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**Giving Video Commencement Speech Is Not Rocket Science, But It Pays to Have Experience at
NASA**

Girl Scouts CEO Gives Video Commencement to All Women Engineering Graduates

CHICAGO (May 18, 2020)—Rocket scientist, former NASA employee and current CEO of the Girl Scouts of the USA, Sylvia Acevedo, gave a [stirring video commencement address](#) to all women engineering graduates today. The commencement address was part of Acevedo’s support of Chicago-based Society of Women Engineers, which arranged the address.

Acevedo began her career at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory, where she created algorithms and analyzed data from Voyager 2’s spacecraft flyby of Jupiter and two of its moons, Io and Europa. She went on to work as an engineer and executive at Apple, Dell, Autodesk, and IBM.

Through Girl Scouts, Sylvia discovered her passion for space, science, and math. Her interest in STEM subjects would lead her to a career as a rocket scientist, engineer, technology executive, and award-winning STEM entrepreneur.

Cindy Hoover, president of SWE, introduced Acevedo and said that she was a natural choice for the SWE commencement address, given her STEM credentials. Acevedo transformed the Girl Scout programming in STEM, leading the largest rollout of badges in recent history—more than 100 badges in STEM and the outdoors

“With graduation ceremonies around the world cancelled or indefinitely postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we wanted to recognize this milestone with some words of encouragement from a leading woman engineer,” she said. Hoover is vice president and chief engineer for operations at aerospace manufacturer Spirit AeroSystems, Wichita, Kansas.

Acevedo was one of the first Hispanic students, male or female, to earn a graduate engineering degree from Stanford University—an MS in industrial engineering—and she holds a Bachelor of Science degree with honors in industrial engineering from New Mexico State University.

“I want to offer my heartfelt congratulations on earning your degree. I know your traditional commencement-related in-person events are canceled, so I wanted to reach out and acknowledge you for the incredible hard work, perseverance, and resilience you have shown in achieving this important milestone,” Acevedo said in the video.

“Now more than ever, our country needs people with the skills, the ambition, and the drive to create innovative solutions to our most pressing problems—and that includes engineers like you,” she concluded.

About SWE

The Society of Women Engineers (SWE), founded in 1950, is the world’s largest advocate and catalyst for change for women in engineering and technology. The not-for-profit educational and service organization is the driving force that establishes engineering as a highly desirable career aspiration for women. To ensure SWE members reach their full potential as engineers and leaders, the Society offers unique opportunities to network, provides professional development, shapes public policy and provides recognition for the life-changing contributions and achievements of women engineers. As a champion of diversity, SWE empowers women to succeed and advance in their personal and professional lives. For more information about the Society, please visit www.swe.org or call 312.596.5223.

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