







Celebrating those who earned the highest achievement in Girl Scouting, the presitigious Girl Scout Gold Award.

Friday, June 9, 2017 • Massachusetts State House

#### The Girl Scout Gold Award

The Girl Scout Gold Award represents the highest achievement in Girl Scouting, recognizing girls who demonstrate extraordinary leadership through remarkable Take Action projects that have sustainable impact in their communities and beyond. A girl must spend a minimum of 80 hours working on her project, and must complete all seven steps.

- 1. Choose an issue
- 2. Investigate
- 3. Get help
- 4. Create a plan
- 5. Present your plan
- 6. Take action
- 7. Educate and inspire

#### **Gold Award Facts & Figures**

- Gold Award recipients spend between one and two years on their projects.
- The average age of Gold Award recipients is 17.
- In 100 years, more than one million girls nationally have earned the Gold Award or its equivalent.
- Gold Award recipients who join the armed services enter at one rank higher than other recruits.
- University research indicates that adding Gold Award to a college application is a critical element in the admissions decision process.

#### **Gold Award Prerequisites**

#### A girl must:

- Be in 9th, 10th, 11th or 12th grade
- Be a registered Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador
- Have completed two Senior or Ambassador Journeys or have earned the Girl Scout Silver Award and completed one Journey

#### Dear Gold Awardees,

Congratulations on your extraordinary achievement in earning the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest honor a Girl Scout can earn!

Today we celebrate your accomplishment as the culmination of your Girl Scout Leadership Experience. You, along with your sister Girl Scouts from across the Commonwealth, have demonstrated dedication to empowering yourself and improving your community. And you are now part of the legacy of impressive Girl Scouts who have been making meaningful, sustainable change in their communities and around the world since our Movement's founding in 1912.

Whatever your Girl Scout journey has been, it has brought you here as a G.I.R.L. (a Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader) $^{\text{TM}}$ . You are a source of pride for the adults who have watched you grow and excel, and a role model for others in your community.

Many of you are graduating from high school, and we hope you will remain part of our sisterhood by becoming an adult member. Wherever you go next, your Girl Scout experience goes with you. And your Gold Award sets you apart as a confident leader and visionary change maker.

You are the embodiment of the Girl Scout mission: a young woman of courage, confidence, and character, who makes the world a better place. We look forward to seeing what you will do next and how you will fulfill the pledge you have taken so often, "to live by the Girl Scout Law."

Yours in Girl Scouting,

Patricia A. Parcellin Chief Executive Officer Eastern Massachusetts

Patricia Hallberg Chief Executive Officer Central and Western Massachusetts Tricia Tilford

Board Chair and President Eastern Massachusetts

Tricia Tilford

Lyn Simmons

President/Chairwoman

Central and Western Massachusetts

# Congratulations

2017 GOLD AWARDEES!



It's time to embrace all that you've accomplished in Girl Scouting, honor how that will forever be a part of who you are, and step into the world as a young woman of courage, confidence, and character.



**Shelbi Gill, Acton** *Technology Assistance Program for Seniors* 

Shelbi saw an opportunity to help seniors build their technology skills and overcome the technological barriers

to reaching the community. She taught computer classes and built individualized curriculums for a group of seniors. She recruited student volunteers to help teach the classes, created flyers and PowerPoint presentations, and wrote articles for the senior newsletter about her lessons. The Acton Council on Aging's computer club will continue to host drop-in classes for the seniors.



**Elvena Bielecki, Andover** *Reduce Waste: Compost!* 

Elvena wanted to address environmental issues, including waste in the environment and the lack of awareness of

composting. She created a brochure, website, tri-fold poster and step-by-step guide that provide information on how to compost, the benefits of composting, which items are compostable, types of compost bins, and engaging composting projects for children. The Environmental Club at Elvena's high school will keep the presentation resources updated, and the Andover Historical Society will have brochures available at their museum and the town farmers market.



**Meg Davis, Andover**Girls-Only Youth Programming

Meg's project addressed the lack of programming for girls in her town. Meg teamed with Andover Youth Services

(AYS) to create Girls Venture Out, a set of monthly clinics offering girls an active adventure to explore alternative sports. The clinics include self-defense, mountain biking and rock climbing. Meg also created a Girls-Only Block Party at the youth center on the first Wednesday of each month. During these events, girls could learn from and support each other playing sports, creating art, dancing and more without involvement by boys their age or male staff. Based on the success of these initiatives, AYS will continue Girls Venture Out and Girls-Only Block Party.



Olivia Gaspar, Andover Service Awareness

Olivia wanted to raise awareness about poverty, natural disasters and other unfortunate circumstances outside nental United States. Within a local church community,

of the continental United States. Within a local church community, she organized a series of workshops, guest speakers and small service projects, one of which was assembling bags of resources to distribute to the homeless. She also organized a mission trip to Ponce, Puerto Rico, in partnership with the organization Team Effort. Olivia also created a website that offers service opportunities, a mission trip template, information about the mission trip to Ponce, and a blog with mission trip plan updates.



Katherine Holden, Andover Building a Path to Service for Younger Kids

To show middle school students their potential to empower themselves and others through service, Katherine

coordinated various service opportunities for middle school students at her local church. These projects included writing letters to government officials about community issues, baking treats and delivering them to first responders, building a stage for a local theater production, constructing care packages for sick or recovering members of the congregation, teaching social media to older church members, making "superhero" kits for children at a homeless shelter, and more. Two high school students will continue to facilitate service days.



**Sophie Bronstein, Ashland** *Senior Citizen's Tech Connection* 

Concerned about the difficulty senior citizens have using technology and electronic devices, Sophie held one-on-one

tutoring sessions at the Ashland Senior Center. Sessions covered how to accept phone calls, download ebooks onto ereaders, shop online, take cell phone photos, join social media platforms and more. Sophie also held community workshops about cyber security, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, with Q&A sessions. She recruited volunteers from her high school to assist in the tutoring sessions and workshops to create relationships between these two generations. Ashland High School's Tech-Team and the National Honor Society will continue the program.



### **Olivia Sewell, Ashland** *Picnic Tables for All in Ashland*

Olivia sought to encourage recreational activities that would foster a connection among all community members. She

built ADA-compliant picnic tables for all community members to use, including those with physical limitations. She used pressure-treated wood to withstand time and all weather conditions. She recruited Department of Public Works staff to help deliver the tables to their final destinations. She hosted an intergenerational brunch, where high school students and seniors could connect over a meal at the picnic tables. The Ashland High School student council will continue to host intergenerational brunches semi-annually.



Michaela DeFoe, Becket Becket Beach Update

Erosion from rainwater had created a dangerous cliff-edge underwater at a town beach. Engineers had developed a

plan to fix the problem, but the town lacked workers to provide the labor. Michaela took the lead. She collaborated with engineers, coordinated with town departments, and created a project plan for the job, detailing the workers, permits, dates and equipment needed to complete the job. She gathered volunteers from her school and the community, and led the difficult job of clearing 17 tons of stone by hand and preparing a safer gradual slope for the new beach sand.



Felicia Barber, Bedford Science is Fun!

Felicia's project addressed the lack of interest in the sciences among young students in her community. She

developed a series of classes taught by professionals for elementary students, each of which focused on a specific STEM field. The instructors gave a short talk on their field of work and profession, and then coordinated a hands-on activity that gave students direct experience exploring and experimenting. Felicia also created a website with the activities for others to do at home, and an instruction manual, which students of the National Honor Society at the local high school will use to continue the classes.



### **Kira Kennedy, Beverly** *Autism Awareness Through Art*

awareness—to earn the Gold Award. Once a week, Kira created art with students on the autism spectrum at the Future Behavioral Therapy Center. She then framed the artwork and hosted and promoted an art show and reception at the Beverly Public Library to raise awareness about Autism in her community. At the show she was able to connect art teachers to the art program at the therapy center for future collaboration, and the Future Behavioral Therapy Center will continue to facilitate art classes.

Kira combined her two passions—art and autism



**Taylor Ann Bennett, Billerica** Saints – Our Link to God

As a candidate for Catholic Confirmation, Taylor realized that she and her classmates did not learn about saints,

which made choosing a Confirmation name difficult. In response, Taylor created a saints curriculum for elementary-aged CCD students. She researched six saints chosen to appeal to different interests such as music, sports, animals and more. For each saint, she created a tri-fold poster of information, and a craft and prayer cards that students could take home. Taylor presented the saints to CCD classes and held three Saints days, one at each church in Billerica. She created a curriculum booklet for each CCD program for future use.



Kendra Clemenzi, Danvers Danvers Composts

saw an opportunity for her school to take the lead on this initiative while the town of Danvers finalized its long-term plan to start curbside composting. Kendra worked with the town Department of Public Works to set up compost bins in the Danvers High School cafeteria. School staff were trained by an organization called Change is Simple, and now incoming students will attend a presentation on how to contribute to the school's composting system. Student volunteers monitor the bins and encourage continued student participation. A local composting company picks up the compost bi-weekly.

The benefits of composting were evident to Kendra, who



Marissa Clemenzi, Danvers Gender Equality

High School about the importance of terminology associated with gender identity and its role in ensuring a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for students whose rights are protected under the law. She created a lesson plan focused on gender identity and vocabulary for the health education curriculum, which is now a permanent part of the lesson plan. She also gave a PowerPoint presentation to freshman health classes, and created a website and brochures for the middle and high school nurses' offices.

Marissa's project sought to educate students at Danvers



Makayla Selden, Everett Mission Vision

A local Lion's Club donates old glasses to organizations globally that distribute them to those in need of eye care,

and Makayla's project leveraged this effort already in place to increase donations. She set up donation bins at local businesses to collect glasses. The bins feature QR codes that lead to a video created by Makayla and posted to YouTube. She also designed lesson plans and created a Facebook page about the importance of donating glasses to underserved communities. She wrote a newspaper article to raise awareness about the collections and the issue of wasted eyeglasses. Students at Makayla's high school will continue her efforts.



**Brooke Coolidge, Georgetown** *Improving the Town Soccer Fields for All* 

Brooke noticed that the few benches at local sports fields were unsafe. As she learned more about the fields, she

discovered that endangered turtles build their nests and live in the area during the spring when local teams use the fields. She recruited volunteers, and together they built and installed new benches throughout the fields. To protect the turtles' nests, she raised awareness by building and installing a sign to inform visitors to the fields, and creating a PowerPoint presentation for teams that play on the fields, which will be presented to teams at the start of every sports season.



Alison Bayreuther, Grafton Sensory Garden

Alison wanted to create an outdoor learning environment to allow children diagnosed with an autism spectrum

disorder 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. The sensory garden provides a safe learning environment for children to use all of their senses and learn about the outdoors. Alison also created a book that includes lesson plans, recipes and care instructions for the garden.



**Lauren Bayreuther, Grafton** *Wrapping Kids in Kindness* 

Lauren and her twin sister were born two months early and spent time in the hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care

Unit (NICU). Lauren wanted to provide the same comfort that her family received when she was in the NICU, to other families going through this distressing experience. She organized and hosted a Sew-A-Thon event, where a famous quilt judge made an appearance. Lauren made 126 blankets and 30 smocks and donated them to the NICU at UMass Memorial Medical Center.



**Cassidy Chiu**, **Grafton** *Bundles of Love* 

After her friend was diagnosed with leukemia, Cassidy was inspired to provide comfort to children going

through similar treatments. She created and organized various events advocating for patients and spreading awareness of childhood cancer. She also created a Facebook page to raise awareness in her community and to publicize ways to support the cause. Cassidy's efforts will be sustained by the Family Community Leaders (FCL) club at her school. Cassidy and FCL will continue to post to and run the Facebook page.



#### Olivia Johnston, Grafton NEADS Dogs Need You

Olivia's project was sparked by her love for animals and her admiration for National Education for Assistance

Dog Services (NEADS), also known as Dogs for Deaf and Disabled Americans. Olivia created the Graduation Gift Basket Program for NEADS dogs and their new service partners and made more than 230 dog bandanas with volunteers from her church. She also created a 12-page booklet listing 50 pet pantries in Massachusetts, and a brochure about canine health and hygiene. Olivia put together a binder including information about her project for its sustainability, and she collaborated with two church groups in Grafton to ensure donations are collected for the basket program in the future.



Julia Klisiewicz, Grafton Bee Kind

Motivated by her passion for preserving the environment and concern for declining animal populations, Julia

focused on a local issue: the disappearing bee population. She took a course at the University of Massachusetts Medical School to learn about honeybees. With this knowledge, Julia created a program for children about bees. She worked with volunteers to gather materials, form lesson plans, and modify existing plans. She then modified the program for older children. She also created a bee garden full of bee-friendly flowers, which will continue to bloom every year in front of the local library.



Hailey Petruzzelli, Grafton Angel Outfits

Hailey repurposed donated wedding dresses to make burial outfits for babies who had passed away. Having had family

members endure the devastating loss of a baby, Hailey's project goal was to help grieving families with one aspect of the funeral planning process. She hosted a sewing event in her community to make the dresses. During the event, a woman was so touched by the project that she agreed to help Hailey continue the project for years to come. Hailey is a 2017 Prudential Spirit of Comunity Award recipient and a National Young Women of Distinction nominee.



Madelyn Rice, Grafton Healthy Brain, Healthy You!

Research shows that exercising the brain can push back symptoms of memory loss in patients with Alzheimer's

disease and dementia. Having earned her Alzheimer's Certification, Madelyn used her clinical understanding of patients with dementia to make brain kits for seniors. These kits include Sudoku game books, word searches, cross word puzzles, coloring books, markers, crayons, pencils and sharpeners. She also created an informational guide that includes a list of websites that provide 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.



Julia Mendel, Groton Operation Ready Set Grow

opportunity to create unity between students, including those in the special education program. She resurrected the garden club and together they repaired the plant beds, weeded the overgrown areas, and laid down wood chips to prevent weed growth. They planted bean, pepper, tomato, cucumber and blueberry plants, as well as flowers and other perennials, and installed benches and tables. Julia made the garden accessible to everyone by incorporating raised beds with cutouts to allow wheelchair access. The garden club will continue cultivating the garden, and garden maintenance will be a permanent part of the special education program.



Ciara Selders, Groton Sprouting New Knowledge

Ciara partnered with her high school lunch and special education programs. She built a raised, handicap-

accessible vegetable garden for special education students in the Providing Academic/Vocational Experiences (PAVE) program. The garden provides an opportunity to develop gardening skills through hands-on learning in the outdoors, in conjunction with lesson plans Ciara created that cover the basics of gardening, nutrition and recipe creation. The garden provides fresh herbs and produce for the school cafeteria. The special education program staff will continue to implement Ciara's lessons and maintain the garden.



#### Julia Goslin, Hanover Hanover Mock Trial Team

to educate other students about the judicial system. She met with a government teacher to research, plan, and set up a format for club meetings. Julia recruited students to join the club, where they learned what goes on in a court of law, including how to proceed in a court case, perform cross and direct examinations, respond correctly to questions asked by lawyers and memorize affidavits. Julia distributed affidavits for the students to memorize, and then they performed a mock trial. The Mock Trial Team is continuing, with plans to compete in the Massachusetts Bar Association Mock Trial Program next year.

Julia started a mock trial team at Hanover High School



**Kate Schweikert, Hopkinton** *Addressing the Allergy Crisis Through Education* 

One of Kate's close friends passed away after suffering an allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. To earn her Gold

Award, Kate was inspired to raise allergy awareness. With the help of allergy specialists, teachers, school administrators and community members, Kate created extensive allergy curriculums for students in grades one, three, five, seven and nine of the Hopkinton school system, which explain the symptoms, risks, social implications, treatments, prevention methods and emergency protocols for anaphylaxis. Kate's program is now a permanent part of the wellness curriculum in schools around Massachusetts.



Claire Whitaker, Lanesborough *The Book Nook* 

Claire has a passion for reading and wanted to inspire the same interest among children in her community. Claire

held several book drives requesting gently used books. After receiving an abundance of books, Claire was able to set up five book nook boxes in locations frequented by the community's youth; children could take books without having to worry about returning them. The Book Nook has already distributed nearly 1,000 books to children throughout the community, and a local Girl Scout troop will continue to collect books for the boxes.



Julianna Winters, Lexington
Save the Trees

Julianna educated community members about oriental bittersweet, an invasive plant that can kill trees. She created a video and made posters about the invasive species for the local library. She also hosted an event at a local farm to educate and recruit community members to work together to remove the vines, using effective removal techniques that Julianna taught them. Julianna also spoke with environmental clubs at the local high school, so they can continue to identify and remove oriental bittersweet, as it takes an ongoing effort to eradicate the invasive species.



### **Isabel Cummings, Longmeadow** *A Walk Down Memory Lane*

Isabel's project offered residents of the memory care unit at East Village Place the chance to celebrate the fullness of their lives by making personal scrapbooks. Isabel designed

scrapbooking workshops and created scrapbooking kits for the residents. She led a group of volunteers who worked one-on-one with residents. Isabel hosted an event at a local library at which she presented a PowerPoint presentation and video about the scrapbooking project and its impact. Isabel continues to share kits and her time with individuals and memory-focused organizations. The East Village Place will continue the scrapbooking program with new residents.



Katherine Kelley, Longmeadow Rowing4Rowers

Katherine has a passion for rowing and helping people with disabilities. Through Rowing4Rowers, Katherine

raised awareness of the need for rowing equipment for rowers with disabilities. Her troop supported her efforts by donating troop funds to cover the cost of a resolute racing shell, which holds an adaptive seat, allowing rowers of all abilities to succeed. Katherine spearheaded a daylong rowing event, during which members of Holyoke Rows were able to row from Sunderland to Holyoke. She also created a blog that includes interviews of rowers and paddlers with disabilities.



#### Lillian Brown, Ludlow Let's Explore Ludlow

Lillian became interested in her town's local history, so she decided to focus her project on raising awareness

of Ludlow's history among children and families. Lillian also wanted to get children outdoors to explore. So she reached out to the town commission, boards and experts on Ludlow's history, and created a series of seven letterboxes that were placed at historic 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.



Elise Lilly, Lunenburg MIHN Gardens

Since Elise was 12 years old, she has volunteered at a homeless shelter in Leominster. She believes deeply in their

work, so she wanted the shelter to benefit from her Gold Award project. The shelter was starting to move to a new location, and Elise assisted by building gardens for the new building. Elise consulted with others on the best plants to use, drafted a garden layout and did the planting. Elise worked with the confirmation classes at St. Boniface Church, and they will continue to maintain the gardens.



Ava McGarry, Marblehead School Library

The Edward A. Sisson School in Lynn did not have a library because there wasn't enough room, and local public library

branches had closed. Ava filled this void by creating a library on the school's first floor for kindergarten through second grade students, and a second library in a fifth grade classroom. She recruited volunteers from General Electric to help and construct the bookcases that are moveable and expandable, so the library can close into a coat cubby when not in use. Ava collected nearly 2,000 books, which she categorized, labeled and shelved. She started a book club for third and fourth grade students to get them interested in reading.



**Hyesoo (Julie) Han, Medfield** *Notes that Carry Over* 

Julie wanted to bridge the gap between students of different generations so they can have meaningful interactions. Julie

recruited 18 high school band students, who volunteered time to play instruments with fifth and sixth grade students. Through this program, the students were able to connect, and the elementary students gained an older student musician to look up to. Together, the students put on a concert for local senior citizens, and were able to talk with them afterwards. Julie had an underclassman shadow her as she created and implemented this project, so this program can continue in the future.



Kathleen DiBiasio, Medway The Bat Project

Kathleen and volunteers from local Girl Scout troops built bat houses for the Medway Community Farm as an eco-

friendly alternative to pesticides. Kathleen gave presentations to the Medway Middle School Green Team, highlighting how bats contribute to a healthy environment. She also created interactive packets, and a preand post-presentation survey to assess comprehension. The club will continue to give these presentations to fifth grade students each year, and the Medway Community Farm will continue to include Kathleen's research and efforts as part of a self-guided tour.



Beth L. Boersdamm, Middleborough Smiles for Sick Kids

Beth was inspired by the murals she saw in the children's ward of a local hospital, and used her Gold Award project

to create similar murals in the Middleborough public schools' nurses' offices. Beth painted four murals in various nurses' offices, each with a unique theme—ocean, jungle, forest and outer space. She also created a "healthy living" coloring book, which provides tips on how to stay healthy throughout the coloring pages. Beth gave a presentation to a local summer camp about how to maintain a healthy lifestyle, and coordinated a group of artists to create coloring pages containing facts promoting healthy living.



### **Charlotte Hankin, Newton** *Beyond the Red Ring*

Inspired by a friend's struggle with Lyme disease, Charlotte wanted to make a difference in the lives of those with this

often debilitating diagnosis. She gave presentations about risks and symptoms, and the danger of postponing treatment. She interviewed patients and created a video and numerous infographics, which she posted in 25 community locations. The infographics informed the public about using bug spray, staying covered, performing tick checks, and seeking medical attention if a tick is found. She also shared these messages at a table she hosted at a local farmers market. Charlotte's infographics are available at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital and The International Lyme and Associate Diseases Society (ILADS).



**Katie McMahon, Norfolk** *The Lakota Tribe Project* 

Katie wanted to bring awareness to the Lakota Tribe in South Dakota and the issues affecting their education. The

closest store to the Lakota Tribe is almost two hours away, making it difficult for students to obtain basic school supplies and new clothing. Katie partnered with her local parish, St. Jude's, to host clothing drives and solicit donations from Staples to donate for the Lakota Tribe's local school, St. Joseph's. Katie delivered the donations to the school during a trip to South Dakota in the summer of 2016. St. Jude's will continue to collect donations for the school through their confirmation classes.



Eliza Sheehan, Norfolk Day On

Eliza wanted Martin Luther King, Jr. Day to be a true day of service in her community. Since her school is closed

that day, she created Day On to promote service. Eliza hosted a series of community service days across the three towns that make up the King Philip Community over the course of a year, starting on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. She recruited student volunteers to join her in volunteering, including opportunities at multiple food and pet shelters, and environmental cleanups. She also created a preschool program about her town's history. The King Philip Student Council has added Day On to its event calendar to continue Eliza's efforts.



**Eleanor Spellman, Norfolk**The History Wall at Freeman-Kennedy School

When the town of Norfolk built a new elementary school, Eleanor wanted to ensure that the history of the previous buildings would be preserved. Spaces within the current and former buildings were named for 10 prominent individuals from the community, so Eleanor constructed a history wall featuring plaques with their biographies and images. The history wall also contains a pictorial timeline of Norfolk school buildings from 1852 to the present. Information from the History Wall has been added to the Norfolk Public Schools and Norfolk Historical Commission websites. Eleanor presented the History Wall to current students and family members of the honorees at an all-school assembly in November 2016.



Tara McCurley, North Grafton Grafton Pet Food Pantry

Tara recognized the vital role the local food bank has in her community, but realized it was missing something

that many families need: pet food. Not wanting families to lose a pet or service animal due to financial difficulty, Tara started the Grafton Pet Food Pantry. She worked with various business leaders around town to begin collecting pet supplies and food, and set up donation boxes throughout the community. She also created a website to educate the public about the Grafton Pet Food Pantry.



Claire Bailey, North Reading Children and the Farmers Market

Claire saw an opportunity to get local elementary students excited about healthier food options through the North

Reading Farmers Market. Claire created fun, educational and interactive activities for students at the market, which she promoted on the Farmers Market Facebook page before each market day. These activities included a scavenger hunt to find a rainbow of vegetables, creative vegetable painting, and planting flowers and herbs. Each week, she shared a word or phrase of the week associated with the activity, and conducted a drawing at the end of the summer. Claire created a binder with all of the activities so the Farmers Market manager can continue the activities in future seasons.



#### Jessica Kelly, North Reading STEM Mentoring Program

Committed to increasing participation in her town's middle school Science Olympiad program, Jessica created a program for students in third through fifth grade to learn about their favorite STEM-related topics that aren't covered in school curriculum. She developed STEM activities, and trained high school science club volunteers to assist the students. Then she brought the program to middle school students with more advanced activities. Jessica used worksheets and surveys to evaluate how much the students learned and if their interest in STEM had increased. She discovered that more than half the students said they were interested in joining a science club. An officer of the high school science club will continue the program.



Lynda Loucif, Northborough MoveforEndo

Over 176 million women globally have been diagnosed with endometriosis. Lynda created a website about the disease,

explaining illnesses that tend to accompany endometriosis, offering various resources to learn more, and including a symptom tracker. Lynda also worked with a medical team to design instructional dance videos as a resource for women dealing with the chronic joint pain that is a common symptom of endometriosis. Lynda presented her project at the Endometriosis Conference in October of 2016, and she will continue to update her website with new information and resources. Lynda served a one year term on GSEMA'S 2013-14 Board of Directors.



Mckena Hendriks, Northbridge Sensory Room

Mckena designed and established a sensory room at McCloskey Middle School as a safe and calming area for

students diagnosed with emotional, physical and mental disabilities. The room provides many calming techniques and activity centers to help students relax if they become overwhelmed in the classrooms. The sensory room will be maintained by the school behavioral therapist with the help of teachers and staff.



Mary Erickson, Norwood Tikkun Olam (Repairing The World)

Mary's project raised awareness about recycling items including foam, cork, crayons and tennis balls. She met with the Board of Health director and the ReFoamIt owner to learn about proper recycling processes. She filmed educational videos to inform the community about the importance of recycling and these lesser known recyclable materials, and coordinated a foam recycling event. Mary created flyers and posters, and utilized social media and local newspapers to promote her recycling event. Additionally, Mary collected foam lunch trays at three lunch periods a day at her school for several weeks, and since then the school has removed foam trays from the dining halls of all Norwood public schools. Mary is a 2017 GSEMA Scholarship recipient.



Monica Desmond, Pepperell Hipster Helpers

Hipster Helper is a kit for patients who are in rehabilitation after having hip replacement surgery. While recovering,

these patients cannot bend forward, so even the simplest tasks become very difficult. Monica designed and produced several items to help recovering patients perform daily tasks, including walker bags, pipe exercise weights and pants puller-uppers. She also included reachers, sock aids, bath sticks, shoe horns and elastic laces. She has shared the designs with caregivers and care facilities so they can use them to provide comfort and support to others.



Hannah Bennett, Phillipston Food Allergy Awareness

As someone with food allergies herself, Hannah understands the importance of community allergy

education, especially because not all food allergies are alike. Hannah wanted to raise awareness of food allergies and how the community can be supportive. Hannah successfully advocated with her school administration and school committee to include guidelines for food allergy harassment in their policy manual. She organized a school seminar on food allergies with speakers on diet, health, emergency responses and support.



### **Brianna Cristiani, Quincy** *Quincy Junior Historians*

much of the history of their hometown. Brianna decided to do something about this in Quincy, bringing a sense of fun to her history lessons. She created an interactive program using social media to promote an event at a local homestead. Her program highlights the history of the town through historical games and activities, including flying a hoop through the air using two sticks, planting flowers in gardens, and making whirligigs, a toy that buzzes when spun. She also created a booklet for children to use while on a tour of the homestead, which includes trivia and games. Brianna recently completed a one year term on GSEMA'S 2016-17 Board of Directors.

It is not surprising that young students often don't know



**Amy Trillcott, Quincy** *Finance for Life* 

After Amy started her first job, she had a lot of questions about personal finance. She conducted a survey of students at her school and found that between 48% and 81% of students surveyed knew little about credit, savings accounts, taxes, loans and checkbooks. Amy worked with a representative from Quincy Credit Union to create

Amy worked with a representative from Quincy Credit Union to create four workshops at her high school about money skills, budgeting, credit cards and student loans. She also implemented a financial literacy class as a part of the freshman seminar, which will remain a part of the curriculum. At Quincy's World Thinking Day, Girl Scouts of all ages could sign up to attend workshops to earn the financial literacy badge.



Elizabeth Saltzman, Randolph Girls CAN S.T.E.M.

Elizabeth created a seven-week STEM curriculum consisting of a series of 90-minute STEM-related classes to empower girls in fourth and fifth grades to enter STEM field

inspire and empower girls in fourth and fifth grades to enter STEM fields when they are older. The classes included experiments, worksheets and activities. Female professionals from a variety of STEM fields led handson activities and demonstrations with the girls during the final week of the program. Elizabeth created a website featuring her curriculum, photos from the program, and information about the gender gap in STEM fields. The Randolph Recreation Department will continue the classes annually.



Meghan Mello, Raynham 25i Awareness

To honor her best friend who passed away after taking the synthetic drug 25i, Meghan visited schools, churches and

local organizations to raise awareness of the dangers of recreational drugs. She created a brochure and website with information about 25i, along with testimonials, memorials to those who have passed away due to a 25i overdose, videos of her past presentations on the topic, and a calendar promoting her upcoming presentations. She will continue to give presentations in her local community, and has plans to expand her presentations to other states as well. Meghan is a 2017 GSEMA Scholarship recipient.



Christina P. Brzezenski, Reading Teenage Depression Awareness

Adults and teenagers may not recognize or understand the symptoms and signs of depression in teenagers. To raise

awareness, Christina created flyers detailing depression symptoms, and distributed them during Reading's Town Day. She also organized a speaking engagement at her high school, when a psychologist spoke with teachers and students about teenage depression. This event will be held again next school year. The psychologist's presentation was filmed, so others can watch and be informed.

Amelia Collymore, Reading
Promoting Tactile and Physical Activity for Preschool
Children with Disabilities

Building on her Silver Award topic, Amelia was inspired to show how tactile stimulation and physical movement can help children focus while reading, especially children with sensory processing disorders and challenges. Amelia wrote an interactive children's book about a squirrel and his forest friends, titled, *Fluffernutter and the Forest Fiesta*. The book comes with a tactile box filled with a variety of engaging objects and activities for students as they read. Amelia recruited volunteers to help with the illustrations and recording an audio book. Amelia distributed copies of the book, tactile boxes and audio books to preschool classes at the Reading Integrated School Experience (RISE) Preschool.



Laura Richards, Reading Sergeant Joshua Eaton Jr.

Laura wanted to find out who Sergeant Joshua Eaton Jr. was and why the local elementary school is named in his honor.

Laura knew she wasn't alone; not many students in her town knew his story. She learned that Joshua Eaton was the only soldier from her town to lose his life in battle during the American Revolution. She wrote and illustrated a historical fiction book, and recruited volunteer editors to help finalize her story and ensure it is factual and accurate. Third grade teachers are using copies of Laura's book in their classes to teach local history, and two copies are available at the Reading Public Library.



Tessa Senders, Reading Hearing Health Advocacy

One of Tessa's family members has noise-induced hearing loss, which inspired Tessa to raise awareness about hearing

loss and prevention. Using the Dangerous Decibels Jolene Cookbook, Tessa created a mannequin named "Jolene," that can measure the decibel levels of music on a phone or MP3 player. Tessa met with health professionals and used her research to make informational and pledge flyers, posters and coloring books. She and a team of volunteers distributed these materials along with ear plugs at booths at two major town events. She gave presentations to high school students about hearing health, and they tested their own phones with Jolene. Hearing health is now incorporated into the school's health curriculum.



Shannon Saffle, Sandwich Historic and Recreational Geocaching in Sandwich, MA

Shannon created 60 geocaches and placed them at various historical and recreational sites around Sandwich to raise

awareness of the town's historical significance to residents and Cape Cod tourists. She promoted her geocaches in local newspapers, and on Facebook pages and websites. In addition, she created her own website with historical information about her geocaches and tips on how to participate in geocaching. Shannon also created educational materials about the history of Sandwich for third grade classes, which have been added as a permanent part of the history curriculum.



#### Emma Chistolini, Sherborn Common Room Development and Art Therapy

Emma renovated the Day Center common room of Family Promise Metrowest, a nonprofit organization that serves

homeless families. She recruited a carpenter who built a kitchen unit, and an interior designer who made the room more practical and inviting. Emma collected donations to buy window blinds for privacy when the room is occupied. She applied for a grant from the Agnes Lindsay Trust to purchase two computers and a printer, for those pursuing employment and training opportunities. Emma also created an art program for children at the center and assembled a binder of art projects for children to reference in the future.



### **Elliana Davis, Shrewsbury** *Operation Spreading Confidence*

As a participant in regional and national teen pageants, Elliana learned public speaking and stage presentation

skills while developing self-esteem and confidence. She created the Shrewsbury Sweetheart Pageant to offer girls ages 12 - 18 in her community the opportunity to develop their self-confidence and presentation skills. She added a website and business plan to promote what she hopes will be an annual event in her hometown. She has planned a workshop titled, "Love the Skin You Are In," through which girls can learn about healthy eating, makeup, hairstyles and fashion. Participants are also encouraged to be active in their community's service projects and events.



Sarah Tucker, South Hadley Fun Financial Facts

While volunteering at the Granby Public Library, Sarah noticed the lack of personal finance resources for teens.

Sarah knew that students her age have no formal training in personal finance, so she researched best practices and worked with library staff to create a section of books on the topic. Sarah also created a tri-fold poster presentation and fact sheets, and held workshops for teens so they could learn about personal finance and pass the information along to others.



### Kelsey Moulton, Sterling La Romana Mission Team Goes Gold

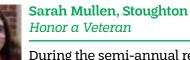
Kelsey wanted to improve the efficiency of her church's mission trip to the Dominican Republic. Each year, The

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 Haitian immigrants living in the sugar cane villages. To prepare first-time travelers, Kelsey created a booklet and held an information session to detail all aspects of the mission and answer questions. She also described safety and the proper hygiene necessary to remain healthy during the mission. Each year the church will distribute the booklet to its travelers.



Stoneham to showcase this largely undiscovered natural resource in her community. The herbarium provides information about various plant species and how to find them in nature. Sarah compiled a binder with all of the plant information, and built a kiosk to display the information at the park. She presented the herbarium to the Stoneham Conservation Committee; they were thrilled to gain this public resource, and said they would use the herbarium to provide information about Whip Hill natural resources during tours.

Sarah created an herbarium for Whip Hill Park in

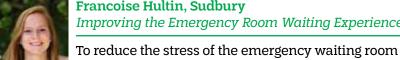


During the semi-annual re-flagging of Stoughton cemeteries, Sarah discovered that several graves were not

properly marked to ensure that they received new flags on Memorial Day and Veteran's Day. She met with the Veteran's Agent and learned that the last attempt to compile a list of veteran graves in the largest cemetery was prior to the year 2000. Using the older list as a starting point, Sarah surveyed the cemetery of more than 3,000 graves and created a master list and a corresponding cemetery map. She found over 100 veteran graves that had not been properly marked. The Veteran's Agent will maintain the list and map in the future.



Emma created a program through which students in kindergarten through third grade were paired one-on-one with high school reading tutors to address deficits in reading fluency and comprehension. Over the course of six weeks, the students read together for 30 minutes each week. The one-on-one sessions created a safe space where the students could challenge themselves and improve their reading skills. Emma created a website that contains photos, testimonials from parents, information about the tutors and other resources. Interested parents can sign their child up on the website. One of the tutors will continue the Reading Buddies program next year.



Francoise Hultin, Sudbury Improving the Emergency Room Waiting Experience

experience, Francoise created a more family-friendly, peaceful environment at Emerson Hospital. First, she founded the Pediatric Intervention Club at her high school. They created activity pamphlets for distribution at the hospital and local pediatricians' offices. The pamphlet describes activities to promote healthy coping strategies, provide distraction, and offer relaxation methods. Francoise also designed a multi-age, interactive and germ-free activity for the hospital in which a digital photo frame mounted on an ER waiting room wall offers a guessing game to fill the time and provide distraction.



Georgia Reilly Neale, Sudbury IBD-Friendly Foods

and Colitis walk many times, Georgia knew that people like herself were unable to eat the food offered during the event. To earn the Gold Award. Georgia created and hosted a healthy foods tent at the 2015 walk. With donations from local and national food companies, Georgia led a team of volunteers at the tent to provide diverse options for those with dietary restrictions. Georgia offered recipes and was able to engage in conversations about how to manage diseases and diets. The Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America has implemented Georgia's project at all their walks nationally.

Having participated in the annual Take Steps for Crohn's



**Abbey Sykes, Sudbury**Supporting the Team: Service Dogs and their Handlers

Abbey collaborated with the National Education for Assistance Dog Services (NEADS) to advocate for and support service dogs and their handlers. With her team of volunteers, Abbey created a paved walkway so handlers with limited mobility can access a short trail that leads to the NEADS campus pond, and designed and built a shaded pergola for puppies being trained. Abbey also distributed flyers and wrote articles for local newspapers about the laws surrounding service dogs and the proper way to interact with service dogs and handlers.



**Sarah Martin, Topsfield** *Kids Caring for Kids* 

Sarah was inspired to make a difference for hospitalized children who may be scared, sad or bored. She gave presentations about kindness to local students, and promoted the need for coloring books, crayons, markers, puzzles and mind games for children in local hospitals. She distributed newsletters and hung posters, which provided information about her collection efforts. The students

which provided information about her collection efforts. The students donated many items, and Sarah and her team of volunteers assembled over 50 care packages for children in local hospitals. Sarah created a booklet detailing her project, which hospitals can distribute to anyone interested in volunteering in this way.

Linnea Wingerup, Topsfield Books for Bhutan: Enriching Communities on Both Sides of the Globe

When she was 11 years old, Linnea traveled to Bhutan, and this experience inspired her to help Bhutanese primary school students while expanding the worldviews of students in her own community. She educated sixth grade students from Topsfield on Bhutan and its culture. Linnea facilitated a book drive, collecting hundreds of donations. She also coordinated a book-making workshop, at which the Topsfield students wrote and created a book describing their daily lives. Linnea sent this book along with the other donated books to the Bhutanese students so they, in turn, could learn about a different culture.



### **Terryn Fraser-Mines, Tyngsborough** *STEM Storytime and Backpacks*

Terryn started a monthly STEM Story Club, with topics such as architecture, astronomy, nocturnal animals and weather. She also made STEM-themed backpacks filled with hands-on STEM activities and books for students to check out at the Tyngsborough Public Library. To unveil the backpacks to the community, Terry hosted an open house at the library, where she organized STEM activities for children. The backpacks will continue to be available at the Tyngsborough Public Library.



#### Madison Parker, Tyngsborough Reviving Flint Pond

Pollution from a local landfill had killed many organisms in Flint Pond, causing the pond to be susceptible to invasive

species. To address this problem, Madison built an environmental awareness kiosk at the edge of the pond, containing information on the status of the pond, how community members can help clean the pond, and volunteer opportunities. She also created brochures and made a presentation to middle school students to explain the poor conditions of the pond. Madison assembled a binder with all the information about the kiosk, and a member of the Flint Pond Conservation Committee will maintain the kiosk and continue the cleanup efforts.



Claire Kearney, Walpole Positively Pollinators!

Claire saw the many ways people unknowingly damage nature, and wanted to raise awareness about how

clearing land and mowing lawns destroys animal habitats, including beehives and pollinator habitats. Claire assembled a team of gardening, construction, education and art experts and volunteers. Together they renovated an old parking area within a local park, and created a garden where pollinators can thrive. Using presentations and brochures, Claire educated children and adults about our effect on the environment and the importance of pollinators. She included daisy seeds within the brochures so people can create their own pollinator habitats.



**Cindy Ge, Wayland** STEM Explorations

on young girls, Cindy created a STEM after-school program for fifth grade girls. Each session in the six-week program included a STEM lesson and hands-on construction and experimentation. Cindy published her lesson plans online so others can implement the program. She also distributed lesson plans to local Girl Scout troop leaders, teachers and community centers.

To counteract the effects of negative gender stereotypes



Eleanor Boyd, Wellesley
Tech Talks

In collaboration with the Council on Aging, Eleanor created and taught technology classes for seniors. Eleanor's goal was to teach them skills that will empower them to adapt confidently as technology changes. The monthly classes helped seniors to build a clear technology foundation through interactive demonstrations, personalized help and information sheets. Eleanor's lessons focused on the basics of the Internet including Internet sefety again modic, and

personalized help and information sheets. Eleanor's lessons focused on the basics of the Internet, including Internet safety, social media, and computer security, and the basics of an iPhone, including what apps are, how to use a few popular ones, and taking and editing photos. The Wellesley High School Key Club will continue the technology classes.



Sinclaire Alexandra Vandervoort, Wellesley Garbage to Gardens

Sinclaire collaborated with the Bates Recycling Program, a pilot recycling project of the Green Schools organization, to

educate students and families about the widespread problem of food waste. With recycling, liquid disposal, and composting systems already in place, she identified the need for community outreach. Sinclaire created videos about how to cut down on household food waste and how to make meals and pack school lunches that produce less waste. She shared these videos through school emails, a website and a YouTube channel. At the Wellesley STEM Exposition, Sinclaire shared her videos and got children excited about waste reduction by helping them decorate reusable napkins.



Abigail Yuan, Wellesley
Equity

workforce, believing that if teenagers are more aware of the imbalance, the potential for improvement will increase. Abigail developed a workshop for students in grades 6 - 12 to discuss gender and pay inequality, and to raise awareness of the movements and organizations where students can learn and volunteer. She conducted the workshop at various after-school programs in the Boston area, and for students in Germany while on a school exchange trip. She also developed a lesson plan that mirrored her workshop for the Women in STEM club at her school.

Abigail was inspired to address gender inequality in the



### Shreya Chowdhary, Westborough WiSE@Gibbons

Shreya created WiSE@Gibbons, a Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE) club at Gibbons Middle School in

Westborough, to encourage middle school girls who are interested in science. She created fun, hands-on STEM activities for each session and introduced the students to female role models in STEM fields. The program will become one of the ongoing activities of the Gibbons After-School Program.

Emily Reed-Edwards, Westborough

Domestic Violence—Making a Difference, Bringing

Awareness

Emily wanted to improve the living situations of children and families staying at a local domestic violence shelter. She organized donation drives, collecting books and craft supplies for after-school sessions for the youth in the shelter. She helped them develop their reading skills, and led creative art projects. Emily knew helping these families directly was important, but she also wanted to raise a broader awareness of the everyday challenges faced by those living in the shelter. She assembled a community-wide panel to spark conversation about how the community can change the perception of domestic violence and provide support to those who need it.



Deirdre Robins, Westborough Reading Alive!

Deirdre wanted to introduce more preschool-age children to reading for maximum impact on their intellectual development. Deirdre read stories to children and facilitated a

development. Deirdre read stories to children and facilitated a drawing activity to foster creativity at Miss Tanya's Nursery School and the Westborough Public Library. Children and their families now have access to her story time through local community television and a website she created. Future high school students will have the opportunity to share their love of books and stories by participating in an established program through Westborough High School and Westborough TV as a result of Deirdre's project.



Kaleigh Wright, Westborough Wildlife in Westborough

With a broad goal of educating her community about how humans can coexist with wildlife, Kaleigh focused on how

to keep people and pets safe in the outdoors. She wrote a children's book that includes photos of local wildlife, and a poem she wrote for each animal in alphabetical order. She created a voice-over recording of her book, which will air on a regular basis on Westborough TV. She also developed an informative website about animal safety, and ran a month-long supply drive for a local wildlife clinic. The local elementary schools and library have access to Kaleigh's backyard wildlife book.



**Nikita Battaluri, Westford** Oral Care for Blind Children

While on a trip to India, Nikita noticed high rates of blindness among children. Although institutions take care

of these children, many lacked knowledge about proper dental care. Nikita reached out to a dental school in India, connecting with dentists and dental students to help with her project. The volunteers taught dental care through individual hand-over-hand coaching sessions with the children, helping them feel unclean teeth with their tongues and fingers. The dentists will continue to make regular visits to the school for the blind. Nikita created a documentary about her project to engage other volunteers, which is available on YouTube and was streamed on a local television channel.



### Courtney Burrow, Weston It's a Choice—A Movie About Parenting

To break the stigma surrounding the decision to become a stay-at-home parent, Courtney created a documentary

about parenting, including interviews she conducted with six parents with diverse career backgrounds. At the premiere of the documentary, Courtney facilitated a parenting panel discussion. She presented the documentary to sophomore career seminar classes at her school, and the video will be shown in these classes in the future. She made a website, which includes a blog that is updated with articles about stayat-home parenting.



Molly Prior, Whitinsville GSS: Girls Standing Strong

Girls Standing Strong (GSS) is a group at Northbridge Middle School designed to help fifth and sixth grade girls

increase self-esteem. Molly was inspired to help in this way because she, and many of her friends, experienced low self-esteem issues in middle school. She developed a six-week workshop curriculum with the support of a school counselor, who also attended the sessions. The girls participated in a variety of activities that helped them develop personal advocacy, leadership and stress management skills, and a stronger self-image. Molly trained seventh and eighth grade girls to continue the workshops next year.



**Isabela Ferraro, Wilbraham** *It's an Issue Here: Drugs & Alcohol* 

Isabela educated teens and her community at large about the issue of drug and alcohol abuse in Wilbraham—a topic

normally not discussed because of its stigma. Isabela assembled and led a team to create a documentary featuring stories about how drug and alcohol abuse has affected real people. Her documentary includes interviews with community members from diverse backgrounds, including people in recovery from addiction, and representing a range of perspectives to convey the reality of substance abuse and that addiction can affect anyone, even a high-achieving student or community figure. Isabela is a 2017 National Young Women of Distinction nominee.



Cristina Hain, Winchester
STEM Studies

The increasing importance of coding as a job skill inspired Cristina to introduce STEM subjects, specifically coding,

to local middle school students. She created a coding lesson plan for an after-school engineering club. They started by learning basic code, and then used a programming language called Scratch to develop video games. Students who were already familiar with Scratch learned how to use the programming language Unity to develop three-dimensional video games. The lesson plan was added to the curriculum and will be taught each year.



**Erika Nakajima, Winchester** *Share Your Passion* 

While traveling with her volleyball team, Erika realized how lucky she was to live in a town with the resources to offer

volleyball programs. Erika collaborated with the West End House Boys & Girls Club in Allston to start a volleyball program in that community. She recruited some of her teammates to help, and together they taught girls basic volleyball skills in the West End House gym. She also created a binder with technique tips and game ideas for the Club to utilize in the future. While Erika enjoyed sharing her love of volleyball, her broader purpose was to encourage her friends and teammates to start similar projects to help children discover what they love to do.

#### **Special Thanks**

GSEMA thanks United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley for support of the Gold Award program.

A special thank you to the Women's Legislative Caucus and its executive director, Lauren Scribi, for sponsoring Girl Scouts at the Massachusetts State House.

#### **Gold Award Committees**

Thank you for your significant commitment of time and talent, and your dedication to the Girl Scout mission. You are making a difference in the lives of girls who, in turn, are making the world a better place.

#### Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts

Erin Long Boland, Wilmington
Alice (Bo) Bowen, South Yarmouth
Marie (Skip) Carver, Winthrop
Jennifer Coombs, Waltham
De Corrigan, Methuen
Marianne Geoffroy, Marlborough
Nini Gomez, Hingham
Irene Greenberg, Needham
Jess Huckins, Salem
Elena Janice, Brookline
Diane Kimball, Hudson
Alissa Lauzon, Lexington
Alecia Orsini Lebeda, Mashpee
Cheryl Lebedevitch, Harwich
Caitlyn LeBlanc, Burlington

Nancy Marshall, Lexington
Courtney Medlin, Dorchester
Jessica Robinson, Bridgewater
Paula Ruozzi, Norton
Lynn Sanderson, Natick
Linda Schuller, Belmont
Gail Spring, Quincy
Marissa Szabo, Wakefield
Anne Valade, Reading
Patti Wilder, Cambridge

**Gold Award Co-Chairs** Cathy LeBlanc, Burlington Joan Reilly, GSEMA

#### Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts

Lissa Asta-Ferrero, Agawam
Jean Baxter, Hadley
Polly Billiel, Turners Falls
Paula Brault, Northfield
Jenn Cherry, Ludlow
Glynis DeVerry, Feeding Hills
Chrissy Howard, Springfield
Sue Labelle, Leominster
Ellen Moorhouse, Springfield

Stacy OBey, Rutland Nancy Owens, Jefferson Jane Schroeder, Milford Tawnya Tiskus, Easthampton Ann Marie Waller, Feeding Hills Arlene Wolfe, Worcester

Gold Award Advisor Katie Chappell, GSCWM



## On my honor...

#### **Girl Scout Promise**

On my honor, I will try:

To serve God and my country,

To help people at all times, And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

#### **Girl Scout Law**

I will do my best to be
honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong, and
responsible for what I say and do,
and to

respect myself and others, respect authority, use resources wisely, make the world a better place, and be a sister to every Girl Scout.



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