

## Ways to Say "Thank You!" (Troop, Service Unit, or Community Level)

### **Recognize Adult Volunteer Contributions**

People volunteer for countless reasons, but underneath it all, most volunteers are motivated by the quality of their performance. When volunteers know their time and energy are appreciated and that they are valued by Girl Scouts, they commit themselves to the organization. Volunteers also want to know that their service is helping the greater good—that together we made a difference in girls' lives and, through our mission, made a difference in the world. Therefore, volunteer recognition is one of the most powerful tools for retaining the invaluable women and men who volunteer for Girl Scouts.

The key to successfully recognizing volunteers is:

- Do it well
- Do it often
- Make it meaningful

### **An attitude of appreciation can be created by:**

1. Being aware of the extra effort put forth by an individual
2. Taking the time to mention a person's service or to thank her/him for a job well done
3. Helping people to attain a higher level of achievement
4. Developing a climate wherein work is sincerely noted at all levels

When and how the recipient is recognized can make the expression of gratitude memorable.

Recognitions might be made on special Girl Scout holidays, at service unit or community meetings, at a special recognition event, immediately following the service rendered, at local recognition events, etc.

### **Informal Recognitions (Given by a troop, group, service unit, or community)**

Some ways to say "Thank You" informally at the service unit/community level, or by committees or task groups could include:

- A framed photograph of the Girl Scouts who participated in a particular project or event (can be a blown-up snapshot)
- A thank-you statement published in a Girl Scout publication, web site, Yahoo group newsletter, or community paper
- Flowers presented at a meeting
- Birthday or holiday greetings made by the girls
- A special citation read at a meeting
- Fun awards such as breath mints (you take my breath away), note cards (for noteworthy achievements), or batteries (you've added energy to our group)

Check the internet for more ideas!

## GSSEM Nomination Process for GSUSA's Adult Volunteer National Awards

Nominating a Girl Scout volunteer for a Volunteer National Award is a simple but meaningful way to express your appreciation.

- 1. Thanks Badge I and II only: Write the required letter of endorsement.** The letter of recommendation demonstrates how the nominee has made an impact throughout Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan's service area. The content of these letters should be objective and supported by facts and data.
- 2. Submit your nomination materials on or before December 13, 2024.** Submit the completed online nomination form and letter of endorsement\* at [www.gssem.org/nominate](http://www.gssem.org/nominate).

## GSSEM Timeline for GSUSA's Adult Volunteer National Awards

April–December 13, 2024	<b>Nomination Process Open:</b> Any registered Girl Scout may nominate a registered adult volunteer for a Volunteer National Award.
December 13, 2024	<b>Nomination Materials Due:</b> Submit your completed nomination form and letter of endorsement* online at <a href="http://www.gssem.org/nominate">www.gssem.org/nominate</a> .
Upon Receipt	Nominators will receive confirmation of nomination receipt within one business day. If you do NOT receive nomination confirmation, you <u>must</u> contact the Volunteer Experience department at <a href="mailto:volunteerexp@gssem.org">volunteerexp@gssem.org</a> . The Volunteer Experience team reviews the nomination materials for accuracy, legibility, and completeness. We'll reach out to you if additional information is needed.
December 2024	<b>Review of Nominations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nomination review is based solely on Award criteria and provided information.</li> <li>• Nominations may be: 1) approved, 2) approved with a change of award category, or 3) not approved.</li> </ul>
Post-Committee Review	<b>Within five business days of the committee's vote, nominators are contacted 1) if their submissions weren't approved or 2) if their nominee's award category must change.</b> Feedback will also be given if a stronger nomination is needed. Nominators may use the feedback to modify and resubmit their nominations—as long as they do so within 5 business days of December deadline.
January 2025	<b>GSSEM Board Approval:</b> Approved nominations are sent to the Board of Directors for final approval.
Post-Board Review	<b>Nominators are contacted regarding Award approval.</b> Nominators are asked to inform their nominee(s) that they'll be receiving an award and to look out for an invitation to GSSEM's Volunteer National Awards Banquet.
February 2025	Honorees receive formal invitation to the Volunteer National Awards Banquet.
April 2025	Awards presented at the Volunteer National Awards Banquet.

\* A letter of endorsement is only required for a Thanks Badge I or II nomination.

# Adult Award: Volunteer of Excellence

## Description

The Volunteer of Excellence award recognizes those volunteers who have contributed outstanding service while partnering directly with girls in any pathway to implement the Girl Scout Leadership Experience through use of the national program portfolio or who have contributed outstanding service in support of the council's mission delivery to girl and adult members.



## Criteria

- The candidate is an active, registered adult Girl Scout.
- The candidate has successfully completed a term of service and all requirements for the position.
- The candidate has performed beyond expectations for the position to deliver the Girl Scout Leadership Experience to girls using the national program portfolio, or
- The candidate's performance has been beyond the expectations of the position and has supported council's mission-delivery goals in one or more of the following functional areas: Membership Development/Community Cultivation, Volunteer Relations and Support, Program, Leadership and Governance, Fund Development, and Council Support Service (such as IT, Customer Service, Merchandising, MarComm).
- The candidate actively recognizes, understands, and practices the values of inclusive behavior.

## Nomination

A nomination form is completed and submitted, including a biography that indicates how the nominee meets the criteria.

## Example of Candidate

- A volunteer Program Advisor works over the course of the year with a teen advisory committee. The 30 current Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors who plan and deliver four performance day camps, using content from the *aMuse* Journey, targeted to girls in underserved areas in our Council. As a result, those areas had a combined total of 210 new Junior girl members and 16 new adult volunteers; 92 percent of the girls at camp also signed up for other opportunities during the year.
- A college student volunteer who was recruited by IT to help with data entry saw a posting on the council's Facebook page encouraging recognition of volunteers on Leader's Day. She saw the opportunity to use the council's website to make this type of volunteer recognition easy and relevant for everyone to use.

In coordination with council staff, she helped launch a recognition page on the website that leverages tools like e-cards and online voting campaigns, highlights real volunteer success stories, and provides valuable information on ways to thank all volunteers throughout the year.

As a result, 4,700 personal thank-you messages were sent to volunteers last year by council leadership and staff, volunteers, parents, and girls. Nominations for Council- and GSUSA-earned awards also rose by 35 percent and volunteers reported feeling highly valued on satisfaction surveys 22 percent more than the previous year.

## Adult Award: Appreciation Pin

### Description

The Appreciation Pin recognizes an individual's exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. This service, which has had a measurable impact on one geographic area of service, helps GSSEM reach and surpass the mission-delivery goals of the area.



### Criteria

- The candidate is an active, registered adult Girl Scout.
- The service performed by the candidate is above and beyond the expectations for the position held, and made an impact on a geographic area within the council's jurisdiction.

### Nomination

A nomination form is completed and submitted to the council's recognition committee, including a bibliography that indicates how the candidate or nominee meets the criteria.

### Example of Candidate

At an event, a troop leader noticed that the diversity of the girls did not match the diversity of the community. She talked with her council staff and found that they had identified a potential for membership increase among the Latinx communities in her area. She partnered with the service-delivery team to create and implement recruitment strategies to reach both girls and adults and new ways of work to support new members. As a result, Latina girl membership rose by 14 percent and adult membership by 15 percent last year. The new members participated in series and camps, as well as 78 percent in troops.

## Adult Award: Honor Pin

### Description

The Honor Pin recognizes an individual's exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, which has had measurable impact on two or more geographic areas of service, allowing the council to reach and surpass its mission-delivery goals.



### Criteria

- The candidate is an active, registered adult Girl Scout.
- The service performed by the candidate is above and beyond the expectations for the position held and made an impact on two or more geographic areas within the council jurisdiction.

### Nomination

A nomination form is completed and submitted to the council's recognition committee, including a bibliography that indicates how the candidate or nominee meets the criteria.

### Example of Candidate

A facilitator realized that, although the council created online courses and resources on the GSLE, at volunteer meetings she heard comments indicating that many volunteers still were hesitant to use Journey to deliver the GSLE to girls. She worked with the Volunteer Management department to develop a GSLE Coach role, which would support all direct-service volunteers as they implemented what they learned in the courses and put Journeys into action. This role was piloted in four service-delivery teams where, after the first year, Journey sales increased by 30 percent; girls shared the impact of 14 new take-action projects via the council's Web site; and the volunteer-satisfactions scores increased by 12 percent.

## Adult Award: Thanks Badge - One Endorsement Letter

### Description

The Thanks Badge honors an individual whose ongoing commitment, leadership, and service have had an exceptional, measurable impact on meeting the mission-delivery goals and priorities of the entire council or the entire Girl Scout Movement.



### Criteria

- The candidate is an active, registered adult Girl Scout.
- The outstanding service performed by the candidate resulted in outcomes that benefitted the total council or the entire Girl Scout organization, and is so significantly above and beyond the call of duty that no other award would be appropriate.

### Nomination

A nomination form is completed and submitted to the council's recognition committee, along with supporting documentation indicating how the candidate or nominee meets the criteria.

### Example of Candidate

A volunteer saw an opportunity to use Journeys to increase membership in one of the council's target markets through the camp pathway. She helped the council partner with local companies and groups to provide in-kind, financial, and volunteer support to build a Take-Action Tree House at each camp. She led a task group of girls to design and develop progressive programming, based on girl-led processes and Journey content, which culminated in take-action projects. The three-year project brought in 300 new Girl Scouts, a 5 percent overall increase in camp registrations the following year, 90 new volunteers, and new partnerships with 11 local organizations.

## Adult Award: Thanks Badge II - One Endorsement Letter

### Description

The Thanks Badge II honors a previous Thanks Badge award recipient who has continued to provide exemplary service in a leadership role, resulting in a measurable impact that benefits the entire Girl Scout Movement.



### Criteria

- The candidate is an active, registered adult Girl Scout.
- The candidate has received the Thanks Badge.
- The outstanding service performed by the candidate resulted in outcome(s) that benefitted the entire Girl Scout organization, and is so significantly above and beyond the call of duty that no other award would be appropriate.

### Nomination

A nomination form is completed and submitted to the council's recognition committee, along with supporting documentation indicating how the candidate meets the criteria.

### Example of Candidate

After receiving the Thanks Badge, the volunteer from the Thanks Badge example was motivated by the success of the Take-Action Tree House project and submitted to present this best practice at a GSUSA conference. She then served for the two years on a national task group to help educate and support all 111 other councils to create long-term plans that integrate all council departments to implement the camp pathway to grow membership and deliver the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) through Journey use.



# GSSEM Adult Award: Friend of Girl Scouting

## **Description**

The Friend of Girl Scouting Award honors community and business partners who support Girl Scouting within Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan's service area.

## **Criteria**

- The community/business partner actively recognizes, understands, and practices the value of inclusive behavior.
- The community/business partner has worked with Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan to provide at least 1 event related to the Girl Scout Leadership Experience within the past membership year.
- The community/business partner actively supports Girl Scouting with funds, resources, community connections, and/or in-kind donations.

## **Nomination**

A nomination form is completed and submitted to the council's recognition committee, along with supporting documentation indicating how the candidate or nominee meets the criteria. The recognition committee reviews the nomination documentation, then approves or denies it. The recognition committee sends notification of the decision to the council's board of directors for confirmation.

## **Example of Candidate**

- A local museum offers badge programs for Brownies.
- A community college works with Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan to provide space for a badge-earning event.
- An elementary school offers space for Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan's Girl Empowerment Program (GEP).