.8 Million Women in Washington State

Washington State Women's Commission Launches a Campaign to Close the State's Gender Wage Gap in Partnership with Girl Scouts of Western Washington

(Seattle, WA) June 28, 2024— Washington State has one of the worst gender wage gaps in the nation. On Friday, June 28, the Washington State Women's Commission (WSWC) officially launched Activate 3.8: The Pay Equity Tour, a statewide initiative dedicated to raising awareness and generating solutions to bring Washington from the bottom 10 to the top 10 states in the nation for pay parity.

The sold-out launch event at Nectar Lounge in Fremont brought together over 200 civic leaders, volunteers, students, and community members. The event featured speeches from seven prominent gender equity advocates, including Governor Jay Inslee and Andrea Anderson, CEO of Girl Scouts of Western Washington, who discussed strategies to advance economic empowerment for Washington women.

Speakers included:

- Governor Jay Inslee
- Grace Yoo, Executive Director, Washington State Women's Commission
- Andrea Anderson, CEO, Girl Scouts of Western Washington (GSWW)
- Cami Feek, Commissioner, Employment Security Department

- Lekha Fernandes, Executive Director, Office for Minority and Women's Business Enterprises
- April Sims, President, Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO WA
- Veronica Bronkema, Board Chair WSECU

Two columns of stacked blocks on stage represented Washington's gender wage gap. After each speaker addressed the audience, they contributed a block to the shorter column until it reached the height of the taller column, symbolizing "closing the gap" between women's and men's earnings in our state. This on-stage moment highlighted the collective efforts needed across various sectors to achieve pay parity.

WSWC Executive Director Grace Yoo emphasized the opportunity within the challenge: "While the gender wage gap is disheartening, it's also an opportunity to ensure more women in our state are benefitting from Washington's thriving industries and high-paying jobs."

Though the event underscored alarming data around the state of women in Washington state today, Andrea Anderson also shared optimism around a brighter future for the next generation of girls* in our state.

"With the year-round programming we provide, Girl Scouts of Western Washington is helping to create a diverse pipeline of women leaders in STEAM through unique partnerships in aviation, aerospace, tech, construction, and multiple trades. Every day, Girl Scouts are stepping into their power as they unlock the courage, confidence, and character to achieve their wildest dreams. They're empathetic, they know how to work with diverse teams, and they have the resilience and strength to tackle new challenges. I have great hope for the future of girls and gender-expansive youth in Washington and am thrilled for our organization to be embarking on this partnership with the Washington State Women's Commission," Andrea shared with attendees at the launch event.

April Sims, President of the Washington State Labor Council, underscored the importance of a multifaceted approach: "What we can't win through policy, we can bargain for in our contracts." She presented data showing unionized women of color earning significantly closer to their male counterparts compared to those in non-union settings.

A major highlight of the campaign is the partnership with the Girl Scouts of Western Washington, who are joining WSWC as the premier K-12 sponsor. This collaboration aims to increase girls' exposure to higher-paying wages in STEAM, tech, aerospace, and

construction/trade industries—industries that are key to Washington’s economic health but have significant rates of occupational segregation. Girl Scouts will participate in the state-wide tour across 10 cities to spotlight these opportunities and connect girls* with women leaders in these fields.

The Pay Equity Tour kicks off on July 27th in Spokane at the Hemmingson Auditorium and HEMM Den on the Gonzaga University campus. The tour also stops in Bellingham, Olympia, Pullman, Redmond, Seattle, Sequim, Spokane, Tri-Cities, Vancouver, and Yakima.

Photos for use: [Activate 3.8 launch event](#)

Credit: ClaymoreMac Media

Please contact eliza.craig@swsc.wa.gov if you have any issues accessing the link.

About Girl Scouts of Western Washington

Girl Scouts of Western Washington is consistently and unapologetically committed to providing safe spaces for all girls* to belong. Girl Scouting builds youth of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place. Founded in 1912, our organization has been committed to meeting the needs of our youth members for over a century. We uplift all Girl Scouts in a supportive environment where they can discover their strengths and rise to meet new challenges—whether they want to climb to the top of a tree or the top of their class, lace up their boots for a hike or advocate for climate justice, or make their very first best friends. Backed by trusted adult volunteers, mentors, and millions of alums, Girl Scouts lead the way as they find their voices and make changes that affect the issues most important to them. They are the future leaders paving the way toward a brighter tomorrow. To join us, volunteer, reconnect, donate, or learn more, visit www.girlscoutswa.org.

About the Washington State Women’s Commission

The Washington State Women’s Commission (WSWC) is an executive branch cabinet agency in the Office of Governor Inslee serving as the primary voice in government for Washington women and girls. Signed into law in 2018, WSWC develops policies and initiatives to address critical issues that disproportionately affect women, including childcare access and affordability, domestic and gender-based violence, equal pay, health care access, and intersectional inequities. Through strategic listening and collaboration, we represent the 3.8 million women and girls across the state.

Learn more at [wswc.wa.gov](https://www.wswc.wa.gov) and activate38.com.

**Girl Scouts of Western Washington uses the term girls inclusively to speak to everyone who identifies with the Girl Scout experience, which includes cisgender girls, gender-expansive youth, transgender girls, non-binary youth, gender nonconforming youth, genderqueer youth, and any girl-identifying human.*

###