

Adult Recognitions Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What are adult volunteer awards?

A. They are formal awards designed by Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) and Girl Scouts of Connecticut (GSOFCT) to be used to recognize exemplary service that goes above and beyond what is expected in the position. They can also be informal awards/recognitions given throughout the year.

Q. When should adult awards be given?

A. A formal adult award should be given when a volunteer has completed a project or year of service where they have made significant **measurable** contributions. These awards can be given at the GSOFCT Annual meeting or at a Service Unit Recognition Event. Informal awards/recognitions can be given at any time throughout the year.

Q. Who should be nominated?

A. Girl Scouts of Connecticut values and appreciates the contributions of people within and outside of Girl Scouting. Whether that contribution is working in partnership with girls or adults, in governance or management, volunteer or employed staff member, long tenured or short-term, we appreciate anyone whose efforts are sincerely focused on making the Girl Scout experience good for girls. The adult recognition process is designed to honor those individuals, organizations and businesses whose service exceeds expectations, whose contributions are significant, who is a model of outstanding performance, and whose efforts go “above and beyond.”

Q. Who can nominate a volunteer for an award?

A. Any Girl Scout volunteer, girl members and/or their families, or staff members can submit a nomination. Anyone can nominate. Girls are especially encouraged to participate in the nomination process by nominating and/or writing a letter of endorsement.

Q. When are nominations due?

A. The deadline for all Board, GSOFCT Recognitions Committee, and Membership approved nominations is March 1st. The Helping Hand, Leading the Way, Distinguished Leader and Distinguished Volunteer awards can be given throughout the year.

Q. What do I need to do to receive my Membership Numeral and/or Volunteer Years of Service pin?

A. You will need to complete and submit the *Request for Membership Numeral Pin* or the *Request for Volunteer Years of Service Pin*. Pins are provided in 5-year increments. Requests for pins of 5, 10, and/or 15 year increments are to be submitted to your Service Unit Recognitions Coordinator or designee where pins for 20 years and above, need to be submitted to the Volunteer Services Department. All requests must be submitted by March 1.

Q. Where can I find detailed information on adult volunteer awards?

A. The *GSOFCT Adult Recognitions In Girl Scouting Handbook* provides more detailed information on formal awards and can be found at www.gsofct.org.

Q. What if I have questions about adult awards?

A. Contact your local Service Unit Recognitions Coordinator, Membership Manager or email recognitions@gsofct.org.

Q. When should I begin collecting materials for formal award nominations?

A. Formal award nominations are due into the North Haven Service Center by close of business March 1 of each year. This means that you should begin collecting materials (nomination form, endorsement forms/letters) around the beginning of the membership year (October).

**Remember: nominations are for the previous Girl Scout membership year. Forms submitted on March 1, should be based on a volunteer's work from the past year and going back up to three years.

Q. Does the amount of work/time a volunteer devotes to non-Girl Scout activities have any bearing on an award nomination?

A. No. Many Girl Scout volunteers have other commitments including work, families and other volunteer efforts. While the fact that they still devote time to Girl Scouts on top of everything else is greatly appreciated, Girl Scout awards are based on the work they do for girls and the organization as a whole. Informal recognitions are a great way to make sure these circumstances are recognized.

Q. Can I submit formal award nominations and endorsements well before the March 1 deadline?

A. It's encouraged! When nominations are submitted to the North Haven Service Center, a member of the Volunteer Services Department will review them to ensure they are eligible to be considered for the specific award. If there are any missing requirements, the nominator will be contacted to address whatever the issue may be, if possible. If the nomination isn't submitted until the deadline, there is no time for a nominator to address any issues.

Q. Can nomination forms and endorsement letters be submitted separately?

A. The completed nomination packet which includes the nomination form and all the required endorsement letters should be submitted together. This will eliminate the potential for misplaced letters that may result in your volunteer not being recognized.

Q. We worry that if we give out too many recognitions their significance will be "watered down". How do we maintain quality?

A. We should celebrate having growing numbers of people who deserve recognition. Take pride in having many to recognize. Girl Scout adult recognitions are not a competition. There should be no limit on the number of awards given.

Q. What about recognizing people more than once. Should you give the same recognition to a person more than once?

A. It is great to celebrate people whose continuing service and commitment make a difference in Girl Scouting. Rather than giving a duplicate award, consider personalizing a certificate, gift or service. This would be appropriate when someone deserves repeated recognition at the same level, for example, as a Helping Hand or Honor Pin recipient.

Q. How does a person decide which recognition to wear?

A. If an adult has received more than one special recognition (e.g., Volunteer of Excellence & Appreciation pins), the highest award received is generally the one worn on the uniform. People with numerous pins usually retire the remaining ones with honor, either placing them in a scrapbook, framing together with other mementos, or using them to recognize another worthy volunteer.

Q. If a nomination requires three or four endorsement letters, can one letter be photocopied and signed by other people?

A. No. Each individual who writes a letter of endorsement should give her/his own account of the significant contributions of the nominee. Photocopying or using "form" endorsement letters takes the sincerity out of the letter and may give the committee cause to question if the nominee's service is deserving of recognition.

Q. Can I submit a nomination for the Appreciation Pin online?

A. At this time, only the Helping Hand, Leading the Way, Distinguished Leader and Distinguished Volunteer awards can be electronically submitted using the online recognitions portal at <http://gsfct.org/volunteer/nominate.php>.