The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest recognition in Girl Scouting. An award with national standards, it acknowledges an individual’s accomplishments, leadership, commitment, creativity, and personal effort to make the world a better place. Each Girl Scout Gold Award project addresses community needs and improves lives, while the process itself builds a young woman’s personal leadership skills and inspires others to community action.

The Girl Scout Gold Award recognizes that for girls to become leaders, they need to become knowledgeable, involved, and proactive. They need to take the lead. Above all, the achievement of the Girl Scout Gold Award helps a girl understand the difference one person can make, what one girl in a leadership role can do, and how one girl’s vision can inspire positive change. The award is a major accomplishment in a young woman’s life and an extension and compilation of all that she has learned through her Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

Every girl can make a difference in the world. **Here are 26 golden examples...**
Alison Bayreuther
Grafton

Alison wanted to create an outdoor learning environment that allows autistic children to use their five senses. She created a sensory garden consisting of four raised garden beds in the playground area at Millbury Street Elementary School in Grafton, Massachusetts.

Alison is excited her project will be sustainable because, along with the sensory garden, she also created a book which includes lesson plans, recipes, and care instructions for the garden. The sensory garden will continue to impact others as it provides a safe learning environment to educate others about special needs students, the outdoors, and their five senses.

Alison is a member of the varsity volleyball team, Family Community Leaders Club, as well as National Honor Society. As a Girl Scout, she has earned her Silver Award and completed her PA program. She also earned the Presidential Volunteer Service Award Gold Level. In college, she plans to study biology with a pre-med track and hopes to continue on to medical school. She would like to be a pediatrician one day and be a positive role model for youth.

Lauren Bayreuther
Grafton

Lauren and her twin sister were born two months early and spent time in the NICU. For many families, having children in the NICU is very scary, so Lauren wanted to provide the same comfort that her family received when she was in NICU. For her project, she made and donated 126 blankets and 30 smocks to UMass Memorial Medical Center’s NICU. Lauren’s project has given her confidence and practice in public speaking. Lauren held an event called the Sew-A-Thon, where a famous quilt judge made an appearance.

Lauren is a member of the Grafton chapter of the National Honor Society and the Family Community Leaders Club at her school. She coaches and plays club and varsity volleyball and softball. She also earned the Presidential Volunteer Service Award Gold Level last year. After graduation, she plans to attend an undergraduate physician assistant program and hopes to eventually work in a hospital setting.
As someone with food allergies herself, Hannah understood the importance of ensuring the community is educated about the effects of different food allergies, especially since not all food allergies are alike.

Hannah wanted to bring awareness and education to her community about food allergies and how the community can come together to stop the harassment of people with food allergies. Hannah successfully advocated with her school administration and school committee to include guidelines for food allergy harassment in their policy manual. She arranged a school seminar on food allergies with speakers on diet, health, emergency responses, and support.

Hannah’s favorite hobby is writing. She also loves to sing and perform in school talent shows. She is an AP Honors Student at Narranganset Regional High and is exploring colleges and career options.

Lillian became very interested in her town’s local history, so she focused on raising awareness of Ludlow’s history among children and families. Lillian wanted to get children outdoors to explore, so she created a series of seven letterboxes that were placed at historical locations in Ludlow. These letterboxes contained information on each site, as well as an engaging activity for kids, a unique stamp, and logbook. In addition, Lillian wrote and self-published an interactive children’s picture book on Ludlow’s history. She gained leadership and life skills by reaching out to the town commission, boards, and experts on Ludlow’s history for help with research, funding, and permission to place her letterboxes.

Lillian has been a Girl Scout for 13 years and serves on GSCWM’s Girl Leadership Board. A high school senior, she plays clarinet in the band, is secretary of the Tri-M Music Honor Society, and is in the National Honor Society. She participates in the Spanish Club, Leading Lions, and Interact Club. She is also an equestrian and volunteers at her local library. Lillian will attend the University of Vermont to study Environmental Engineering.
When her friend was diagnosed with leukemia, Cassidy knew it was the start of her Gold Award. Her project would provide comfort to children going through treatments at hospitals. She developed her leadership skills by creating and organizing events and advocating for and spreading awareness of childhood cancer. Cassidy is excited her project will be sustained thanks to Family Community Leaders (FCL) a club at her school. FCL will sustain the project along with Cassidy, by creating and maintaining a Facebook page to spread awareness of childhood cancer with ways to help.

Cassidy is an active Girl Scout and also participates in numerous clubs including Best Buddies, SADD, Family Community Leaders, and theater at her high school. In addition, she is on the varsity volleyball and swim teams and is VP of her class. She also received the Presidential Volunteer Service Award Gold Level and loves being involved with her school and community. Cassidy aspires to work in the medical field and help people in need.

WiSE@Gibbons is a Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE) club at Gibbons Middle School that Shreya created to encourage and inspire middle school girls who are interested in science. She created fun and hands-on STEM activities for each session and introduced them to other female role models. Through this project, Shreya learned how to serve as a mentor to the girls, to advocate for a cause that she deeply cares about, and to effectively organize the meetings and lead a group of girls. The program will become one of the ongoing activities at the Gibbons After-School Program.

Shreya is the President of her high school’s FIRST robotics team and an active officer of her school’s Science Olympiad team. She received a National Honorable Mention Award as one of the top 10% of applicants in the National Center for Women in Technology 2016 Aspirations in Computing program. Shreya is a member of the National Honor Society and has been a Girl Scout for eight years. Shreya hopes to study computer science in college.
Isabel Cummings
Longmeadow

Isabel's project offered residents of the memory care unit at East Village Place the chance to communicate the fullness of their lives by making personal scrapbooks. Isabel designed a program of scrap-booking workshops so that residents could communicate about their lives to caregivers and others. She created special kits and led volunteers working one-on-one with residents. She also presented an informational PowerPoint and video event at her public library, and she continues to share kits and leadership with individuals and memory-focused organizations. Isabel gained valuable leadership experience: she connected with staff, families, and the broader community, and she has enabled East Village Place to continue the program for new residents.

Isabel, a high school junior, is a member of the National Honor Society, Wind Ensemble, and the East Asia Club. She enjoys running cross country and track, and coaches youth track. Isabel volunteers for Griffin's Friends, the children’s cancer fund at Baystate Hospital, and in the activities program at East Village Place. As a Girl Scout, she served as co-chair of the Longmeadow Camporee. Isabel is currently exploring her options for college.

Elliana Davis
Shrewsbury

As a successful participant in regional and national teen pageants, Elliana learned new skills in public speaking and stage presentation while developing a greater sense of self-esteem and confidence. She created the Shrewsbury Sweetheart Pageant to offer girls ages 12–18 in Shrewsbury the opportunities she has had to develop their own self-confidence and presentation skills. She created a website to promote what she hopes will be an annual event in her hometown and a business plan to ensure that it continues. She has planned a workshop titled “Love the Skin You Are In” where the girls learn about healthy eating, appropriate makeup and hairstyle, and fashion sense. Participants are encouraged to become active in their community’s service projects and special events.

Elliana is the Senior Class President at Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School. She loves to dance and has been a ballerina for fifteen years. She also plays varsity field hockey and lacrosse and hopes to continue her lacrosse career at Framingham State University where Elliana plans on majoring in Business and Finance.
Michaela DeFoe
Becket

Michaela’s project helped save her local town beach where she works as a lifeguard. Erosion from rainwater had created a dangerous cliff-edge underwater. Engineers had developed a plan to fix the problem, but the town lacked workers to provide the needed labor. Michaela took the lead. She worked with the engineers, coordinated with town departments, and created a plan for the necessary people, permits, dates, and equipment to do the job. Then she gathered volunteers from her school and the community and personally led the grueling job of clearing 17 tons of stone by hand and preparing a safer gradual slope for the new beach sand arriving this season.

A high school athlete and leader, Michaela has served as captain of the swim and volleyball teams and as treasurer of her class. She was also a member of the National Honor Society. Outside of school, Michaela tutored at her local library for two years. In the fall, Michaela plans to attend the University of Hartford to study Prosthetics and Orthotics.

Monica Desmond
Pepperell

The Hipster Helper is a kit for patients who have experienced hip replacement surgery and are in rehabilitation. Monica designed and made several items which will aid recovering patients perform daily tasks. While recovering, these patients cannot bend forward, so even the simplest tasks become very difficult. Monica selected this project because her mother is an occupational therapist and she grew up spending time in the hospital and meeting patients. She also was influenced by her grandmother, who suffered a terrible stroke; it meant a lot to Monica to make her grandmother more comfortable while she was in the hospital. She has shared the design plans with caregivers and facilities so that they too can provide comfort and support to others.

Monica has been a Girl Scout since Kindergarten earning her Bronze and Silver Awards. In high school, Monica was on the honor roll, a member of the National Honor Society, and a Brownie troop mentor. A campus ministry leader in high school, Monica is now at Franciscan University of Steubenville studying Theology, Catechetics, and Philosophy. She plans to teach high school religion to help teens understand the beauty of Catholicism.
Isabela Ferraro
Wilbraham

Isabela’s project educated teens and her community about the very real issue of drug and alcohol abuse in Wilbraham—a topic hidden from discussion because of its stigma. Isabela assembled and led a team to create a documentary in which people from the community, with varying backgrounds and perspectives, were interviewed. Her project showed the big reality of substance abuse and that addiction could affect a top student just as much as it could affect the troublemaker in class. Isabella gained confidence by completing this long-term project and feels empowered by bringing the difficult issue into discussion and by sharing stories about real people and the impact of substance abuse.

An experienced Girl Scout for 12 years, Isabela is a member of the GSCWM Girl Leadership Board and Board of Directors. Isabela is involved in many school clubs with leadership roles in several. She competes on the track team, plays in multiple bands, and is in the National Honor Society. A member of her church youth group, she also volunteers with local organizations. Isabela plans to join ROTC in college and serve in the military.

Mckena Hendriks
Northbridge

For her project, Mckena designed and established a sensory room at McCloskey Middle School with school administrative approval and support. The sensory room is designed to be a safe and calming area for children with emotional, physical and mental disabilities. The room provides many activity centers and calming techniques to help students relax after they are overwhelmed in their classrooms. Mckena is excited the room will be maintained with the help of the teachers and staff along with the school behavioral specialist.

Mckena is a senior at Blackstone Valley Tech and has been a Girl Scout for 12 years. Over the past four years at BVT, she played both varsity field hockey and varsity lacrosse. She has also been a student ambassador as well as a peer mentor and a member of the National Honor and National Technical Honor Societies. She plans on attending Worcester State University and majoring in Occupational Therapy.
Olivia Johnston  NEADS Dogs Need You

Olivia's project was sparked from her eternal love and passion for animals. Her project included five major parts: the Graduation Gift Basket Program for NEADS (National Education for Assistance Dog Services) dogs and their new service partners, making more than 230 dog bandanas with members of her church, a 12-page booklet listing 50 pet pantries in Massachusetts, and a Canine Health and Hygiene brochure. Sustainability of this project is key to its everlasting success, so Olivia created a binder of everything needed to keep this project going and teamed up with two church groups in Grafton to ensure donations for the baskets in the future as well as with the NEADS Center in Princeton, MA.

After high school, Olivia plans to earn a Master’s Degree in Environmental Science. A high school junior, Olivia is currently an active president of two clubs, as well as a member of three more. She is also a three season athlete who enjoys reading, writing, ceramics, animals, and activism opportunities. Olivia has been a Girl Scout for 12 years and is in a troop with five of those original girls plus her mother as their troop leader.

Katherine Kelley  Rowing4Rowers

Katherine has a passion for rowing and for helping people with disabilities. Her Rowing4Rowers project worked to raise awareness of the need for rowing equipment for rowers with disabilities. Her troop also helped her by donating troop funds to cover the cost of a Resolute Racing Shell which holds an adaptive seat that allows rowers of all abilities to succeed. Katherine’s leadership skills were developed by spearheading a day-long rowing event where she and members of Holyoke Rows rowed from Sunderland to Holyoke. She also created a blog that included interviews of rowers and paddlers with disabilities. Katherine learned she could achieve her goal by setting smaller, achievable benchmarks.

Katherine is a rising senior at Suffield Academy. She runs Cross Country, and is a member of the Varsity Crew Team. She is also a boarding proctor for her dorm and has been playing the trombone for eight years. Her fondest memories were at Girl Scout Camps. She also enjoyed High Adventure Girl Scouts preparing for Wilderness First Aide. She enjoys helping people, and plans to continue rowing in college.
Julia Klisiewicz
Grafton

Julia focused her Gold Award Project on an international problem - the disappearing bee population. It started with a passion for helping the environment and concern for declining animal populations. She took a course at UMass Medical School in Worcester to learn about honeybees. With this knowledge, Julia created a hands-on program for children so they could learn about the importance of pollinators for bees and how to protect them. She learned how to lead a project from start to finish and to work with others to gather materials, form ideas, and modify existing plans. Her confidence in her abilities as a leader increased when she modified the program for older children. The bee garden she created, full of bee-friendly flowers, will continue to bloom every year in front of the library.

Julia is the Vice-President of the Chorus Club and a member of the Art Club at school. She has also been inducted into the National Honor Society and is the senior-most Acolyte at her church. Julia joined Girl Scouts in the 3rd grade. Her most memorable experience was when her troop of four headed off to Europe for two weeks to London, Paris, Florence, and Rome. Julia plans to get her Bachelor’s Degree in Biomedical Engineering.

Elise Lilly
Lunenburg

Since Elise was 12, she has volunteered at a homeless shelter in Leominster and knew that helping that shelter would be the best choice for her Gold Award. The shelter was moving to a new location when Elise was starting her project, so they asked her to build gardens for the new house. Elise consulted with others on the best plants for the garden and drafted a garden layout. She then started planting! Elise was excited to work with the confirmation classes at St. Boniface who will continue to take care of the gardens in the future.

Elise has played three sports in high school and was named captain of the soccer and basketball teams. She has volunteered with the Montachusett Interfaith Hospitality Network, and at the local Boys and Girls Club. She was inducted into the National Honor Society this year, has been involved with Best Buddies, and has taught religious education. She has earned both her community service and leadership pins and plans on pursuing a degree in Sports Management.
Tara McCurley
North Grafton

Tara knew that the local food bank was a vital asset in her community, but it was missing something that many families needed - pet food. Tara started the Grafton Pet Food Pantry to fill the void, because she didn’t want families to lose a beloved pet or service animal due to financial troubles. Working on this project improved her communication skills through her asking for help and advice. She also had to work with various business leaders around town in order to begin collecting pet supplies and food. Tara is excited to provide this important service to families in the community.

Tara is currently a junior in high school. She has been actively involved in Girl Scouts since the third grade. Over the years, her troop has set up and hosted many events like sock hops and tea parties for Girl Scouts as well as for girls not in Girl Scouting. Tara is planning on pursuing a career in Art Illustration.

Kelsey Moulton
Sterling

Kelsey’s project focused on improving the efficiency of her church’s mission trip to the Dominican Republic. Each year, The First Church in Sterling embarks on a medical mission to La Romana, Dominican Republic where they provide urgent medical care and install water filters for impoverished Haitian immigrants living in the sugar cane villages. Kelsey’s focus was on how to make it easier for first-time travelers to know what to expect on a mission trip as well as what safety and hygiene steps to take to remain healthy themselves during the mission. Her goal was to increase the number of people participating in the mission trips. This project allowed Kelsey to build her public speaking and leadership qualities all while helping people who are very near and dear to her heart.

Kelsey has been a Girl Scout since the age of five earning her Bronze and Silver Award. She competes on her high school swim and cross country teams. She is a member of the National Honor Society as well as the Honor Societies for Spanish, Math, and Music. In the fall, Kelsey will be attending the University of New England and pursuing a major in Medical Biology. She plans to become a physician assistant.
The Angel Outfits project was about making burial outfits from donated wedding dresses for babies who passed away. Having family members suffer from burying their baby led Hailey to develop this project. Her project was aimed at helping grieving families focus on things like planning other aspects of a funeral rather than having to shop for baby clothes. Her leadership skills grew and developed when she had to host a sewing event for her community. During the event, a woman was so touched by the project that she agreed to help Hailey to ensure the project will continue for years to come.

Hailey plans to go to college and hopes to major in a medical field like Dentistry or Veterinary Medicine. She wants to help people and feels a medical career is the most direct way to do this. Her project reflects this because she is able to help people in need with these outfits and can make a difference in their lives.

Hailey is a National Young Women of Distinction Nominee and Prudential Spirit of Community Award Distinguished Finalist.

GSS, Girls Standing Strong, is a group Molly started at Northbridge Middle School to help 5th and 6th grade girls strengthen their self-esteem. Molly developed a six-week workshop curriculum for the school-based program she planned with the support of a school counselor who attended the sessions as well. The girls participate in a variety of activities that help them develop a stronger self-image, personal advocacy, leadership, and stress management skills. Molly selected this project because she, and many of her friends, experienced low self-esteem issues in middle school. She trained 7th and 8th grade girls to continue the workshops next year.

Molly has been in Girl Scouts for over ten years, and has been with the same group of girls throughout her journey. In addition, at her school she is Student Director for the Drama Club, as well as a section leader for the acapella choir and a member of the National Honor Society. In the fall, Molly will be attending Manhattan College in New York majoring in Communications.
Emily Reed-Edwards
Westborough

Emily focused her Gold Award project on improving the living situation of children and families staying at a domestic violence shelter. She organized donation drives to collect books and craft supplies for after-school sessions for the youth in the shelter, helped residents with their reading skills, and provided creative craft projects. Emily knew helping these families directly was important, but she also wanted to raise a broader awareness of the challenges those living in the shelter face every day. She created a community-wide panel to help start the conversation of how the community can bring change to the perception of domestic violence and also provide support for those who need it.

Emily joined Girl Scouts in the first grade. One highlight was when her troop went on an Outward Bound trip to Costa Rica and Panama. She saw a lot of wildlife including a sloth and a gigantic spider. Emily learned about leadership and independence on this trip which helped her adjust to living at college. Emily just finished her first year in college and believes that being a Scout helped her get through it.

Alzheimer's and Dementia are becoming increasingly common in adults age 60 and up. Research shows that exercising your brain can push back symptoms of memory loss. As a sophomore at Blackstone Valley Regional Technical High School, Madelyn visited seniors every other week at area nursing homes and has earned her Alzheimer's Certification there. She saw first-hand the benefits of seniors staying active through crafting and puzzles. Using her clinical understanding of patients with dementia, Madelyn made Brain Kits that included Sudoku game books, word searches, cross word puzzles, coloring books, markers, crayons, pencils, sharpeners and an informational guide that included a list of websites providing free downloads of additional puzzles and coloring pages. The Brain Kits were distributed at the senior center in Grafton and Beaumont Nursing Facility in Northbridge.

Madelyn has been in Girl Scouts since Kindergarten. She attends Blackstone Valley Regional Technical High School where she plays lacrosse and is studying Health Services. When she graduates, she will be certified as a CNA pharmacy tech. Her goal is to become a Physician Assistant. She is an active member of SkillsUSA, which sponsors vocational and leadership competitions.

Madelyn Rice
Grafton

Domestic Violence-Making a Difference, Bringing Awareness

Healthy Brain, Healthy You!
Deirdre wanted to introduce more preschool-age children to reading because it is a critical time in their intellectual development. Preschool children benefited from her project by hearing stories and working on their creativity through a drawing activity. Children and their families now have access to her story time through local community television and a web link. Future high school students will have the opportunity to share their love of books and stories by participating in a partnership program that she established with Westborough High School and Westborough Community Television. Throughout the project, Deirdre learned how to explain her thoughts more clearly, listen to others, and follow through on her goals.

Deirdre will be attending Lafayette College in the fall of 2017 and is excited to pursue her passion for international affairs, law, film, and photography. She enjoys helping people, and has volunteered as a Girl Scout camp counselor as well as with Special Olympics. Her favorite experiences have happened while helping kids and volunteering has made an incredible impression on her. Deirdre is also extremely proud of her film production and how it positively influenced her community.

Sarah Tucker
South Hadley

While volunteering at the Granby Public Library, Sarah noticed the lack of resources for teens regarding personal finance. She also knew that students her age had no formal training in personal finance. Since this was concerning to Sarah, she researched best practices and worked with the library to create a section of books about personal finance. Also at the library, Sarah created a tri-fold and fact sheets with information about personal finance. Additionally, Sarah held workshops for teens so they could gain knowledge and pass the information along to friends and family. While doing this project Sarah was able to improve her communication and public speaking skills.

Sarah plays clarinet in the South Hadley High School’s marching band and concert band. At nationals for marching band, they earned 12th place out of 24 bands. She has also studied ballet for five years. She volunteers at the Granby Public Library and is part of her school’s Leo Club doing community service projects. Sarah has been a Girl Scout for 9 years and is part of the High Adventure Troop.
Claire Whitaker
Lanesboro

Claire has a passion for books and wanted to help children in her community discover the same love. Claire held several book drives requesting gently used books for donation. She was surprised at how many books she received as they overtook her bedroom quickly! Given the abundance of books, Claire was able to set up five Book Nook boxes in locations frequented by the community’s youth. The biggest challenge that Claire stated she faced was that of communication. At first the thought of making phone calls to reach out to the community seemed daunting, but with a little practice, she became much more confident in her skills.

Claire has been an active Girl Scout since second grade. She loves volunteering, and is thankful for the opportunities that being a Girl Scout has given her to help her community. She also loved going to Camp Bonnie Brae in the summer. Claire is her school’s National Honor Society President, a violinist for the Pit Orchestra, and a thrower on the Track team. She is attending Northeastern University in the fall to study Engineering.

The Book Nook

Kaleigh Wright
Westborough

Kaleigh’s project educates residents about how humans can co-exist with wildlife and focused on keeping people and pets safe even in their own backyards. She wrote and published a children’s book that included photos of the animals and a poem she wrote for each one in alphabetical order. She also developed an informative website about animal safety, and she created a voice-over recording of her book with Westborough TV which will air her reading on a regular basis. Additionally, Kaleigh ran a month-long supply drive for the wildlife clinic. This project will impact children in the K-6 schools and the library as they have access to her backyard wildlife book.

Kaleigh has been in Girl Scouts for 11 years. Highlights include being a top cookie seller, earning the Presidential Volunteer Service Award and doing an Outward Bound leadership/service trip to Costa Rica and Panama. In high school, Kaleigh completed close to 250 hours of service. She is also a 12-season athlete, 4-year marching band participant and 4-year symphonic band member. Kaleigh will attend Stonehill College, where she will continue playing the French Horn.

Wildlife in Westborough