



# Girl Scout Gold Award Ceremony



**June 8, 2025**

2pm-4pm

**Hotel Marcel**

500 Sargent Drive  
New Haven, CT 06511



# 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, Girl Scouts identify issues in their communities, draft plans to address the root causes, and lead volunteers to implement them. When the projects are complete, the Gold Award Girl Scouts 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 also 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 resumé can make a Girl Scout stand out when it comes to college admissions, scholarship applications, internships, and job interviews.



# Thank You!

Thank you to all of the members of the Gold Award Committee for helping to guide these extraordinary Girl Scouts as they completed their Gold Award projects. Made up of volunteers and Gold Award Girl Scout Alumni, they know on a personal level the planning and consistent commitment that it takes to complete a Gold Award project.

With their help, Girl Scouts across the state were able to make meaningful changes in countless communities, from restoring neglected graveyards to building essential mental health resources.

We thank all the members of the Gold Award Committee for imparting their wisdom, time, and resources to help this class of Girl Scouts become tomorrow's leaders.



## **Girl Scout Mission**

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage,  
confidence, and character, who make the  
world a better place.

## **Girl Scout Promise**

On my honor, I will try:  
To serve God\* and my country,  
To help people at all times,  
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

## **Girl Scout Law**

I will do my best to be  
honest and fair,  
friendly and helpful,  
considerate and caring,  
courageous and strong,  
and responsible for what I say and do,  
and to respect myself and others,  
respect authority,  
use resources wisely,  
make the world a better place,  
and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

\*Members may substitute for the word God in  
accordance with their own spiritual beliefs.



# Gold Award Ceremony

## Welcome

**Lisa Carberg**  
*WTNH-NewsChannel 8 Anchor*

## Flag Ceremony

**Krissie Gerrish &  
New Haven Girl Scout Troop**

## Keynote Speaker

**Yasmin Blackburn**  
*GSOFCT Finance Committee  
Member*

## Presentation of Gold Award Certificates

**Adrienne Parkmond, Esq.**  
*GSOFCT Board Chair*  
**Carol Quinn Toomey**  
*GSOFCT 1st Vice Chair*

## Guest Speaker

**Kristen Thebeau**  
*Lifetime Member*  
*2026 National Council Session*  
*Alternate Delegate*

## Presentation of Gold Award Scholarships

**Adrienne Parkmond, Esq.**  
*GSOFCT Board Chair*  
**Carol Quinn Toomey**  
*GSOFCT 1st Vice Chair*

## Call to Action

**Lisa Carberg**  
*WTNH-NewsChannel 8 Anchor*

## Send off

**Adrienne Parkmond, Esq.**  
*GSOFCT Board Chair*

# Gold Award Girl Scouts



## Elizabeth Atkins

### *Stories Beneath the Stones*

Elizabeth Atkins restored an overgrown and neglected cemetery in Harwinton so residents could better understand the lives of those who have passed. In collaboration with the Harwinton Historical Society, Elizabeth conducted a cemetery walkthrough called “Stories Beneath the Stones” in which residents could learn more about the buried townspeople’s history. Through implementation of self-guided tours and annual walkthroughs (constructed via scripts by Elizabeth), the Harwinton Historical Society will carry on Elizabeth’s work.



## Harshini Balaji

### *Raising Awareness to Intellectual Disabilities*

Harshini Balaji worked to raise the awareness of intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) through a series of interactive presentations at local elementary schools and for Girl Scout troops. Through the presentations, Harshini challenged stereotypes surrounding IDD and engaged students in open discussions around the topic. Harshini also created a website that houses resources and information about the topic. The Best Buddies group has agreed to integrate the presentations into future initiatives.



## **Gabriella Bourdon**

### *Meriden Public Library Courtyard Project*

Gabriella Bourdon created an ADA compliant courtyard at the Meriden Public Library to address the lack of community spaces for individuals with disabilities and special needs. Equipped with plants, mosaics, and seating friendly to people with a variety of disabilities, the space serves as a calming area that members from the community can enjoy, regardless of their disabilities. The city of Meriden will maintain the courtyard past Gabriella's involvement and library staff will continue to hold programming in the space.



## **Danielle Britton**

### *Pollinator Garden at the Grange*

Danielle Britton created a pollinator garden at the Wallingford Grange to help combat the lack of native plants for pollinators (bees, hummingbirds, moths, butterflies, and other insects) local to the area. Danielle hosted a “Grange Fair” that helped to educate community members on the importance of what kind of plants are growing on their property and how to care for the ones that will benefit pollinators exclusive to the area. The Wallingford Grange has agreed to maintain the garden in the years ahead.



## Leah Corso-Greene

### *Mindfulness Garden*

Leah Corso-Greene made a “Mindfulness Garden” to address mental health struggles in middle school students, acting as a space for them to unplug and remove themselves from social media. The garden is equipped with a toolbox that lists breathing exercises, guided meditations, and more opportunities for alleviating mental health struggles. Teachers will encourage the students to use the space moving forward and Mrs. Rich, Leah’s Gold Award Advisor and Health Teacher at the school, will maintain the garden moving forward.



## Emilia Costa

### *STEM Kits and Program for Local Kids*

Emilia Costa administered free “STEM Kits” at the Pomfret Public Library for local Girl Scouts and community members to use, increasing engagement and involvement within STEM initiatives. She also hosted STEM programs specific to children and their interests. The kits were focused on fun and easily accessible science experiments, fostering an interest in STEM from a young age. The library is committed to restoring the “STEM Kits” after they are used and ensures that this opportunity will be available to community members in the future.





## **Emma Costa**

### ***WMS Back to Band Mentorship Program and Camp***

Emma Costa helped to revitalize and improve the music programs within her local middle school by creating a “Big Buddy System” in which foundational music lessons, instrument specific lessons, and team building experiences were provided to 6th-8th graders. The Tri M Music Honor Society will continue Emma’s work and help students to create a direct pathway to musical involvement at a high school level.



## **Julia Farrand**

### ***Sensory Boards***

Julia Farrand created and delivered over 20 sensory boards to two local school systems to support special needs students with sensory processing challenges. She accomplished this by researching the needs of children with autism and sensory processing disorders, gathering donated materials, collaborating with educators and specialists, and working with a team of volunteers to build and deliver the boards. The schools, Berlin Public Schools and the ACES organization, received extra supplies and guidance on maintenance, ensuring the boards can be repaired, reused, or redesigned to continue helping students regulate stress, improve focus, and build social and motor skills for years to come.



## **Dellaney Flower**

### ***Hidden Valley Orienteering System***

Dellaney Flower established a permanent orienteering course at Hidden Valley Nature Preserve to promote outdoor activity and teach navigation skills. She collaborated with local partners to map trails, install markers, and create accessible materials like maps, QR codes, and an instructional video. The course will continue through permanent signage and ongoing support from the library and local Girl Scout troops.



## **Lyndsey Hale**

### ***Inspiring Communities using Hands-Only CPR***

Lyndsey Hale educated diverse communities across Connecticut on Hands-Only CPR to increase bystander intervention in emergencies. Through interactive demonstrations, events, and a custom website with QR code access, she empowered over 500 people with lifesaving knowledge. Her project is sustained by permanent educational posters, keychains, and continued community outreach by her team, mentor, and local healthcare partners.



## **Sara Hearne**

### ***Gratitude Workbook, Yearbook & Library***

Sara Hearne made a series of “Gratitude Through Art” workbooks for students from preschool through high school to promote mindfulness, positivity, and happiness through gratitude-based activities and art. She partnered with local educators and youth programs to distribute the materials and launched a companion “Gratitude Yearbook” and “Gratitude Library” model to encourage long-term engagement. Through QR codes, a Facebook page with resources and instructional videos, and adoption by schools, Girl Scout troops, and community programs, Sara’s work will endure.



## **Vibhuti Jani**

### ***First Aid/CPR Education for Kids***

Vibhuti Jani led CPR and First Aid workshops at no cost for children and teens to address the lack of accessible emergency training for youth. Through developing age-appropriate lesson plans, organizing community classes, certifying over 20 teens through the American Heart Association, and teaching Hands-Only CPR to more than 50 students, Vibhuti was able to increase the accessibility of emergency training for youth. Her local EMS department is committed to offering free First Aid/CPR classes in the future.



## **Mackenzie Janski**

### ***The Hope Hangout***

Mackenzie Janski created “The Hope Hangout,” a website and mindfulness kit initiative designed to support teen mental health by providing accessible resources, coping strategies, and local/national support information. She built the site with curated content, embedded articles, and QR codes, and distributed 100 mindfulness kits at schools, libraries, and businesses. The Granby Youth Action Council will maintain the website and continue sharing the kits using donated supplies and a provided sourcing guide.



## **Isabella Johnson**

### ***Husky Training Camp***

Isabella Johnson launched “Husky Training Camp,” a half-day orientation program for rising fifth graders to ease their transition into middle school, helping them build confidence, navigate their schedules, and connect with peers and teachers. She designed the camp in collaboration with school staff and student leaders, creating rotating workshops on topics like organization, team building, and more. Clinton Public Schools will continue the orientations, with a designated student successor, training guides, and a Google Drive of resources ensuring long-term implementation and improvement.



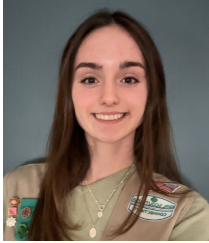
## **Kayleigh Kirchoff** *Slingshot Range and Safety*

Kayleigh Kirchoff built a slingshot range at Camp Jewell YMCA to promote outdoor activity, improve hand-eye coordination, and offer a fun, accessible alternative to traditional ranged sports. She led a team of volunteers to construct and paint the range, install targets, and develop a Standard Operating Procedure for safe use. The range is now a permanent camp fixture and will be maintained by Camp Jewell staff as a recurring activity for campers and families for years to come.



## **Fiona Kirwan** *Elementary School Nature Trail*

Fiona Kirwan restored and enhanced a long-neglected nature trail behind Rock Hill Elementary School to support outdoor education and environmental awareness among 3rd–5th graders. She identified key plant species linked to the science curriculum, created educational signage and a companion PDF guide, and led volunteers in clearing and marking the trail. The project is sustained by the Wallingford Conservation Commission, which will maintain the trail and update materials as needed, while hard copies and a QR-linked digital version ensure long-term educational use by the school.



### **Jenna Knecht** *Artistic Stress Relief*

Jenna Knecht created a mental health resource called “Serenity Space for Students,” which includes a self-designed coloring book and a website offering free tools like meditation guides, podcasts, and wellness apps. She collaborated with school and community partners to distribute printed copies of the coloring book (each with a QR code linking to the site) at her high school and the Brookfield Public Library. The project is maintained through printable digital access and ongoing support from the school counseling office and library staff, ensuring that students continue to benefit from these creative coping resources.



### **Jordyn Larson** *Empower Hour*

Jordyn Larson created “Empower Hour,” a summer program designed to help middle school girls build life skills, confidence, and healthy relationships before transitioning into high school. She developed and led interactive sessions on topics like friendship, communication, and self-worth, using peer-to-peer counseling and group discussions to foster a supportive environment. The program will annually be handed off to, starting with her younger sister.



## **Virginia Lynch**

### ***Computer Science Mentorship in Newtown, CT***

Virginia Lynch made a computer science mentorship program in Newtown, CT, introducing students in grades 3–8 to coding through an after-school club and summer workshop. Using platforms like Scratch and Python, she made coding approachable and fun, with high school mentors guiding students through hands-on projects. She also created reusable lesson plans and a website to help others replicate the program. Newtown High School's Computer Science Honor Society and advisor Kelly Murphy will continue Virginia's work.



## **Holly Masi**

### ***Educating the Elderly about Scams***

Holly Masi made & taught a scam awareness presentation for elderly residents in Southbury to help them recognize, avoid, and report financial scams. She developed a slideshow, printed handouts, and collaborated with the Southbury Police Department and local senior centers to share real-life examples, warning signs, and actionable tips. Officer Armeno, a local officer, will continue the presentations thanks to printed materials and a personal video introduction, reaching new audiences after Holly's graduation.



## Rachel Mikush

### *Long Meadow Elementary School Debate Extracurricular Program*

Rachel Mikush created a debate and public speaking program for fifth graders at Long Meadow Elementary School to help students develop critical thinking, communication, and presentation skills often overlooked in early education. She made lesson plans, coordinated biweekly meetings, and collaborated with local student volunteers and teachers to lead interactive sessions. Younger high school debaters, with a training guide and resource library, will continue Rachel's work.



## Kelsie Miller

### *Career Clash: How to start your life after High School*

Kelsie Miller launched "Career Clash," a five-part workshop series and career closet at Grasso Tech to prepare students for life after high school. Her classes covered resume writing, interview skills, financial literacy, workplace behavior, and included a graduate panel to share real-world experiences. She also created a free clothing closet with professional attire to help students dress for success. The school's Interact Club and counseling department will continue offering the classes and managing the closet for future students.





## **Grace Moriarty** *Mental Health and Wellness Programming for Teens*

Grace Moriarty developed a mental health and wellness initiative at Cheshire Academy to address rising rates of teen stress, anxiety, and depression. She organized a campus-wide event with student-led workshops, created a wellness space in the school library, and collaborated with staff to establish the school's first annual Health and Wellness Community Weekend. Her project lives on through recurring wellness programming, a dedicated library relaxation corner, and a shared digital toolkit of presentations and workshop materials for future student leaders and staff to continue using.



## **Anna Mulligan** *Perrot Community Seed Library*

Anna Mulligan created the Perrot Community Seed Library to promote environmentally responsible gardening and increase access to non-GMO and native plant seeds. In collaboration with the Perrot Memorial Library and the Garden Club of Old Greenwich, she stocked and organized the library, developed educational brochures, and hosted workshops for both children and adults. The project encourages biodiversity and sustainability while remaining free and open to all community members. Annual seasonal launch will be led by the Garden Club and library staff using Anna's templates, materials, and detailed transition plan.



## **Blair Mulligan**

### ***Educating High School Students About Internet Safety and Digital Citizenship***

Blair Mulligan designed a digital citizenship and internet safety curriculum for high school students to help them navigate online spaces responsibly and securely. She developed and organized 28 lesson plans covering topics like online privacy, misinformation, hacking, and AI, and compiled them into a public website for teachers and students. After presenting the curriculum to her school administrators, it was approved for ongoing use in Advisor Base classes. The program will be integrated into the school's yearly curriculum and there's online accessibility for broader use.



## **Ava Murdock**

### ***Revived RHS Pollinator Garden***

Ava Murdock restored the neglected pollinator garden at Ridgefield High School, transforming it into a thriving educational and community space. She collaborated with local gardeners, school staff, and town officials to install native plants, create an herb garden, and improve accessibility with new paths and seating. The garden is now used by AP Environmental Science and health classes, as well as the school's summer cooking program. It will be maintained by the Environmental Club and incorporated into the school curriculum.



## **Lena O'Malley**

### ***The Art of Aging***

Lena O'Malley created “The Art of Aging,” a 12-class painting program for residents at The Greens senior living community to improve cognitive function, fine motor skills, and emotional well-being through art. Lena taught foundational painting techniques, shared the health benefits of creative expression, and made adaptations to support residents with physical or cognitive challenges. Her project is sustained by trained staff and volunteers, an instructional video she created, and ongoing art sessions that continue to engage residents in meaningful creative activities.



## **Alina Palmieri**

### ***Life Skills in School***

Alina Palmieri made a video-based life skills curriculum for high school students to address the lack of practical knowledge taught in schools. She developed educational videos on essential topics like cooking, getting a driver's license, home maintenance, investing, and digital footprints, and distributed them during 10th grade advisory periods at Shelton High School. The videos will be used annually by school staff and public access via YouTube, helping students gain confidence and real-world readiness beyond traditional classroom subjects.



## **Lily Picard**

### ***Go Gold for Silver***

Lily Picard spearheaded “Go Gold for Silver,” a community initiative to make Farmington a safer, more bike-friendly town by improving bike education, infrastructure, and public awareness. She hosted a youth bike rodeo, educated over 50 children and parents on safety practices, designed and installed a custom bike rack at the community center, and worked with local leaders to advocate for the implementation of a biking curriculum in schools. The bike rodeo will be held every year by Bike Walk Farmington CT and ongoing efforts to integrate bike safety education into the town’s curriculum will continue.



## **Grace Piccioli**

### ***Summer Camp Makeover***

Grace Piccioli revitalized her church’s low-cost summer Bible camp to provide engaging, affordable childcare for local families and build leadership opportunities for teen volunteers. She redesigned the camp curriculum, recruited confirmation students to serve as counselors, led themed activities and decorations, and ensured smooth daily operations throughout the weeklong program. Her project will continue annually, supported by a built-in volunteer pipeline from the confirmation program and growing collaboration with neighboring churches to share materials and best practices.



## **Riley Simons**

### ***The TeenWell Initiative***

Riley Simons created “The TeenWell Initiative,” a mental health education program designed to help adults recognize and respond to warning signs of mental illness in teens. She developed an original curriculum with input from healthcare professionals and teen volunteers, and led a presentation at The Grove School that included interactive worksheets, role-play scenarios, and pre/post knowledge checks. Her program will continue to make an impact as Grove School staff incorporate it into their yearly parent workshops, expanding its reach to families.



## **Dakota Smith**

### ***Food Waste and Composting***

Dakota Smith created an educational program for preschoolers to teach them about food waste and composting as a way to fight climate change. She led interactive lessons that included reading themed storybooks, playing a recycling sorting game, and helping each child build a personal worm composter to take home. To ensure long-term impact, she provided teachers with full activity kits, including books, guides, and materials, so they can easily run the program each spring or for Earth Day in the future.



## Julia Vela

### *The Distracted Driving Project*

Julia Vela developed “The Distracted Driving Project” to educate teen drivers about the dangers of distracted driving and how to prevent it. She created a video presentation, backed by research and personal storytelling, which was shown to her entire senior class and supported by a series of educational social media posts. Her project will be sustained through annual showings of the video to future graduating classes during advisory sessions at Pomperaug High School, reinforcing safer driving habits year after year.



## Sara VonEinsengrein

### *Blankets of Love*

Sara VonEinsengrein launched “Blankets of Love” to bring comfort to cancer patients by donating handmade fleece blankets to local treatment centers. She organized blanket-making events with seniors and Girl Scout troops, collected donated materials, and delivered 40 finished blankets, each with a handwritten tag, to Trinity Health Cancer Center. The project is maintained through a partnership with the East Windsor Senior Center, which will continue making and donating blankets annually as part of their regular programming.



## Brianna Wood

### *Back to School with Brianna*

Brianna Wood created “Back to School with Brianna,” a free video-based STEM education program designed to combat summer learning loss and spark excitement for science and math among elementary students. She collaborated with a team to write, film, and edit 30 educational videos and launched a website and YouTube channel to share them with families and teachers. The Bristol Public Library will continue to use her resources and the video is publicly accessible, ensuring widespread impact.



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