

GSOFACT Adult Volunteer Guide to the Girl Scout Gold Award

**This guide is intended for adults supporting girls who are earning
The Gold Award with the journeys as prerequisite(s).**

**Girl Scouts of Connecticut
Program Department
20 Washington Ave. North Haven, CT 06473
(800) 922-2770
www.gsofct.org**



The Girl Scout Gold Award Adult Volunteer Guide

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest award Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors can earn. Your role, whether you're a troop/group Advisor or a technical/Community Consultant, is to encourage Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors to think critically, be open to multiple perspectives, investigate thoroughly, work cooperatively, and identify resources within and beyond their local communities. You are supporting girls as they develop into leaders for today and tomorrow.

This guide is intended to be used with the GSOFCCT Guidelines for Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors and the Girl Scout Gold Award Toolkit. Both are posted on the Girl Scouts of Connecticut web site at www.gsofct.org. Girls must use the GSOFCCT forms relating to the Gold Award, which are included in their guidelines and toolkit booklet.

The Girl Scout Gold Award is designed to be completed by an individual girl. To earn the award, each girl must complete two Senior or Ambassador journeys or complete one Senior or Ambassador journey and have earned a Girl Scout Silver Award. After completing either of these requirements, a minimum of 80 hours is suggested to complete the steps to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award.



2010 Gold Award Reception

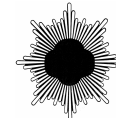
Important GSOFACT Definitions

- **Troop Advisor** – the adult who is responsible for the specific troop/group
- **Gold Award Mentor** – the adult member of the Gold Award Committee who has been assigned to work with a specific girl on her Gold Award Project.
- **Gold Award Technical/Community Consultant** – an adult (not necessarily connected with the Girl Scouts) who has agreed to advise a girl with specific technical aspects of her project. This could be a member of an agency who is supporting the girl's project, a professional with specific expertise relevant to the project. This person may not be a parent or close family member.
- **Local Pinning Ceremony** – This ceremony is planned with the girl's input at a local level. It may be planned by the troop/group, family or service unit. At this ceremony, girls receive their Gold Award Pin (contact your Gold Award Mentor to arrange for pin). This ceremony may be held anytime after the girl has successfully completed her project and final interview.
- **Council Gold Award Reception** – This ceremony and reception honors all GSOFACT girls who have earned the Gold Award during the year. At the Reception, girls receive their Gold Award Certificates and congratulatory letters. The reception is held in the afternoon of the first Sunday in June.

Important GSOFACT Dates/Points to Remember

- **July 1st prior to 9th grade** – Earliest date when prerequisite journey work may begin towards the Gold Award.
- **July 15th after graduating High School** – last date for submitting Gold Award Proposal paperwork.
- **April 1st** – Annual deadline for submission of Final Reports for inclusion in current year's Council Gold Award Reception, Gold Award photo Brochure, celebratory certificates solicited by council from national organizations. (if Final Report is turned in at this deadline, in order for you to be recognized at the June reception of the current year, you must make yourself available for your interview before the 15th of April)
- **April 1st** – Connecticut Gold Award Scholarship deadline: Bea Okwu Gold Award Scholarship, Emily Chaisson Scholarship, and Connecticut Elks Scholarship. Applications are online at www.gsofact.org.
- **September 30 after graduating High School** – last date for submitting final report. (Young women who are developmentally delayed may have until the completion of their 21st year to finish their Gold Award.)
- **January 1st** – Interview deadline for all girls at college who have completed the Gold Award project and submitted their final report by September 30th following High School graduation.
- **Rolling** – Attendance at the Gold Award Proposal Workshop required within one year prior to submitting Gold Award Project Proposal paperwork.
- **Rolling** – Gold Award Project Proposals may be submitted at any time of the year.
- **Note**– Girl Scouts is an inclusive environment for all girls. We encourage Girl Scouts of varying abilities to pursue the Gold Award. If you require special assistance or an aide in order to fully participate, please let your Gold Award Mentor know so she can support you in the best way possible.

GSOFACT Gold Award Process at a Glance



Celebrate! Local Pinning Ceremony: to be planned & held locally. Attend Council sponsored Reception, 1st Sunday of June

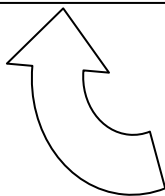
Submit Final Report to GSOFACT Program Department, and attend interview with GSOFACT Volunteer Gold Award Committee Members.

Work on your Take Action Project. Maintain monthly contact with your GSOFACT Gold Award Committee Mentor. Build a team of helpers to complete the project. Remember to share – tell others what you are doing!

Submit your Project Proposal paperwork to the GSOFACT Program Department. After the Volunteer Gold Award Committee has reviewed your proposal, a committee member will contact you to arrange an initial meeting. At this time you'll discuss any suggested changes to the project and sign an agreement. The agreement outlines project expectations. All project work must begin *after* you have received approval from your Gold Award Committee Mentor. Remember that a take action project: Addresses a root cause of an issue, is sustainable, is measurable, has a global link, and although Gold Award Take Action Projects are individual projects, you must involve others.

After completing the journey prerequisite(s), attend a required GSOFACT Project Proposal Workshop. Plan ahead! Ideally you'll attend a workshop between steps 4 and 5, but you must attend prior to submitting a proposal. As workshops may fill to capacity, register as early as possible. See listings of workshops at www.gsofact.org program & training registration area. You may attend a workshop on your own or with others. During the workshop, project ideas will be discussed in small groups with Gold Award Committee Members and other girls. Attending adults participate in a parallel workshop.

Complete either two (2) Senior and/or Ambassador Journeys or one (1) Journey if you completed a Girl Scout Silver Award Project. "Completing" a journey means earning all awards linked to a specific journey. Journeys used as Gold Award prerequisites must be started *after* July 1st preceding 9th grade. Adults supporting girls while they prepare for the Gold Award may attend a *Journey to Gold* Workshop.



Start here!

"I also learned a lot about myself from the project. I learned that with hard work and dedication, I can accomplish things that I never thought I could before." Mary, 2010

Tips for the Troop/Group Advisor

At this level, Girl Scouts are on their honor to uphold the Standards of Excellence. These standards respect the skills and talents that Girl Scouts bring to making a difference in world and provide a challenge that inspires girls to learn what they can accomplish by doing their very best.

Steps	Standards of Excellence	Coaching Tips
<p>1. Choose an issue: Use your values and skills to identify a community issue you care about.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Live the Girl Scout Promise and Law. ▪ Demonstrate civic responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide a listening ear. ▪ Give constructive feedback.
<p>2. Investigate: Research everything you can about the issue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use a variety of sources: interview people, read books and articles, find professional organizations online. Remember to evaluate each source's reliability and accuracy. ▪ Demonstrate courage as you investigate your issue, knowing that what you learn may challenge your own and others' beliefs. ▪ Identify national and/or global links to your community issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Before the online investigation starts, suggest taking the Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge at www.girlscouts.org/internet_safety_pledge.asp. ▪ Recommend ways to expand the project beyond the local community. For example, talking to and involving people from organizations that offer help to people on a national and global level (such as the Red Cross and Doctors without Borders).
<p>3. Get help: Invite others to support and take action with you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seek out and recognize the value of the skills and strengths of others. ▪ Respect different points of view and ways of working. ▪ Build a team and recruit a project advisor who will bring special skills to your Take Action project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working with a team will help make a bigger impact and cover more ground. Although this is an individual project, other Girl Scouts, neighbors, classmates, and friends can help. ▪ Make sure that either you or a family member is aware of times and places and who the interview subjects are. ▪ A network is a great thing. Share pointers on how to create an effective network.
<p>4. Create a plan: Create a project plan that achieves sustainable and measurable impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lead the planning of your Take Action project. ▪ Work collaboratively to develop a plan for your project that creates lasting change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide guidance on project sustainability. Here are suggestions: education and raising awareness, holding workshops and hands-on learning sessions, collaborating with community groups to ensure the project lasts. ▪ Suggest using creative ways to support the project. If money is required to complete the project, please adhere to money-earning guidelines in the Volunteer Packet and <i>Safety-Wise</i>.
<p>5. Present your plan and get feedback: Sum up your project plan for your Girl Scout council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Submit a Project Proposal to your council that is concise, comprehensive, and clear. ▪ Describe your plan, including the Girl Scout Leadership Outcomes you want to achieve and the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Suggest using the tools and tips in the toolkit in preparing the Project Proposal. ▪ Provide constructive suggestions. Project Proposals are submitted to councils. The Council (or the council's Gold Award Committee) approves the project.

	<p>impact you plan to make on yourself and the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Articulate your issue clearly and explain why it matters to you. ▪ Accept constructive suggestions that will help refine your project. 	
<p>6. Take action: Take the lead to carry out your plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take action to address the root cause of an issue, so that your solution has measurable and sustainable impact. ▪ Actively seek partnerships to achieve greater community participation and impact for your Take Action project. ▪ Challenge yourself to try different ways to solve problems. ▪ Use resources wisely. ▪ Speak out and act on behalf of yourself and others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conducting interviews on the chosen issue is an important part of this step. Play the interviewee to help synchronize the timing and the flow of the interviews.
<p>7. Educate and inspire: Share what you have experienced with others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reflect on what you have learned when you present your Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report to your council. ▪ Summarize the effectiveness of your project and the impact it has had on you and your community. ▪ Share the project beyond your local community and inspire others to take action in their own communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be available for any questions that might arise as during sharing or reflection. ▪ Suggest using the tools and tips in the toolkit to prepare the Final Report.

- Adults should attend a GSOFACT Journey to Gold Workshop. This workshop gives an overview of the Gold Award process in GSOFACT, discusses journeys, Take Action projects, and the Gold Award standards of excellence. Adults will receive resources to bring back to their troop/group, which may be used while supporting girls on their “journey to Gold”.
- Remind girls to plan ahead. Girls must attend a Gold Award Proposal Workshop prior to submitting their project proposal. This workshop should be attended after completion of journey(s), and ideally during steps 2-4. Attending girls should expect to submit their project proposal within six months of the workshop.
- While girls are honored and receive Gold Award certificates at the council-wide Reception, a local pinning ceremony should be planned. Discuss with the girl what type of ceremony she envisions. Consider inviting members of the service unit, local officials and people who helped with the project.

Tips for the Technical/Community Consultant

A Girl Scout Gold Award Technical/Community is chosen by a Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador to help plan and implement her project. As the technical;/Community Consultant, you provide guidance, experience, and expertise to the girl as she works to complete her Take Action project.

Your primary responsibilities include:

- Partnering with a girl to support her in completing her Take Action project
- Understanding the steps to the Girl Scout Gold Award and the Standards of Excellence required for each step

Girls will start working on their project by first searching for issues that they care about, and then investigating how they can narrow the focus of the issue that they have chosen, enlisting the help of others in the community, and working collaboratively to create and implement their plan.

Before girls can start working on their project, they must attend a GSOFCT Gold Award Proposal Workshop, and submit a Project Proposal to their council for approval. Girls will seek your expertise in developing and implementing the project ideas.

Girl Scout Gold Award projects require the following:

- Makes a lasting difference in the local community, region, or beyond.
- Puts the Girl Scout Promise and Law into action.
- Includes provisions to ensure sustainability.
- Identifies national and/global links to the girl's selected issue.
- Inspires others.

If you require additional assistance at any time during the award process, contact the group/troop Advisor, the local Girl Scout council staff person who manages the awards (program@gsfct.org) or the council's Girl Scout Council Gold Award Committee. They will provide you with background information about Girl Scouts including policies, and information about any learning opportunities.

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

In Girl Scouting, Discover + Connect + Take Action = Leadership. The entire Girl Scout program, regardless of the exact topic, is designed to lead to leadership outcomes (or benefits) that stem from these three keys.

- **Discover:** Girls will understand themselves and their values and use their knowledge and skills to explore the world
- **Connect:** Girls care about, inspire, and team with others locally and globally.
- **Take Action:** Girls act to make the world a better place.

It's not only about the activities girls do, however, but the processes they use to do them that builds leadership. The Girl Scout processes promote the fun and friendship that have always been so integral to Girl Scouting.

- **Girl-led:** Girls play an active part in figuring out the what, where, when, how, and why of their activities.
- **Learning by doing:** Girls use a hands-on learning process that engages them in continuous cycles of action and reflection that result in deeper understanding of concepts and mastery of practical skills.
- **Cooperative learning:** Through cooperative learning, girls work together toward goals that can be accomplished only with the help of others, in an atmosphere of respect and collaboration.

When Discover, Connect, and Take Action activities are girl-led and involve learning by doing and cooperative learning, girls achieve the desired and expected short-term outcomes. This ultimately results in Girl Scouting achieving its mission of building “girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.”

Through the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, girls gain specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, and values in Girl Scouting. Girls reflect on the impact they have had and how the experience has helped to strengthen their leadership skills.

The following are the fifteen outcomes of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience:

Discover outcomes:

- Girls develop a strong sense of self.
- Girls develop positive values.
- Girls gain practical life skills.
- Girls seek challenges in the world.
- Girls develop critical thinking.

Connect outcomes:

- Girls develop healthy relationships.
- Girls promote cooperation and team building.
- Girls can resolve conflicts.
- Girls advanced diversity in a multicultural world.
- Girls feel connected to their community, locally and globally.

Take Action outcomes:

- Girls can identify community needs.
- Girls are resourceful problem solvers.
- Girls advocate for themselves and others, locally and globally.
- Girls educate and inspire others to act.
- Girls feel empowered to make a difference in the world.

For more about The Girl Scout Leadership Experience, go to www.girlscouts.org/gsle.

Hartford-Middletown

Gail Myers

Northeast

Linda Zimmer*

Northwest

Joan Piercey
Rita Farren

**Waterbury/
Danbury**

Hillary Micalizzi
Elizabeth Roth

Greater New Haven

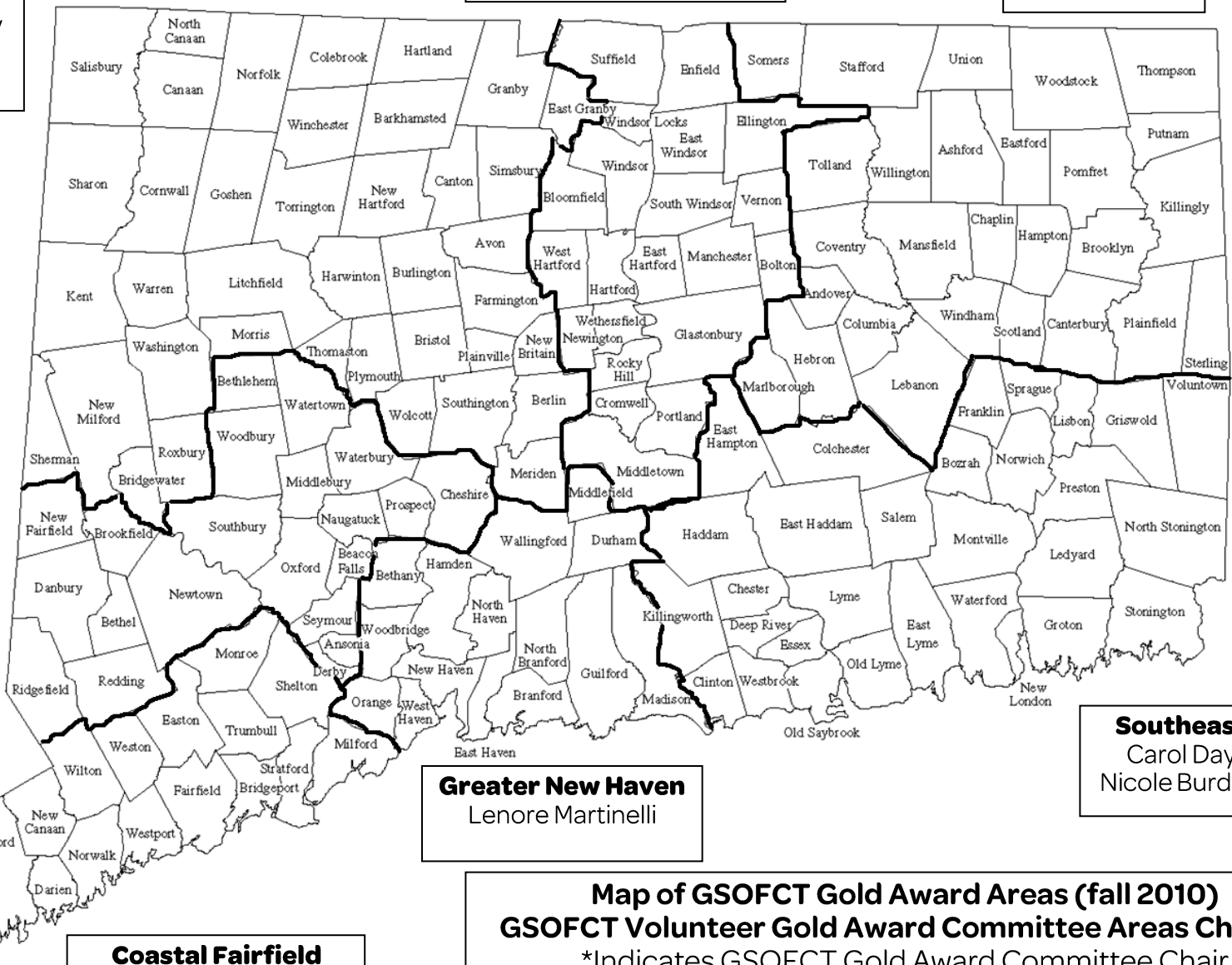
Lenore Martinelli

Southeast

Carol Day
Nicole Burdick

Coastal Fairfield

Paula Fromm



Map of GSOFTC Gold Award Areas (fall 2010)
GSOFTC Volunteer Gold Award Committee Areas Chair(s)

*Indicates GSOFTC Gold Award Committee Chair

Important Contact Information: _____