



# Gold Award Girl Scouts

**2025-2026 YEARBOOK**

girl scouts   
of suffolk county

## Honoring Young Women of Excellence

Dear Friends,

The Girl Scout Gold Award is more than the highest honor in Girl Scouting—it reflects a Girl Scout’s strength, courage, and enduring commitment to making the world a better place. Each young woman who earns this distinction transforms her compassion into action, creating meaningful change in her community while emerging as both a leader of today and a visionary for tomorrow.

This year’s class of Gold Award Girl Scouts has addressed pressing issues with creativity and a steadfast determination to make a difference. Through thoughtfully designed initiatives, they have educated and empowered the next generation—developing resources, establishing mentorship opportunities, and creating safe, inclusive spaces that promote acceptance and connection.

On behalf of everyone at Girl Scouts of Suffolk County, we extend our sincerest gratitude to our Gold Award mentors, volunteers, and families for their unwavering support. Your encouragement is evident in the confidence, character, and leadership these young women embody. We proudly celebrate their achievements and look forward to the many ways they will continue to change our world.

Yours in Girl Scouting,



Tammy Severino  
*President & CEO*



Donna Smeland  
*Chair of the Board*

## Gold Award Girl Scouts Change The World

Gold Award Girl Scouts are change-makers. They have changed the world, changed their lives, and earned the most prestigious award in Girl Scouting.

To earn the Gold Award, a Girl Scout identifies an issue in their community, drafts a plan to address a root cause, and leads a team of volunteers to implement it. When the project is complete, the Gold Award Girl Scout and their team have made a sustainable impact on the world that continues to last beyond their involvement.

It’s a huge accomplishment that also impacts the Gold Award Girl Scout as a person. How they see the world—and how the world sees them—is forever changed. It’s a credential that will be with them for the rest of their life; having the Girl Scout Gold Award on a high school transcript or resume can make a Girl Scout stand out when it comes to college admissions, scholarship applications, internships, and job interviews.



of Gold Award Girl Scouts hold leadership roles in their everyday lives—such as at school, in their careers, or through volunteer work

Every Gold Award Girl Scout spends **at least 80 hours** planning and implementing a project that has a lasting impact on the community.



Gold Award Girl Scouts in the Class of 2026



hours spent making the world a better place.



**Alena Berenblatt** has been active in Girl Scouts since 2005, serving as a Girl Scout troop leader for her daughters' troop as well as organizer, fall product manager, permit manager and coordinator for the service unit in Babylon Village. She attended the 2014 National Convention in Salt Lake City as a National Council delegate and the 2017 National Convention in Columbus, Ohio, as a girl chaperone. Alena feels honored to be a Gold Award mentor and enjoys helping girls from around Suffolk County achieve the highest award in Girl Scouting.



**Morgan Caufield's** journey with Girl Scouts began when she was a Girl Scout herself. As a volunteer, she led her troop through their entire experience, all the way to their high school graduation in 2024. After her troop's graduation, Morgan was determined to stay involved with Girl Scouts. Becoming a Gold Award mentor allowed her to continue being a positive influence within the organization. Her favorite part of the role is watching the girls' ideas evolve into impactful projects.



**Cheryl D'Agostino** was a Brownie Girl Scout, served as a Girl Scout troop leader for both of her daughters and is the proud mother of two Gold Award Girl Scouts. She has volunteered in Service Unit 39 for many years as coordinator, registrar, recruiter, and campaign manager. She attended the 2008 National Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana as a National Council delegate. She loves that being a Gold Award mentor allows her to watch girls take the journey toward becoming the best they can be.



**Colette Galvez** was a Girl Scout, has served as a Girl Scout troop leader for over 10 years and was the coordinator for Service Unit 46. She has served on her service unit team in a variety of ways including treasurer, organizer, and community service coordinator among others. Colette's passion for Girl Scouting is a wonderful asset as a Gold Award mentor and to the girls who are "Going for Gold."



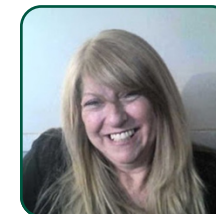
**Victoria Genovese** was a Girl Scout from second through sixth grades, and a troop leader from first grade Brownies through Ambassador Girl Scouts with her daughter's troop. Her troop of 13 Ambassadors had 10 Girl Scouts earn their Gold Award, which proved to be an amazing experience. Because of this, Victoria became a Gold Award mentor in 2015 so she could continue to encourage girls on their Gold Award journey.



**Holly Glick** has dedicated over 13 years as a Girl Scout volunteer, holding several key roles in the Hauppauge and Central Islip School Districts and was a Girl Scout from first grade through high school. Her roles, including troop leader, service unit coordinator, campaign chair, and school coordinator, demonstrate her commitment to fostering leadership skills in young girls. Holly is excited to continue supporting Girl Scouts as a Gold Award mentor, providing guidance and support to empower future generations of women as they pursue their paths to success.



**Joan Godbold** has been a member of Girl Scouts since 1985, reaching Cadette, leading her daughter's troop and volunteering as the older girl consultant in the Port Jefferson area. Joan attended the National Convention as a National Council delegate in 2005 and 2008, and as a girl chaperone in 2011. Joan became a Gold Award mentor to stay involved with older girls and to encourage them to continue in Girl Scouts.



**Marilyn Hall** was a Girl Scout and has been an active adult volunteer as service unit coordinator twice, organizer of the Town of Huntington Silver Award Ceremony before GSSC held their own, and served on the Service Unit 13 as older girl consultant, organizer, and advisor, as well as creating and running many events. She recently received her 35 Years of Volunteer Service pin. She now has a granddaughter in Girl Scouts and attends those meetings with her. Marilyn is honored to serve as a Gold Award mentor, helping girls to reach the highest award in Girl Scouting so they can proudly carry that achievement with them for the rest of their lives.



**Karin Kouril** was a troop leader for both of her daughters' troops in Northport-East Northport, and currently serves as a service unit team member. She was excited to be able to guide her daughters and many others through the completion of their Gold Award. Karin is proud to be a Gold Award mentor and to encourage girls to grow and make a positive difference in their community.



**Nicolle Krongel** is a seasoned volunteer who led her now college-aged daughter's troop and now leads both a Daisy and Ambassador troop in Service Unit 37 in Longwood. She is a Girl Scout alumna, having participated from elementary school to college. She lives in Middle Island with her husband and her son, an Eagle Scout, and her daughter, a Gold Award Girl Scout and current troop leader. She works for a law firm and is also a part-time trainer, campsite director, and archery instructor for the council.

## Gold Award Mentors



**Laverne Marri Perez** was cookie manager and troop leader/advisor in West Babylon for several years. Once the 11 girls in her troop graduated, she chose to become a Gold Award mentor to inspire girls by guiding them to develop leadership skills and a lifetime of confidence. Girl Scouting is important to Laverne because she feels it is essential that girls know themselves by exploring the world.



**Doryce Polanish** was a Brownie Girl Scout and troop leader for her daughter's troop for 13 years in the Commack area until her daughter earned her Gold Award. Her favorite thing about being a Gold Award mentor is seeing the pride and excitement each girl feels upon completing her project.



**Liz Roder** was a Girl Scout and has been an active volunteer in Service Unit 2 since 2005, serving 13 years as a troop leader for her daughter's troop, and is a proud Mom of a Gold Award Girl Scout. She has held service unit team positions as an events planner, organizer, campaign manager, and recruiter, and she is currently the coordinator and treasurer. Liz is extremely honored to become a Gold Award mentor and to support and help Girl Scouts "Going for Gold".



**Rose Vermillion** was in Girl Scouts from first grade to twelfth grade. She has been a troop leader since 2006 with her oldest daughter, and continues to be a leader for her younger daughters. She was service unit coordinator for 3 years, and now holds the events coordinator position on the team. She also currently works at council as a Membership Recruitment Specialist. Rose loves having the opportunity to guide Gold Award Girl Scouts towards their goal, and help motivate them to do the best they can to improve their community.

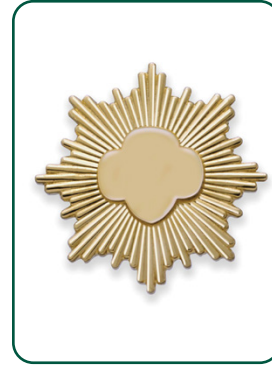




**Katelyn Adams**

**The Lanternfly Trap Initiative**

“I created and taught others how to build low-cost, effective spotted lanternfly traps to help reduce the spread of lanternflies and raise awareness in my community about their environmental impact.”



**Taylor Busch**

**The Flying Friends Sanctuary**

“I built bat boxes to provide safe living spaces for bats and their pups, supporting healthy bat populations that naturally reduce insects and benefit the environment.”



**AnnaBelle Deaner**

**Gluten Free On A Dime**

“I created a gluten-free recipe book using pantry friendly ingredients and made it available both online and at food pantries, like Island Harvest Food Bank, to support families facing dietary restrictions and food insecurity.”



**Kaylee DiBiase**

**Building Self Esteem and Spreading Kindness**

“I created a pamphlet for students at my alternative high school to educate teens with anxiety on coping strategies, building friendships, and self-compassion. I also built two Kindness and Friendship Benches and a Positive Rock Garden for students.”



**Brielle Balz**

**Pediatric Surgical Caps and Blankets**

“I created and sewed 160 caps and 11 handmade blankets for the children at Stony Brook Children’s Hospital undergoing serious medical procedures.”



**Indigo Dalton**

**Enchanting MURAL**

“I painted a large, colorful ocean and coral reef mural at a brain trauma center to create a calming and uplifting healing environment for patients. I also wrote and distributed educational pamphlets about brain injuries to raise awareness.”



**Alexandra DeDonato**

**Empowering Women From The Inside Out**

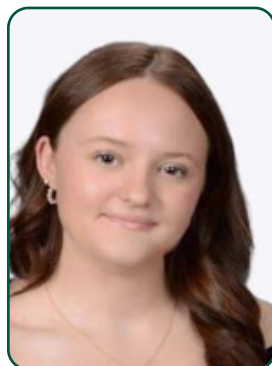
“I created a career corner & closet with accessories, attire, and a makeup counter, at Smithtown High School West, giving students and women free access to get ready for interviews, mock trials and other professional events.”



**Brianna Farrell**

**The C.R.A.M.P Project**  
*(Cloth, Reusable, Absorbent, Menstrual, Pads)*

“I created 85 reusable menstrual kits, which include underwear, sewing supplies, fleece, and step-by-step instructions in English and Spanish and donated them to underprivileged women in the Dominican Republic.”



**Ashley Bittner**

**GOLDen Threads of Connection**

“I led a community-focused storm preparedness initiative, hosting workshops, creating educational resources, and building Adirondack chairs for the Smithtown Library to promote resilience after severe flooding.”



**Paige Damiano**

**Tidy Tides**

“I reduced littering at Tides Beach, by building and painting easy-access clean-up station with baskets and an informative sign with a website to educate visitors on how littering affects the environment.”



**Yana Dhingra**

**Traditional Indian Clothing Drive for Rural Communities**

“I collected, packed, and shipped traditional Indian clothing to communities in India while promoting sustainability, cultural connection, and clothing reuse through partnerships with YICG and ReWild Long Island.”



**Sophia Finamore**

**The Unplugged Literacy Project**

“I created 10 literacy bags designed to excite and encourage children to read, write, and learn away from digital devices. I also held a book drive collecting over 1,000 books to give to children in underserved areas.”



**Ashleigh Fredriksen**

**Go Animal Go**

“I repaired, cleaned, painted, and relocated animal stalls at the Ivy League School & Day Camp to improve comfort and shelter for the animals. I also taught campers and staff about animal education and safety.”



**Camdyn Glover**

**Advocating For All**

“I created a program with a digital presentation, patch program, workshop, workbooks and a website to raise awareness about inclusivity and teach others how to advocate for individuals with special needs.”



**April Haarke**

**Operation Ornaments**

“I handmade over 250 ornaments for individuals affected by natural disasters, helping replace lost belongings and bring comfort during the holiday season.”



**Elliot Jaklitsch**

**Free NYSSMA Repertoire Library**

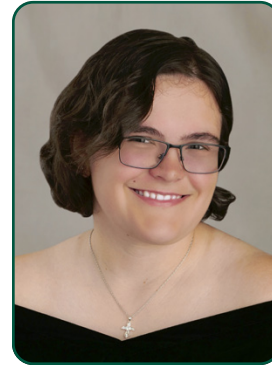
“I established a NYSSMA music library for the Comsewogue School District to allow students to practice and explore varying solo pieces before purchasing and spending months preparing for their performances.”



**Emily Gaide**

**Sensory Garden**

“I created a hands-on sensory garden for children with special needs to learn the five senses and have fun through mushroom-themed tables and a caterpillar made from wooden crates.”



**Katelynn Glover**

**Native Pollinator Garden and Education Board**

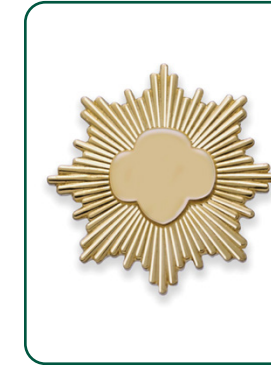
“I addressed the lack of safe pollinator habitats by creating a sanctuary garden using native plants to Long Island and educational boards to teach the community and Girl Scouts how to protect pollinators, like butterflies.”



**Adalia Haas**

**Capybara Hut and Information Board**

“I built a shelter for two rescued capybaras, Dillie and Lillie, at the Long Island Game Farm and created an educational information board about capybaras to educate the community about these animals while they visit their enclosure.”



**Felicity Justich**

**Educational Activity Book**

“I created an educational activity book focused on teaching basic life skills with coloring pages to improve fine motor development in children. These pages covered topics like nutrition, fire and bike safety, hygiene, and more.”



**Lauren Gilbert**

**Tiny But Mighty**

“I created NICU support packages for Mount Sinai South Nassau Hospital with milestone cards that help parents celebrate and preserve meaningful moments during their baby’s care, providing comfort and support during an often challenging journey.”



**Hermione Granger**

**Operation Nourish Our Veterans**

“I created a fully stocked pantry at VFW Post 4927, replenished monthly by Island Harvest, to provide veterans with essential food and personal care items. This boosted membership and brought more veterans together for other post activities.”



**Paige Hubner**

**ADA Compliant Picnic Table**

“I built an ADA-accessible picnic table at the Elwood Park in Huntington to promote inclusion, safety, and equal rights access for disabled individuals.”



**Michaela Kalemera**

**How to Talk to Me**

“I wrote a book that educates readers how to engage respectfully and hold meaningful conversations with individuals who stutter, filled with insights, practical tips, and personal anecdotes, emphasizing patience, empathy, and understanding.”



**Audrey Kirchner**

**Sustainable Recycled Bags**

“I raised awareness about the effects of fast fashion by creating tote bags from recycled jeans and fabrics, giving them a new life. I donated them to my local parish and created educational materials about reducing waste and how to create your own bag.”



**Alexa Lipp**

**Linen Line Up**

“I provided, organized, and improved storage at the Mather Hospital’s Thrift Shop Linen Room, while also promoting buying secondhand items to reduce waste.”



**Fiona Mauro**

**Teen Talks Civics**

“I taught teenagers about the government through a fun and engaging educational video series that can be viewed from school or at home.”



**Kathryn Nielsen**

**Greenway Scavenger Hunt Project**

“I created an interactive scavenger hunt trail in my hometown to encourage children to spend more time outdoors, walking the trail, and appreciating everything nature has to offer.”



**Danielle Krause**

**Dog Agility Park**

“I built a platform structure and ramps for the large dogs at the Smithtown Animal Shelter for exercise and to play on, giving these animals a better quality of life until they find their forever home.”



**Isabella Lundquist**

**Sensory Path**

“I built a sensory path at my childhood elementary school. As students jump, trace or balance their way through the path’s elements, they improve focus and learning in the classroom.”



**Vanessa Molinelli**

**Let’s Be Kind**

“I wrote a children’s book that explains the importance of kindness and how words can affect others to raise awareness on bullying.”



**Chloe Nuccio**

**In My Tech Era!**

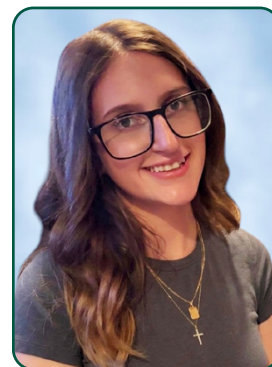
“I implemented and taught a free bi-weekly technology course at the Commack Public Library for elderly patrons about the benefits of modern technology, addressing challenges, and helping them learn devices while promoting inclusion in a tech-driven world.”



**Allison Lauletta**

**VA Women’s Clinic Improvements**

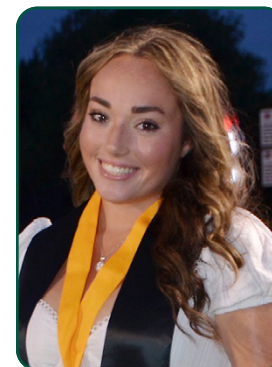
“I improved the Northport VAMC Women’s Clinic waiting area by adding charging stations, providing educational material, books and magazines for both adults and children, and donated essential female care items.”



**Lily Martino**

**Sensory Play for Early Childhood**

“I created portable sensory boards for a preschool to offer engaging and exciting hands-on sensory experiences for children to promote learning, development, and fun.”



**Jocelynn Morris**

**Mural on The Goat Barn**

“I painted a mural on the goat barn at Niegoki Farm to modernize the area, attract visitors, bring tranquility, and advocate for mental health.”



**Paige O’Shaughnessy**

**Courage Caps**

“I designed and manufactured headwear coverings for cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy. Each courage cap includes a positive message to encourage patients. I also taught other Girl Scouts how to create these caps.”



**Sophia Paduano**  
**The Best Buddies**  
**Friendship Wall: Celebrating Connections That Last**  
 “I created a Friendship Wall to promote inclusion between students with and without disabilities, increasing awareness, encouraging connections, and fostering a more inclusive community.”



**Maria Petkovits**  
**Family Water Safety**  
 “I designed and led a comprehensive water safety initiative, by creating a workbook, video, pamphlet, and workshops to equip families with practical skills, recognize risks, and stay safe.”



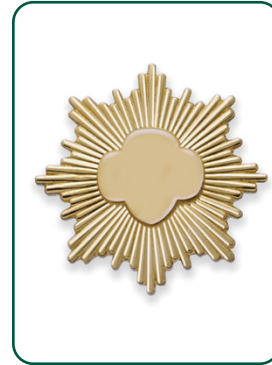
**Judy Reilly**  
**The Safety of Driving to Walt Whitman**  
 “I worked with the Walt Whitman School District to successfully implement a traffic light at the intersection near the entrance of the high school to improve safety for students and the community.”



**Emma Rothleder**  
**Elwood’s Care Closet**  
 “I built an additional pantry and expanded awareness of food resources within my school district to assist more people who face challenges with food insecurity.”



**Riley Perinchief**  
**“Pantry to Table” Cook Book**  
 “I created a physical cookbook and website with nutritious recipes using affordable, food pantry staples to help families easily prepare healthy meals. I distributed copies to local food pantries and organized donation drives to bring awareness and increase contributions.”



**Meghan Pomroy**  
**Warming Hands, Warming Hearts: Clothing for the Homeless**  
 “I taught teenagers and Girl Scouts how to make blankets and scarves while educating them on the complexities of homelessness.”



**Cara Robbert**  
**Warm and Fuzzy Fields: Sensory Garden**  
 “I designed a sensory garden that allows visitors to engage with nature through touch, smell, sight, and sound in a controlled and gentle way.”



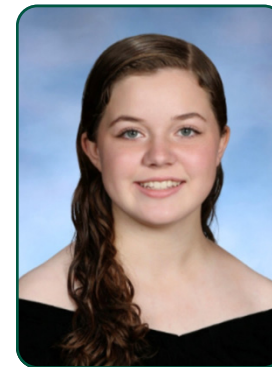
**Jaidyn Schabe**  
**Equity In Science Education**  
 “I created and taught science presentations and activities to over 60 low-income students, exposing them to STEM-related careers and expanding their knowledge of the sciences, and donating educational materials to a Title I elementary school.”



**Arianna Petkovits**  
**Dive In with Confidence: Preparing New Swimmers for Competitive Swimming**  
 “I created a new swimmer resource program, including a handbook, instructional video, and workshops, to guide beginners and families, provide clarity, and build confidence in competitive swimming.”



**Amaya Price**  
**Be Who You Are, Not Who The World Wants You To Be**  
 “Inspired by my brother’s story, I created an educational website with resources and ways to support those affected by Alopecia and hair loss. I also set up a donation box at my local church, collecting 100+ hats providing essential comfort to build confidence.”



**Lucille Romaine**  
**Crocheting with Kindness**  
 “I taught people how to crochet using yarn and crochet hooks donated by the community. I also collected handmade hats that were donated to different groups in the community, especially to those facing hardship or medical conditions.”



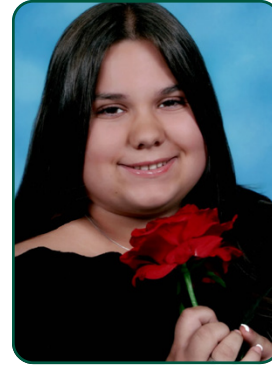
**Emily Schropfer**  
**Pool Safety for Children**  
 “I published a children’s book on water safety and donated a copy to my local elementary school to teach kids how to be safe around water and created pamphlets for lifeguards in my community that can be accessed year after year.”



**Lauren Smalley**

**Bringing Seniors Together**

“I created handicap-accessible vegetable/herb gardens and outdoor benches at the Bristol Assisted Living in Sayville. This project increases socialization through gardening and enjoyment of outdoor spaces for the assisted living community.”



**Emma Stork**

**The Book Nook**

“I created a cozy book nook at Camp Pa-Qua-Tuck, a camp for individuals with disabilities, to provide a quiet, supportive learning space to help campers discover more about themselves and explore new things.”



**Abigail Taft**

**Milkweed for Monarchs**

“I planted a 15-by-15-foot milkweed garden for monarch butterflies at Wawapek, a wildlife preserve in Cold Spring Harbor and educated the public through a website and video about the importance of monarch butterflies.”



**Olivia Zehil**

**Sports Library**

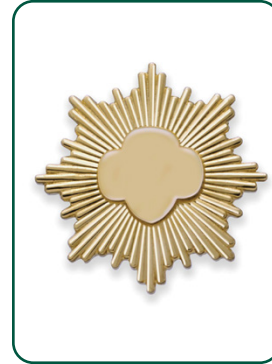
“I created a sports equipment library/shed on the school grounds to give easy access to kids to play and learn a variety of sports with their friends.”



**Gabriela Solis**

**Bathroom Boosts**

“I created a display of positive messages around my school using plexiglass to help students shift their mindset during difficult moments and inspire them. I also provided a presentation for teachers about mental health in younger kids.”



**Jordan Strader**

**Books for Brighter Futures**

“I addressed inequitable access to study materials by collecting, refurbishing, and donating books and materials to schools and libraries for free.”



**Amanda Thurston**

**Bullying: A Student’s Perspective**

“I created an educational video from four students’ perspectives on bullying in differing ranges to gain insight and understanding behind why bullying may occur, where bullying is most common, and what they believe is vital in preventing bullying.”



**Emma Zinkowski**  
**When Seconds Count: A Teen’s Guide To Health Emergencies**

“I created a teen-friendly emergency brochure that turned five life-threatening health crises into action steps, empowering 600+ teens and parents with confidence and practical skills to respond before 911 arrives.”



**Ava Steinhauff**

**Winter Wellness Walk**

”I created “Winter Wellness Walk”, a guided outdoor experience to promote physical health, mental well-being, and an appreciation for nature during the colder months, before the stress of the holiday season.”



**Samaya Syali**

**Care for Caregivers**

“I created “Care for Caregivers”, supporting individuals caring for loved ones with chronic illnesses through care packages, resources and events, raising awareness about caregiver burnout.”



**Kaede Urso**

**Elevate Dance Project**

“I developed and taught a free ballet program for children in underserved communities to build confidence and encourage personal growth. By organizing donation drives, I provided all required items, including ballet shoes, tights, and leotards, allowing each child to participate in the full experience.”



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