

# GIRL SCOUTS AND THE COMMUNITY

## IN THE COMMUNITY

Ask a girl what Girl Scouting means to her and the first thing she's likely to say is, "Fun!" While that's certainly true, many girls will also tell you that Girl Scouting is where they learn about community service—what it is, and how it can change the world.

*"When you get an idea that will do good, follow it up, and don't fear that because it is only you, it cannot succeed."*

—Girl Scout founder Juliette Gordon Low

## MAKING THE WORLD BETTER

Service is an inherent part of Girl Scouting. No matter at what age a girl joins, she can share in meaningful projects that promote civic responsibility and see how her efforts can impact her community. At the Daisy Girl Scout level, community service can include simple things like planting flowers in abandoned lots and visiting senior centers. Teen and young adult girls create innovative projects that change people's lives.

Girls can earn related badges and awards like the Lead On Badge or the Leadership Interest Project Award. The most coveted distinctions are the Girl Scout Gold Award, the Girl Scout Silver Award, and the Girl Scout Bronze Award. Local councils across the country award them to girls who have completed exceptional projects that respond to needs within the community.

Girl Scout Gold Awards are given to girls ages 14 to 17, many of whom perform unbelievably ambitious projects. One honoree developed a project to provide free eye care to residents of a village in India. Another developed a series of self-defense classes for homeless women living in a shelter for victims of physical abuse.

And the teens are not the only ones with great ambition. A Breast Cancer patch program designed by a Junior Girl Scout troop in Ohio showcases community-minded thinking. After participating in a breastcare awareness project, girls became immersed and developed a local Girl Scout patch program. Sketching the design, structuring the program, and researching and writing the educational pamphlet — they did it all.



## THE POWER OF GIRLS' VOICES

Through community service, girls can see that their involvement has the power to change the future. That concept is reinforced during **Girl Scout Advocacy Day**. In this event, Girl Scout Gold Award honorees spend a day on Capitol Hill educating members of Congress about the issues affecting today's girls and the innovative Girl Scout programs that address them. It's a valuable experience that teaches girls to exercise their voices while broadening their understanding of the impact of community service.

Leadership seems to come naturally in Girl Scouting. Perhaps it has something to do with girls having the freedom and encouragement to explore their imaginations and devise their own solutions to the issues in the world around them. Today's dynamic Girl Scouts will some day head businesses, civic groups, and families, and because of Girl Scouting, they'll do it with the best interests of their communities—and indeed, all the world—in mind.

## GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARD QUICK FACTS

- Earning a Girl Scout Gold Award requires 70 hours of work over the course of several years.
- Earning a Girl Scout Gold Award entitles recipients to scholarships at over 100 colleges and universities and higher pay upon entry into all branches of the U.S. military.

## PRESS INQUIRIES

With hundreds of Girl Scout councils around the country, there are always interesting stories to tell. If you'd like to learn more about how girls are affecting their communities, contact your local Girl Scout council or the Communications Department at Girl Scouts of the USA at 1-800-GSUSA4U or [media@girlscouts.org](mailto:media@girlscouts.org).

Girl Scouts of the USA is the preeminent organization for girls and has more than 3.8 million girl and adult members. Girl Scouting fosters values, social awareness, and self-esteem in girls, while also teaching them critical life skills for future success. It's a very special girls-only place where girls discover the fun, friendship, and power of girls growing together. The organization strives to serve girls in every part of the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. To learn more about volunteering, partnership, or Girl Scout news, visit us on the Web at [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org).