



# **2023 Gold Award Girl Scouts**

# Girl Scout Gold Award

Girl Scouts who pursue their Gold Award aspire to transform an idea and vision for change into an actionable plan with measurable, sustainable and far-reaching results. Those honored today are part of an elite group who used their knowledge, talent and leadership skills to improve the world around them.

Gold Award Girl Scouts are community leaders in the truest sense. Their accomplishments reflect outstanding leadership and civic duty. Earning the Gold Award represents the culmination of at least 80 hours of work on a Take Action Project that leaves a sustainable, lasting benefit on the local community.

## Gold Award Committee

Robin Ackerman  
Paula Bell  
Heather Boehner  
Kayla Burch  
Emery Corley  
Kensa Koeppen  
Lou Kramme  
Christine Krueger  
Dana Meyer  
Melinda Orskog  
Dawn Overmann  
Pat Puller  
Leslie Steinmeyer  
Kathleen Todd  
Ruby Trice



90  
Milestone  
Awards

25  
Gold Award  
Girl Scouts

18,000+  
Hours of community service  
performed by our Girl Scouts

603  
Girl Scouts  
earned one of  
their Highest  
Awards



## Kameryn Arnold

To earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, Kameryn decided to take action to create a positive and safe environment for families experiencing abuse. Kameryn partnered with The Women's Safe House, a nonprofit dedicated to serving women and children of domestic abuse, to update the children's playroom. Kameryn led a team of volunteers to clean the room, paint the walls, build shelves and replace the ceiling light fixtures. Afterward, Kameryn stocked the playroom with books and educational toys for the residents and presented the new space to The Women's Safe House executives.

Kameryn's remodeled playroom saw an increase in children using the space. The Women's Safe House staff will continue to ensure the playroom stays clean and well-maintained in the future.

District 4, Troop 3675  
St. Charles West High School  
13 years in Girl Scouts

Milestones  
Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
10 and 13-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Vivian D'Angelo

After recognizing the stress extended hospital stays can have on children, Vivian decided to lift spirits, foster imagination and improve the mental health of young children with extended hospital stays to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award.

Vivian created a club at Parkway West High School where students would work to record themselves reading children's books for patients, so they could watch and listen to them while they endure extended time away from their homes. Vivian then designed a website to store the recordings so that many can access them. Vivian's club will continue to record and upload new stories to the website.

District 8, Juliette  
Parkway West High School  
12 years in Girl Scouts

Milestones  
Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
10-Year Girl Scout



## Laraya Duncan

After recognizing the decline in bat populations in Missouri, Laraya decided to educate the community on this often-overlooked topic to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award. Laraya constructed seven bat houses using donated materials to provide a safe environment for the species to raise their young. Once the bat houses were complete, Laraya installed five houses at two Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri camp properties and placed the other two at a neighbor's farm.

Laraya also created a brochure and a flyer on the importance of bat housing and the adverse effects pesticides can have on animals. Laraya placed the literature at all three camp properties so fellow Girl Scouts can access the information and it was also shared with the Missouri Department of Conservation. Laraya also met with a younger Girl Scout troop to present the bat houses and share her knowledge of bats. Girl Scout camp rangers will maintain Laraya's bat houses.

**District 4, Troop 3675**  
**St. Charles West High School**  
**13 years in Girl Scouts**

**Milestones**  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
13-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Mya Edgar

Mya helped pediatric patients feel more at home by creating care packages to donate to Mercy Hospital to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award. Extended-stay pediatric patients need activities to keep them occupied and their spirits up after recovering from treatment.

Mya organized a donation drive to collect more than 370 items, such as coloring books, journals, crafts, small toys and card games to then assemble the care packages. Mya then taught and led a team of volunteers to sew 75 special pillowcases. Mya also made tutorial videos to teach others how to sew pillowcases for donation to hospitals across the country. Arts in Motion School will continue to host a yearly drive to collect donations for the children in the hospital.

**District 4, Troop 3993**  
**Francis Howell High School**  
**13 years in Girl Scouts**

**Milestones**  
13-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Emily Farris

After recognizing the global impact of drug abuse, Emily decided to take action and create a positive impact in her community. Emily partnered with The Awaken Project, a nonprofit committed to educating teens and young adults about drug abuse, to raise awareness on drug prevention in schools to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award.

Emily created a robust binder full of activities that elementary schools could utilize during Red Ribbon Week, a national initiative promoted each October to help keep kids drug-free. For older students, Emily created prompting questions, a presentation on the dangers of drug usage and a jeopardy game to test their knowledge. Emily's advisor will continue to share these materials with schools to continue the project.

**District 4, Troop 2042**  
**Francis Howell High School**  
**13 years in Girl Scouts**

**Milestones**  
Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
13-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Ryan Harper

Moved by the increased gun violence affecting American students, Ryan decided to address the issue of gun safety for those in her community to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award. Ryan created a video and presentation to teach local students and youth groups the safety steps to follow if they would come into contact with a firearm, how to properly put on a gun lock and tips for creating safer homes.

Ryan created two separate presentations, one for her classmates and one directed toward younger children. In the second presentation, Ryan lists the four steps everyone should follow when seeing an unattended gun. After the presentations, Ryan gave the adults who attended donated gun locks. Ryan's video and presentation have been uploaded to the Top Ladies of Distinction St. Louis chapter website, where the group will continue to promote the project in the future.

**District 3, Juliette**  
**Villa Duchesne**  
**13 years in Girl Scouts**

**Milestones**  
Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
13-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Maeve Heaney

Maeve recognized the need to provide children in her community with exposure of other cultures and to increase interest in learning a second language. So, Maeve organized a three-day language camp for 20 local elementary students to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award.

Maeve and volunteers taught the campers about Spanish, French and German-speaking countries, and helped them learn basic vocabulary through fun games and activities. Maeve also created “words of the day” vocabulary sheets for each language taught, including terms for specific stations such as sports and games, crafts and culture, and nature and learning. Maeve provided detailed project instructions to the Languages Club at Kirkwood High School, which will continue running the camp for years to come.

**District 6, Troop 1891  
Kirkwood High School  
13 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
13-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Natalie Hendren

After recognizing the need to find cats living in animal shelters a safe and permanent home, Natalie set out to support unadopted cats and dismiss the stereotypes to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award. Natalie partnered with Five Acres Animal Shelter to create two animated videos, “How to Care for Your Cat!” and “Understanding Your Cat” to help individuals learn more about the animals and encourage them to adopt. For the videos, Natalie planned and sketched out the storyboard, animated the video and recorded a voiceover. Five Acres Animal Shelter shared the videos on their social channels. Natalie uploaded the videos to YouTube and shared them with local shelters.

In addition to the videos, Natalie also cleaned, decorated and painted four cat boxes to help draw attention to cats in need of a new home. Five Acres Animal Shelter will continue to maintain the cat boxes to use for the years to come.

**District 14, Troop 3778  
Fort Zumwalt West  
High School  
13 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
10 and 13-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Meghan Jachna

Meghan partnered with the Missouri Botanical Garden to create educational activities about plastic film, and how to reduce, reuse and recycle it. Meghan also taught visitors to the garden about the negative impacts the product can have on human health. To ensure she had accurate information for the activities, Meghan interviewed an expert, the director of the plastics sustainability team at the American Chemistry Council. Meghan then used all of the gathered information to share handouts with her audience. Information included how to make reusable bags and how to get involved with organizations who work to reduce the amount of plastics companies are using.

Meghan gathered data that her presentation was impactful by having visitors scan a QR code to test their new knowledge after completing the activities. Meghan's project will continue to be presented by the SAGE (Students at Garden Educators) program through the Missouri Botanical Garden.

**District 6, Juliette  
St. Joseph's Academy  
10 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
10-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Olivia James

After recognizing the need to introduce girls to STEM at a young age, Olivia organized an all-girl STEM event to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award.

Olivia led a team of volunteers to instruct 60 elementary school girls as they built and designed a series of boats, met with local female engineers, and learned about different robotics programs. Each attendee received an engineering notebook to continue working on their boat designs. Olivia worked with the Kirkwood School District Foundation to receive a grant to purchase event supplies still needed after collecting donations from her church. Volunteers from the event will continue to share STEM ideas with young girls in the community.

**District 6, Troop 3523  
Kirkwood High School  
13 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
10 and 13-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Melina Karavousanos

To earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, Melina partnered with the Boys and Girls Club of O'Fallon to assist with the much needed repairs around their facility. After identifying the onsite playset as unusable in its current condition, Melina installed a new donated play structure to provide a safe and interactive space for the program participants.

In addition to the new play structures, Melina also revamped their garden area by pulling weeds, adding new mulch and constructing garden beds. Melina then added a bench, bike rack and gaga pit for the K-12 students and their caregivers to enjoy. The Boys and Girls Club of O'Fallon will continue to maintain the updated garden and play areas.

**District 4, Troop 2042**  
**Francis Howell High School**  
**13 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
10 and 13-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



**District 8, Troop 1258**  
**Parkway Central High School**  
**11 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
10-Year Girl Scout

## Sophia Lundry

After recognizing the effect deforestation and pesticides have on our wildlife, specifically butterflies, Sophia decided to take action to build a sustainable butterfly garden to earn her Girl Scout Gold Award.

Sophia partnered with Friendship Village to replant their garden and give the residents an activity to get them back outside after the COVID-19 pandemic. Sophia began by leading a team of volunteers to weed, prep the ground, and relocate the existing plants to a new area where they would thrive better. Sophia then planted native flowers, such as coneflowers, black-eyed Susan, and milkweed. Sophia is now working on getting the garden registered with the National Wildlife Federation as a certified wildlife habitat. The grounds crew and residents at Friendship Village will continue to maintain the garden.



## Adrienne Mansdoerfer

Concerned about the disappearance of pollinators, like bees and butterflies, Adrienne set out to create educational materials on native plants and species to earn the highest award in Girl Scouting, the Girl Scout Gold Award. Adrienne designed a website for the Wildwood YMCA Therapy Sensory Garden, complete with a virtual tour of the garden, and information on how visitors can use their senses throughout the garden, and the importance of pollination. Adrienne also added links for people to create their own gardens at home to protect and attract pollinators.

Once the website was complete, Adrienne created flyers and QR stickers linking to the website and placed them around the garden to educate and raise awareness for pollinators. Adrienne has provided training to the Wildwood YMCA so they can continue to update the website. Adrienne will also continue to place flyers around the community to promote the Therapy Sensory Garden and website.

**District 5, Troop 2815**  
**Pattonville High School**  
**13 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

10 and 13-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Julie Meritt

A limb-length discrepancy is when one leg or arm is shorter than the other. Treatment for this condition often involves lengthening surgery and intensive physical therapy. Julie recognized the struggles children face navigating life with this condition and the anxiety of surgery. To increase resources for patients with this condition, Julie decided to partner with Shriners Children's St. Louis and create a children's book on the condition.

Julie's book, Brooke's Big Surgery, follows a character with a leg-length discrepancy as she goes through her first surgery. Julie illustrates what fellow patients can expect during their treatment and provides a list of other media, including characters with disabilities and advice from fellow patients. After completing the book, Julie translated it to Spanish and uploaded both versions as a free ebook. Julie then provided Shriners Children's St. Louis with 165 English and 200 Spanish hard copies of the book, and mailed a hard copy of each to the other 17 Shriners Children's Hospital locations. Finally, Julie applied vinyl inspirational messages to 18 clinic room walls at Shriners Children's St. Louis to encourage patients.

**District 14, Troop 3648**  
**Timberland High School**  
**11 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
10-Year Girl Scout



## Taylor Mollet

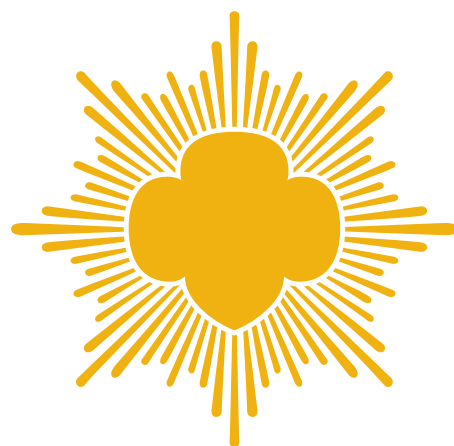
After witnessing the fright and discomfort of children receiving important vaccines, Taylor wanted to provide pharmacies with the tools they needed to comfort their youngest customers. To earn her Gold Award, Taylor made comfort bags that were distributed to children at local pharmacies while they waited in line for their vaccines.

Taylor organized a donation drive to collect items such as coloring books, coloring pencils, stickers and lollipops. Taylor then led a team of volunteers to assemble the bags. The comfort bags keep children calm and help the process go much smoother, resulting in lower stress levels for the children, the caregivers and the pharmacy techs. Afterward, Taylor provided project instructions to the pharmacy techs who will continue to keep the comfort bags filled.

**District 4, Troop 2610**  
**Francis Howell High School**  
**13 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
13-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



**District 17, Troop 9326**  
**Palmyra High School**  
**13 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
13-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout

## Tiffany Neff

After learning more about the history of the 1917 Norfolk & Western Caboose, Tiffany decided to restore and educate the community on local trains to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award. Tiffany began by removing all the reusable parts from the caboose and repainting them. Tiffany then added new siding, floors, windows, and seating to the caboose and repainted the outside.

Once the restoration was completed, Tiffany led groups of children on rides in the caboose, where Tiffany taught them the history of trains, shared symbols left by hobos and provided coloring sheets. Tiffany partnered with North-East Old Thrashers, who will keep the newly-restored caboose on their property and will continue educating the community with the materials Tiffany provided.



## Alyson Palmquist

To earn her Girl Scout Gold Award, Alyson partnered with the St. Louis Student's Robotics Association to develop fun and simple STEM and programming activities for local children in underdeveloped communities. Alyson created a unique board game to teach the basics of programming to young students. The game has three different board designs offering various ways to play the game, printed game cards, and six game pieces Alyson made using a 3D printer.

Alyson led a team of volunteers to host events at local elementary schools and STEM camps to demonstrate the game to 140 children during six events. Alyson also created instructions for the game and shared them with local robotics teams and the St. Louis Student's Robotics Association to use with outreach efforts and programs. To promote the project, Alyson shared the game on social media and created a website.

**District 12, Troop 696**  
**Lafayette High School**  
**11 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Silver Award  
10-Year Girl Scout



## Kalista Rodes

After recognizing the stressful environment teens face in school, Kalista decided to take action and create a positive impact among her peers. To earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, Kalista worked with the superintendent of the Pattonville School District, and the principal and counselor of Pattonville High School to implement Stress Detox and Mindfulness events at her high school.

Kalista organized and led a peer committee to host three events that provided students with self-care tips, stress management techniques, and a safe space for everyone to take time to reconnect. Kalista also presented their project at the Mental Health Summit put on by Pattonville High School. Kalista provided detailed instructions to a Pattonville High School teacher who works with student organizations to continue the events.

**District 5, Troop 908**  
**Pattonville High School**  
**12 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
10-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Megan Roate

To earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, Megan knew she wanted to make a positive impact in supporting families affected by cancer in her community. Megan partnered with Friends of Kids with Cancer, who helped identify the lack of resources available for siblings of kids with cancer. So, Megan created Megan's Totes for Teens.

Megan focused on including items that will help the teens relax and can easily be taken to where their siblings are receiving treatment. Megan filled each tote with stress balls, journals, puzzles and coloring books. Megan contacted a local Walmart and Target for donations to fill the totes. Megan also included an informational card she created with additional resources for the teens. Megan's totes will be distributed through Friends of Kids with Cancer and the hospitals they work with, including St. Louis Children's Hospital, Cardinal Glennon and Mercy.

**District 14, Troop 4818  
Holt High School  
12 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
10-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Lauren Rosenbaum

After recognizing that not every student benefits from the same classroom environment, Lauren was committed to helping students find mentally stimulating outlets throughout the day so they could maintain better focus on their schoolwork. To earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, Lauren created unique brain break hallway activities for the students at Concord Elementary School. Now, the students are able to expend excess energy and refocus when moving from one room to another.

Lauren led a team of volunteers to cut out patterns and activities and taped the pieces to the school hallway. Lauren then recorded an informational video about her project and donated the extra materials for teachers to create more brain break hallways in the future.

**District 6, Troop 2742  
Lindbergh High School  
13 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
10 and 13-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Sophia Saleeby

Sophia, a six-time school spelling bee champion who reached the national level in 2019, strove to address unequal representation among students from under-served communities in the Scripps National Spelling Bee to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award.

Sophia created a high-quality spelling resource packet, including word searches, word scrambles, word families, and lesson pages. Sophia distributed the packets to 200 schools in the St. Louis metro and St. Charles areas. Sophia has also connected with the Missouri Department of Education to spread the spelling packet to every state education office. Sophia's sister, a Girl Scout Cadette and spelling bee competitor, will continue to update the spelling packet and spread it to more schools.

**District 7, Troop 2625  
Ladue Horton Watkins  
High School  
13 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
13-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Elizabeth Schmidt

To earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, Elizabeth addressed the lack of bluebird nest availability due to deforestation. Elizabeth built five nest boxes to provide the bluebirds, an endangered species, with safe habitats to increase their population. Elizabeth installed the boxes throughout the community and continuously monitored the boxes and the bluebird nests. Finally, Elizabeth made a PowerPoint presentation about their project and shared it with Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri's Emerson Resource Center, so it is readily available for any troops to learn more about bluebirds.

Elizabeth presented their project to a local Girl Scout troop to raise awareness and understanding of deforestation. Elizabeth also created a project website, which includes a link to the presentation. Each nest box includes a QR code to the website for those in the community to learn more.

**District 4, Troop 4867  
MICDS  
12 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
10-Year Girl Scout  
Graduating Girl Scout



## Erika Schmitz

Erika decided to positively impact the community by partnering with St. Louis Children's Hospital to spread holiday cheer to their patients.

Erika began by organizing a donation drive at Kirkwood High School to collect items, such as stuffed animals, arts and crafts supplies, blankets, toys, and books for all ages. Erika gathered the donations and presented them to St. Louis Children's Hospital for their patients. Erika created a website and worked with Kirkwood High School to promote the project on social media and school sporting events. The Kirkwood cheer team will continue Erika's project by organizing annual donation drives in the future.

**District 6, Troop 1313**  
**Kirkwood High School**  
**8 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award

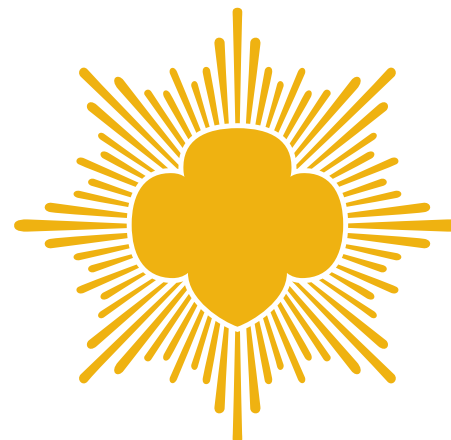


## Natalie Smith

Natalie recognized the inability of fellow Girl Scouts to easily access the Monks Bathtub, a historical landmark on the Camp Fiddlecreek property and took action to resolve the issue to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award. The Monks Bathtub, located across the road from Trefoil Inn, the recently restored oldest building at camp, is an eight-foot-deep swimming pool the monks used to bathe in.

Natalie began by leading a team of volunteers in clearing the area and making a pathway from Trefoil Inn to the bathtub. Natalie then built a dam using rocks and logs to direct rainwater away from the bathtub to avoid more erosion. Natalie has worked with the Fiddlecreek camp ranger who will continue to maintain the area for easy access.

**District 8, Troop 4500**  
**Parkway Central High School**  
**16 years in Girl Scouts**



## Jessica Steinberg

After recognizing the below-grade-level skills in some subjects among elementary students, Jessica wanted to help the students at Monroe Elementary School strengthen their reading level and math skills in a fun, everyday way.

To earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, Jessica applied colorful vinyl decorations to the stairs of the school that focused on math facts, colors, shapes, numbers and character traits. The educational décor was installed on eleven flights of stairs so students could enjoy and retain the information as they viewed it daily. Jessica applied the vinyl to a cove base before installing the project to ensure its durability, with little upkeep needed in the future.

**District 7, Troop 459**  
**Ladue Horton Watkins**  
**High School**  
**12 years in Girl Scouts**

### Milestones

Girl Scout Bronze Award  
Girl Scout Silver Award  
10-Year Girl Scout





# Wildwood YMCA Therapy Sensory Garden



Want to see more of our 2023 Gold Award Girl Scouts? Scan the QR code to watch a special video!

