School of Tourism and Hospitality Management’s Associate Dean recognized as hospitality industry leader

When her name was called, Dr. Elizabeth Barber rose from her seat and walked to the podium, where a boy scout promptly placed a wide-brimmed scout leader’s hat atop her head.

For most other women in the room, the accouterment might have looked out of place. Active in scouting as a child, Barber was the exception.

“I was a Girl Scout,” said Barber, the Associate Dean of Temple University’s School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, “and when you grow up in a scouting family, where your mother is the executive director of your Girl Scout council, you learned a lot about what it means to be a scout.”

The Boys Scouts of America Cradle of Liberty Council honored Barber, who received the council’s Women in Hospitality Good Scout Award at a Nov. 13 reception held at Hyatt Regency Philadelphia at Penn’s Landing. The annual award ceremony recognizes Philadelphia’s hospitality leaders, while gathering the area’s hotelier and vendor communities under one roof.

The Good Scout Award is bestowed upon those who exemplify the ideals of the Boy Scouts of America, as expressed in the Scout Oath and Law. Recipients of the annual award are selected based upon their reputation for community service, their commitment to organizations and causes, and the respect and esteem in which their colleagues hold them.

Barber, an innovative educator in her industry, helped found the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management in 1998.

“Under Betsy’s leadership, the School has grown from six faculty members and 120 students in 1998 to 24 faculty, 15 staff, almost 1,000 students, an internationally recognized research center (SIRC) and over $1 million in externally funded grants and projects,” said Gregory J. Fox, a partner in the business department of area law firm Montgomery McCracken.

At the podium, Barber used her acceptance remarks to reflect upon the early impressions on her life made by scouting. Her mother, Carolyn “Cotty” Hicklin, had worked as the Executive Director of the Shining Trail Council of Girl Scouts, in Barber’s hometown in Iowa. Through her involvement in the scouts, Barber said she learned the skills necessary to lead at every phase of her professional career.

The Cradle of Liberty Council has honored hospitality leaders with its Good Scout Award dating to 1987, recognizing the very best and most innovative in the industry.

“This is a tremendous award and I am humbled to have received it,” Barber said.

And Barber meant it – scout’s honor.

–Christopher A. Vito