

Sheila Hess is a lifelong South Philadelphian, Temple University graduate, and distinguished civic leader widely recognized as Philadelphia's chief ambassador and top cheerleader. Driven by a belief that life is about spreading joy, embracing faith, and lifting others, Sheila dedicated her career to public service as Philadelphia's former City Representative. In this role, she led the city's ceremonial, marketing, and special events arm, promoting Philadelphia's rich cultural diversity on local, national, and international stages while creating impactful community initiatives. Following an accomplished 24-year career at Independence Blue Cross (IBX), she served as Director of the IBX Foundation & Community Affairs and founded the award-winning Blue Crew corporate volunteer program and nursing internship program.

Throughout her career, Sheila has leveraged her platform to champion hospitality, tourism, youth advancement, and disability initiatives across the region. Born with Spina Bifida, she brings a perspective of profound strength, authenticity, and empathy to every endeavor, measuring success by kindness, service, and her ability to leave people better than she found them.

A vital catalyst for civic unity, Sheila excels at building diverse coalitions that bridge communities and support public-facing projects. Her relentless optimism and leadership have earned her numerous accolades, including an honorary doctorate from Rosemont College, where she served as Commencement Speaker.

Through her unwavering advocacy, accessibility efforts, and compassionate leadership, Sheila remains a powerful force for positive change—cultivating deep community pride and celebrating the very best of Philadelphia. She has lent her strategic leadership and energy to numerous non-profit boards and civic organizations, including professional, volunteer, service, and philanthropic activities.