

Promoting Girl Scouts

New community development executive Melissa Pratt believes in the organization

By **JENNIFER LINDSEY**
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Melissa Pratt is the new community development executive for Girl Scouts Western Oklahoma District 6.

District 6 covers the counties of Carter, Garvin, Jefferson, Johnston, Love, Marshall, Murray and Stephens.

What is a community development executive?

Pratt serves as a link between the council, local volunteers and the community and businesses in District 6.

Her tasks include increasing the visibility of Girl Scouts, promoting the organization with local civic organizations and businesses, encouraging philanthropy and making sure volunteers have the resources they need.



JENNIFER LINDSEY/THE ARDMOREITE

Melissa Pratt, the new community development executive for Girl Scouts Western Oklahoma District 6, works in her office in Ardmore on Friday.

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What has she done so far?

Pratt has been on the job for four months.

"Really I'm just working on introducing myself, talking about Girl Scouts and getting word out about Girl Scouts and how it enhances girls' lives," Pratt said.

Getting the word out about the organization has been one of her biggest challenges.

"People have said they didn't know we had Girl Scouting, which surprises me because we have great volunteers and girls during good things in our community," Pratt said.

What about the changes that are happening with Girl Scouts?

Pratt said she is excited about the new Pathways program offered by Girl Scouts.

"The Girl Scout Leadership Experience is a journey, and there are many pathways you can take on that journey," Pratt said.

It offers many opportunities in addition to a traditional troop, including camps and outdoor education, short series such as a robotics team or the high-adventure team, council events, virtual activities and travel.

"The core of Girl Scouts is the troop. However, we also have other things to engage girls who don't want to be in a troop," Pratt said.

Anyone with questions about Girl Scouting can call Pratt at (405) 312-6815.

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"I am the council's person on the ground, going out and increasing visibility and ensuring the sustainability of the organization," Pratt said.

Pratt, who lives in Davis, also has an office in Ardmore in order to serve the girls of southern Oklahoma.

Why did she choose to work for Girl Scouts?

Pratt spent 22 years in the marketing and sales fields. Then she was signing up her daughter, Baylee, for Girl Scouts and planning to volunteer when she found out about the job opening.

"It's always been one of my goals and desires to work for a non-profit organization. I was at a point in my life where I wanted what I do on a daily basis to make the world a better place," Pratt said.

Pratt herself was a Brownie Girl Scout. Her favorite memory is going to Cookieland, a camp located in Newalla.

"My favorite thing was Cookieland because I got to go and experience nature and meet new people," Pratt said. "It was something I got to do that made me feel independent."