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Office of the Press Secretary
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Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano and Girl Scouts of the USA CEO Kathy Cloninger today unveiled a Girl Scout preparedness patch—designed to engage Girl Scouts and their families in personal preparedness for all emergencies—and announced a new affiliation between DHS Citizen Corps and the Girl Scouts to advance community preparedness nationwide.

“This new preparedness patch will increase citizen preparedness and enhance our country’s readiness for disasters,” said Secretary Napolitano. “As a former Girl Scout, I know the ‘Be Prepared’ motto well—and I look forward to working with the Girl Scouts to spread the preparedness message to all of our nation’s citizens.”

“Girl Scouts are thrilled to be partnering with the Department of Homeland Security to encourage girls to learn what to do in case of emergency,” said Kathy Cloninger. “Citizen Corps is a terrific program—one that provides an opportunity for our girls to lead the way in ensuring that their families and their communities are prepared for emergencies.”

The preparedness patch program, developed by the Girl Scout Council of the Nation’s Capital and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), provides critical emergency preparedness information and activities for all levels of Girl Scouts.

The steps and activities required to receive the patch include identifying and preparing for potential emergencies; learning about local alerts and warning systems; and engaging in community service.

In addition to collaborating on the new patch, Secretary Napolitano and Ms. Cloninger also signed an agreement formalizing an affiliation between Citizen Corps and the Girl Scouts that creates a partnership to motivate young women to become community leaders in emergency management and response fields and raises public awareness about personal preparedness, training and community service opportunities.

The announcements took place at Scotchtown Hills Elementary School in Laurel, Md., where Secretary Napolitano participated in President Obama’s My Education, My Future initiative by visiting students and listening to the President’s remarks encouraging them to work hard, set educational goals and take responsibility for their learning.

Secretary Napolitano, Ms. Cloninger and City of Laurel Mayor Craig Moe also participated in preparedness training activities with students highlighting the importance of disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

The announcements are part of September’s National Preparedness Month, during which Secretary Napolitano is encouraging citizens around the country to focus on becoming better prepared for and more resilient in the face of emergencies of all kinds.

DHS Citizen Corps, part of FEMA’s Community Preparedness Division, is a community-based initiative to bring government and community leaders together to involve citizens and organizations in all-hazards emergency preparedness, planning, mitigation, response and recovery.

The Girl Scouts of the USA, chartered by Congress in 1950, is a worldwide organization dedicated solely to girls to build character and skills for success in the real world in an accepting and nurturing environment.

For more information about Citizen Corps, visit www.citizencorps.gov. To learn more about the Girl Scouts, visit www.girlscouts.org. To learn more about the affiliation and emergency preparedness patch, visit www.citizencorps.gov/news/press/2009/girlscoutsannounce.shtm.