

Girl Scouts of Northern California Silver Award Information

Take Action



In Girl Scouts you really can change the world. Start with things that matter to you right in your own community. Then think big. Girls are doing everything from providing food for shelters to fighting for women's rights around the world. Every day, every girl can make a difference!

Girl Scouts of Northern California

- Discover
- Connect
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As part of a movement of 10 million girls worldwide, you are in an exceptional position to take action in your community to make the world a better place. By earning the Girl Scout Silver Award—the highest award a Girl Scout Cadette can earn—you will be joining the ranks of generations of young women who have made a difference in their communities both locally and globally.

Materials you will need*:

- The Girl Scout Silver Award Guidelines from GSUSA.
- The Girl Scouts of Northern California Silver Award Final Report.

* All can be downloaded from the Council website:
www.girlscoutsnorcal.org

Timelines and Requirements

- You must be a registered Cadette Girl Scout to work on the Girl Scout Silver Award.
- The Journey must be completed before beginning the steps toward the Girl Scouts Silver Award Project. A Journey is complete when a girl has earned the Journey awards, which include creating and carrying out a Journey Take Action project. This is in addition to your Silver Award Take Action Project.
- Projects will vary in length of time to complete from planning to sharing and celebration. The time it takes to earn the Award depends on the nature of the project, the size of the team, and the support of the community. Quality projects should be emphasized over quantity of hours. After the Journey requirements are fulfilled, the suggested minimum number of hours to use as a guide is 50 hours.
- You have until September 30 after completing the 8th grade to complete the Girl Scout Silver Award project.
- The Girl Scout Silver Award project can be a small group project (small teams of 2 to 4 members on a team) or an individual project that uses a team from the community for support.
- The Girl Scout Silver Award project must focus on communities outside of Girl Scouting.
- Projects that should be avoided: “Canned” service projects, projects where the girl is simply “doing the leg-work” for an agency or group, single events that have been previously developed and implemented by others that you cannot make your own, and anything that is Girl Scout—exclusive or Girl Scout focused do not qualify as Girl Scout Silver Award projects. These are all excellent and worthy *service* projects, but it takes something extra to be a Girl Scout Silver Award project. Girl Scout Silver Award projects address a community issue, challenge a girl’s leadership and organizational skills, and make a lasting change to life in her community.
- A sustainable project is one that lasts after your involvement ends. A focus on education and raising awareness is one way to make sure a project is carried on. Workshops and hands-on learning sessions can inspire others to keep the project going. Another way to create a sustainable project is through collaborations with community groups, civic associations, non-profit agencies, local government, and/or religious organizations to ensure the project lasts beyond your involvement.
- Projects must include a Leadership element. Leaders have responsibilities and share them with others. As a leader, you must be willing to delegate responsibilities to others and oversee the entire project at the same time. You must seek out and recognize the value and strengths of others, respect different points of view and ways of working, and build a team to work on and support your Girl Scout Silver Award Project.

Leaders and Advisors

- **TROOP/GROUP LEADER.** A troop/group leader is the adult who works with an ongoing troop or group.

⇒ Your troop/group leader's primary responsibilities with respect to your Silver Award include:

- ✓ Partnering with you to support you in completing your prerequisites to the Silver Award project proposal. Approving your Silver Award plan. Verifying the completion of your Girl Scout Silver Award project.
- ✓ Partnering with you to help define the issues in the community in which you are interested. Helping you identify a person in the community who can be a great project advisor for your project.

- **SILVER AWARD ADVISOR.** A Girl Scout Silver Award project advisor can be your Troop/Group Leader or a volunteer who guides you as you take your project from the planning stage through implementation. A Girl Scout Silver Award project advisor is chosen by you to help plan and implement your project.

⇒ Your Silver Award project advisor's primary responsibilities include:

- ✓ Partnering with you to support you in completing your Silver Award project
- ✓ Understanding the steps to the Girl Scout Silver Award and the standards of excellence required for each step

You are encouraged to connect with your community when earning the Girl Scout Silver Award. That means working with a project advisor who is not your parent.

Money and Your Award Project

So, you are planning to do a Girl Scout Award Project and you need some money to make it happen. There is hope. There are things you can do!

- Break open your piggy bank. You can use your own money to fund your project.
- You can earn money to fund your project.
- Sell stuff. You can have a garage sale, a used book sale, a hand made crafts sale, a plant sale, a bake sale...are you starting to get the idea?
- You can directly ask your parents or grandparents to help out. You can ask your family for cash, but not anyone else. Not your friends, not your neighbors, not your teachers at school.
- Service work. Babysitting, car washes, lawn mowing, weeding, etc. You should not take over someone else's job for less money, but if it's available and up for grabs, you can use it for money-earning.
- Ask your troop to use troop funds. As long as the whole troop agrees, you can use troop funds for your project.
- Apply for a grant donation from a community organization or business. You must first contact Nikki Van Ausdall, CO Communications and Fund Development at nvanausdall@girlscoutsnorcal.org. You must ask and receive Council permission before applying for any grant.

Things nobody wants to see you doing:

- Asking businesses or friends and neighbors for money by yourself. Solicitation of money from organizations is only done by adults. You must work with an adult to do this.
- Selling retail items or selling via the internet to earn money.
- Using your project as a fundraiser for any organization, including Girl Scouts. Silver Award Projects are not fundraisers.
- Holding raffles, bingos, poker night, or other games of chance to raise money. Yes, that is gambling and we do not support gambling as Girl Scouts.

Getting Donations of Stuff

- ☒ Research the stores and companies you would like to ask for donations of items. List the name of the business, the exact address, and the name of the manager or owner that you would need to contact.
- ☒ Write a letter explaining who you are and that you are doing a Silver Award project. Describe what the Silver Award is, including what you are planning to do for the project and finally—how they can help. Spelling, grammar, or punctuation mistakes are not acceptable. The Council must approve your letter before you mail the letter. This donation request letter is a reflection of your writing skills as well as a tool to sell your particular project. Do not use contractions. Be sure to sign your letter and have your advisor sign it as well. For help in writing the letter see the letter outline included in this packet. Any questions, please contact Marla Howard, Program Department at Girl Scouts of Northern California (408) 287-4170 ext.251 or mhoward@girlscoutsnorcal.org.
- ☒ You can get your letter on letterhead by contacting the Council staff member for the office you are working through. They will review your letter and put it on letterhead for you.
- ☒ Print out the letter on official Girl Scout letterhead and take it to the store or company. Ask to speak to the manager or owner to explain what you are doing and what you need in person. When you go to the business, make sure you take an adult with you; they are required as your partner to ask for donation of items. If you are asking a company that you cannot visit because it is not local, it is okay to mail the letter.
- ☒ If you get the donation of items, you **must** fill out another form called the gifts-in-kind or in-kind donation form. This form can be accessed on our web site at www.girlscoutsnorcal.org or through your Community Development Director (CDD) or the fund development department. You can find out who your CDD is by asking your Troop Leader or by calling your local council office. Fill out the form saying who made the donation and what its value is and submit it to the council office. The council will then note the donation and send an official thank-you letter to the store or company and make sure they get important tax deduction information for their business.

Sample Letter Outline

TODAY'S DATE:

CONTACT NAME (if you don't have one, get one. This is very important)

TITLE

COMPANY'S NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

Dear Mr./Ms. (name)

FIRST PARAGRAPH: This is the paragraph which you would inform the potential donor who you are and what troop you are from. This is a short paragraph—usually 2-3 sentences.

Points to cover (pretty much in this order)

1. Who you are.
2. Why you are doing a project.
3. What a Silver Award is.

SECOND PARAGRAPH: This is what your particular project is and how what you are proposing will benefit the community. If your project impacts another organization, give a brief description of that organization and how serving that organization will impact the community. A good strategy is to pick 2-3 points you want to make about the organization (if you are collaborating with an organization) and how your project will benefit that organization and the community. The length of this paragraph will vary depending on the information you want the donor to have. Remember, this is your project so **SELL IT!**

1. First sentence should be the project name and what you hope to achieve by doing this project.
2. Next two sentences should give more detail about the project, and again the impact it will have on the community.
3. When including location, if you are holding a workshop, for example, include the name of the facility but do not include an exact address. Do include the date with the day and time the event will take place.

FINAL PARAGRAPH: If you are asking for one or just a few items, describe them in this paragraph explaining how they can help your project and the community. If you are asking for a list of specific items it is best to attach a sheet with your wish list. In this paragraph you thank your donor for how they have supported the community in the past and for the supporting Girl Scouts of Northern California.

Sincerely,

Your Signature

Your Name

Your Title (Cadette Girl Scout)

Your Advisor's Signature

Your Advisor's Name

Your Advisor's Title (Silver Award Project Advisor)

Girl Scouts of Northern California Offices

Send your Girl Scout Silver Award final report and inquiries on status of paperwork to:

- Girl Scouts of Northern California Santa Rosa Council Staff:

Becky Gentry
4852 Old Redwood Hwy
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
Phone: (707) 524-9211
Fax: (707) 544-5477
Email: bgentry@girlscoutsnorcal.org

If you have questions that cannot be answered in this packet, the GSUSA Guidelines, or the website www.girlscoutsnorcal.org, please contact:

- Girl Scouts of Northern California San Jose Council Staff:

Marla Howard
Phone: (408) 287-4170 ext. 251
Email: mhoward@girlscoutsnorcal.org

- Girl Scouts of Northern California Chico Council Staff:

Helen Molnar
Phone: (530) 343-1904 ext. 102
Email: hmolnar@girlscoutsnorcal.org

- Girl Scouts of Northern California Santa Rosa Staff:

Barb Herrera
Phone: (707) 524-9203
Email: bherrera@girlscoutsnorcal.org