



## **Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council**

### **Gold Award**

### **General Guidelines**



**4102 S. Water Tower Place  
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864**

**Phone: (618)242-5079  
Toll Free: (888)317-6353  
Fax: (618)242-5191**

**Website: [www.shagbark.org](http://www.shagbark.org)**

**E-mail: [girlscouts@shagbark.org](mailto:girlscouts@shagbark.org)**

## Table Of Contents

	<u>Page #</u>
Introduction .....	3
The Girl Scout Gold Award Project* .....	3
Requirements for the Girl Scout Gold Award* .....	4
Tips for Selecting a Girl Scout Gold Award Project* .....	7
Planning Pointers* .....	9
From Good to Great: Successful Girl Scout Gold Award Projects* .....	10
Is it Leadership or Service?* .....	10
When Do I Need to Submit my Project Proposal or Final Project Report .....	11
Money and Your Project*, ** .....	13
Girl Scout Gold Award FAQs* .....	17
Ways Parents/Guardians Can Support Girls Working On the Girl Scout Gold Award* .....	22
Girl Scout Gold Award At-A-Glance .....	24
Girl, Troop/Group Advisor and Project Advisor Roles/Descriptions*	
Definitions* .....	26
Documents & Forms List .....	28

\* Documents taken from the GSUSA website, and adapted to the Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council.

\*\* Document taken from the Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council Fund Development Guidelines, approved by the Board of Directors on August 14, 2004.

## Introduction\*

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest award that a Girl Scout 14-18 years of age may earn. Someone once described the Girl Scout Gold Award as being "what you really want to be remembered for" in Girl Scouting. For many, the leadership skills, organizational skills, and sense of community and commitment that come from "going for the Gold" set the foundation for a lifetime of active citizenship.

The Gold Award project is the culmination of all the work a girl puts into "going for the Gold." It is something that a girl can be passionate about—in thought, deed, and action. The project is something that fulfills a need within a girl's community (whether local or global), creates change, and hopefully, is something that becomes ongoing. The project is more than a good service project—it encompasses organizational, leadership, and networking skills.

Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council uses four documents to help you through the process of earning the Gold Award. These documents are:

- Gold Award General Guidelines – a roadmap for the journey
- Gold Award Project Journal – where the girl records her journey
- Gold Award Project Proposal – sent to Council for approval
- Gold Award Final Project Report –sent to Council upon project completion

## The Girl Scout Gold Award Project\*

You must be registered as a Senior Girl Scout to begin work on the Gold Award. Work started prior to Senior Girl Scouting may not be applied toward this award, nor can you finish up the work after September 30th of the year after you graduate High School. A girl is officially a Senior Girl Scout after she registers and the official membership begins October 1 of that year. Our Council works with the girls and allows them to apply requirements starting June 1 of that year she registers as a Senior Girl Scout.

Plan to work on the Gold Award for two to three years. It is very difficult to complete all of the required steps for the Gold Award in one year. Don't wait until your last year as a Senior to make the decision to earn the Gold Award. Recognitions are only symbols of your work – it is the quality of the work and what you have learned while doing it that is important. Do your best work possible. Using short cuts or bending the rules is not in keeping with the meaning of the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

Keep a record of all your work using the *Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council Gold Award Journal*. Keep your notebook or file in a safe place. It is your responsibility – not your leader's or advisor's –to keep track of your documentation. (She/He may want to keep a duplicate copy for her/himself.) You may not count activities done to complete one recognition requirement again for another recognition nor can you count work done as a Cadette Girl Scout for the requirements on the Gold Award. It's important to keep your pre-requisites well documented to avoid any overlapping.

## **Requirements For The Girl Scout Gold Award\***

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest award that a Girl Scout 14-18 *years of age* may earn. The following is an overview of the seven steps in earning the Girl Scout Gold Award. Girls may record their Gold Award progress using the *Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council Gold Award Project Journal*.

Note: the following steps are outlined in detail with room for documentation in the packet titled “Gold Award Project Journal”.

### **STEP 1: ORGANIZE - BUILD A FRAMEWORK**

- Gold Award project success is greatly enhanced if you have a project in mind and use Steps 1-4 to build the skills you will need to plan and execute your project.
- Make an agreement with your troop/group advisor.
- Attend a Council Gold Award workshop and get in contact with your Area Gold Award Consultant.
- Meet with troop/group advisor or Girl Scout Gold Award project advisor and develop a timeline for steps 2-4.
- Occasionally compare your progress to your timeline making adjustments where needed.

### **STEP 2: LEAD - EARN THE GIRL SCOUT GOLD LEADERSHIP AWARD**

- Earn three Girl Scout Interest Project awards related to parts of the Girl Scout Law.
- Set goals and earn charms from the STUDIO 2B Focus book of your choice.
- Log 30 hours in a leadership role.
- Keep records and journal in the *Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council Gold Award Project Journal*.

### **STEP 3: NETWORK - EARN THE GIRL SCOUT GOLD CAREER AWARD**

Life after high school is approaching fast. Summer jobs, internships, part-time jobs, and other work experiences are shaping your ideas about what’s next for you. You may already have plans in place for college, vocational school, or a job. Earning your Gold Career Award gives you a process for planning your direction after high school. Use *Form C in the Gold Award Project Proposal packet* to log your 40 hours of career and college exploration.

Do one or a combination of the following for a total of 40 hours:

- Career-shadow one or more people.
- Get an apprenticeship or internship.
- Visit colleges or trade schools.
- Organize a career fair.
- Publish a newsletter or create a Web page about careers for your school.
- Partner with one or more Girl Scout council staff people.

**Fast Track:** If you currently have a paying job or have started your own business and have put in 40 hours on it, you can use this experience in place of the above step. Use *Form C in the Gold Award Project Proposal packet* to log this information.

#### **STEP 4: EXPLORE - EARN THE GIRL SCOUT GOLD 4Bs CHALLENGE AWARD**

When you are working on this step, you will identify a project advisor and begin seeking assistance and information outside of the Girl Scouting community. See the sections called *Girl Scout Gold Award FAQs* and *Girl Scout Gold Award At-A-Glance* for more information about advisors.

**Become:** Assessment of skill sets and achievement of two related to self-improvement.

**Belong:** Create a community profile to find out more about the community needs and assets.

**Believe:** Create a vision for change by focusing on community needs. Come up with an actual vision statement for your Girl Scout Gold Award project.

**Build:** Focus on developing a specific network of people who might help with the vision. Use the *Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council Gold Award Project Journal* to keep records and journal for discussion and evaluation with Girl Scout Gold Award project advisor.

**Note:** Up to 15 hours spent on the Girl Scout 4Bs Challenge can be applied to the Girl Scout Gold project hours. If you choose to do so, log those hours on *Form E* in the *Gold Award Final Project package*.

#### **STEP 5: CREATE - PLAN YOUR GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARD PROJECT**

- **Plan it.** Figure out what the community problem is and what you want to do about it. If you have not already done so, select and talk to your project advisor. If you don't have one, make sure you speak with the council about retaining one. Go back to Step 4 and review the work you did related to the Four Bs challenge. Is this the issue you want to focus on for your project? Do you have new and different ideas? Keep record of time and process using the *Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council Gold Award Project Journal*.

- **Know more about it.** Collect as much information as you can. Use the internet, read the paper, do some research, and talk to people.
- **Choose it.** Brainstorm ways you can solve the problem and then decide which way is the best way to go. Ask yourself: Do I have enough resources (time, money, help)? If not how can I get what I need?
- **Budget it.** Your council must approve any money-earning or gift-in-kind plans related to project. Create a budget. Be sure to review the health and safety standards in Safety-Wise. Use the Budget form in the *Gold Award Project Proposal*.
- **Map it.** Create a timeline of project steps and list of resources needed. Organize the resources and people needed to carry out your plan. Be open to adjusting your plans based on feedback from the Gold Award Advisory.
- **Work it.** Use your Girl Scout Gold Award project advisor to help in this process
- **Review it.** Go over your plan with your project advisor, your parents, and your troop leader.
- **Submit it.** Turn in your Project Proposal to your Girl Scout council for approval

Your project proposal must have approval from our council before you can start. Our council uses a Gold Award Advisory to review and approve all Gold Award Project Proposals and Final Projects. In order to maintain the high standards of the highest award in Girl Scouting, the Gold Award Advisory needs time to thoroughly review each individual project to provide feedback.

**Submit your paperwork to the council by the 1st of September, December, March and May, in order for it to be reviewed by the Gold Award Advisory.**

Receive feedback from the Council Gold Award Advisory.  
Make adjustment to plans if necessary.

## **STEP 6: ACT**

- Do it! Put plans into action.
- Adjust your plans if necessary.
- Carry out your project.

## **STEP 7: REFLECT**

- Evaluate.
- Submit your Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report to the Gold Award Advisory for approval.
- Celebrate.

## Tips for Selecting a Girl Scout Gold Award Project\*

- Make sure that you look at the “Is it Leadership or Service? Section in this packet. The project you choose must meet those guidelines.
- The Girl Scout Gold Award is intended to give you an opportunity to apply your leadership skills and interests to addressing a need that you identify in your community. It should truly be your own project. For this reason, it is difficult to design a project that is suitable for a group. While it is possible to do a project as part of a group, it should only be considered when the scope of the project is so large that one girl could not accomplish it alone.
- In a group project, each girl’s contribution must be planned as a distinct individual project that meets the Girl Scout Gold Award requirements. Each girl must submit a plan for approval. Each girl must keep individual records and submit an individual final report. Since no two girls are alike, the Girl Scout Gold Award Advisory would not expect to see any 2 proposals or final reports be exactly the same.
  - Consider what would happen if one girl could not finish her part of the project. The other parts of the project should be planned so that they can be successfully implemented as stand-alone projects.
- Implementation is a very important part of a Girl Scout Gold Award project. A significant portion of your project should be spent in doing the service as opposed to planning the project. It is expected that most projects should have at least half of the required 65 hours be devoted to “doing” or implementing the plan.
- Consider the amount of time your project will require. Sixty-five hours is the minimum time that is required. Many projects take more than sixty-five hours and some things may take much longer than you think. You may count up to 15 hours spent on the 4Bs. At least 50 hours should be the project itself. You may count up to 3 hours of “paperwork” completion” time. This includes the final report.
- Some plans include inviting others to participate by asking them to a program or presentation or having them assist with service. If completing your project depends on the cooperation of others, you must plan carefully to ensure that you will have the necessary participation. You should determine the level of cooperation that you can expect by making preliminary inquiries or telephone calls before you submit the plan for your project. You should also consider a back-up plan in case you do not have the expected participation.

- Consider the time of year when you will do your project and if the weather will affect your project. For example, planting probably cannot be done in winter. Events might be postponed because of bad weather, and participants might not be available during holiday or vacation time.
- The project you choose must be a volunteer project rather than something you are paid for doing. If you work with an organization that regularly uses volunteers, be sure that you are involved in planning, so your personal influence is apparent in your project.
- Make sure that your project meets an “expressed” community need. That means that someone who is an authority or leader in the area that your project will address will confirm that your project is providing a service that is needed and is not being provided in any other way.
- Consider your role as a leader. Some of the ideas you may consider are fine service projects, but they do not show any of your leadership skills. Once you have an idea think about how you can involve other people, how you can broaden the scope of your project, how you can impact more people, and how the impact can continue for years to come.
- Think about the impact your project will have on your community. Will you impact ten people in one neighborhood for a short time or will your project help hundreds of people in your town for weeks or thousands of people throughout your state for months and years to come.
- As you look for a project, look beyond anything you have already done, look outside the Girl Scout family. Try not to go with the first idea you come up with—it’s probably not the best idea you can find because it was so easy and it probably is something someone else has already done. Your project should be your own. It should be in an area where you have a real passion to make a mark. It should be something that you want to be involved in and see go on for many years.
- Challenge yourself—If you are not stretching yourself through your Girl Scout activities, you are probably missing one of the greatest benefits of the program. Where else can you try so many new and challenging things and decide for yourself that they are for you—and drop them if they are not? Each step of the way in Girl Scouting should afford you opportunities to grow and expand your skills and knowledge. The highest awards at the senior level should be opportunities to challenge yourself to the max. Don’t shortchange yourself on seeing just how much you can accomplish.
- Take pride in your accomplishment—When you have challenged yourself, have done your very best and have met your goal, you can be justifiably proud of your achievement. You know that you have earned the honor you have received.

## Planning Pointers\*

- Start as soon as possible. Everything will take longer than you think. One of the most common remarks when girls submit their comments on their Final Report of their Girl Scout Gold Award project is, “I wish I had not procrastinated.” When you are under the pressure of a deadline it just makes things harder and puts more stress on you.
- Make the most of the first four steps. These steps are in place to help you gain the skills that you should be utilizing for your project.
- Write it down. Make sure that you keep careful and complete records. Document what you did and when you did it in the *Project Journal*. As you complete each requirement, fill-in the information on your *Project Proposal*, have your advisor sign and date it.
- Take advantage of your activities. School, church, sports, and other organizations all offer opportunities for completing Girl Scout Gold Award requirement. Are you a member of the student council at your school? Are you team captain or president of a club? Did you participate in a service project with your church? All these represent opportunities for completing requirements.
- No double dipping. As with any Girl Scout award or recognition, you cannot use the same activity to fulfill more than one requirement. There is one exception to this rule: CIT, LIT, and Program Aide Leadership hours may be counted towards the leadership action hours.
- Meet with your troop/group advisor to begin planning a timeline by month and year from Step 1 to completion of Step 7. This timeline must be submitted with your Project Proposal. Fill out the timeline on Form A in the *Gold Award Project Proposal*.
- Work on Steps 2-4 in any order. You will probably find that you are working on several requirements at the same time. Take advantage of opportunities for completing activities as they become available.
- Get familiar with the 4 Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council Gold Award Documents. They will help you understand the requirements and the process of earning your Gold Award.
- If you would like to take project photos or use the names of teens and children under the age of 18, use the Photo Consent Form (Form H) in the Gold Award Final Project Report. Have the parent/guardian of the minor complete it in advance.

## From Good to Great: Successful Girl Scout Gold Award Projects\*

A Girl Scout Gold Award project is different from a good community service project. It should involve girl planning, leadership and decision making and focuses on addressing a real need in your community. It encompasses the mission of Girl Scouting — building “girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place.”

### Is it Leadership or Service?\*

**Service:** Service is based on working within a plan that is already established, acting as an assistant or helper, using a prepared list of resources, using existing funds that are allocated to you, asking permission to make changes, and reporting to a supervisor for direction.

**Leadership:** Leadership can require creating a vision and an outcome, setting a goal, developing a plan of work, creating the scope of the project, functioning in a director capacity, delegating to others, making decisions for change, creating a list of needs and resources, creating a budget, evaluating the performance of yourself and/or others, writing reports, accepting accountability for the outcome.

Here are several examples of good service projects that have expanded into great Girl Scout Gold Award projects:

Good Service Project	Great Girl Scout Gold Award Projects!
Volunteering many hours at a Park Service site picking up litter.	Re seeding an area with native vegetation and ridding area of non-native vegetation. Creating an interpretive guide on what the area was like 50 years ago and why it is important to preserve native species.
Working at the local library doing children’s story hours or conducting a book drive for the juvenile detention center.	Creating a reading program for a migrant work camp in the summer. Assuring that each child receives a book (bilingual) of their own. Matching young children with volunteer tutors from the high school Spanish club to create an ongoing service project.
Volunteering to collect games and food at the mall for a teen center.	Creating a health access booklet for teens in the community; culminating with a teen health fair with various organizations presenting their services. Admission is canned goods for a teen center.
Acting in a play to commemorate the 100th anniversary of a community.	Researching and writing a script for a cemetery tour focusing on the founders of the community. Casting parts, creating costumes and arranging for a series of evening cemetery tours to kick off the founding of the community.
Planting flowers in a park during a community service day.	Working with the city parks department to start a public gardening project in your community. Providing food to a food bank from the garden. Using a greenhouse at a school to start plants yearly with kids and retired folks as mentors.

## When do I need to submit my Project Proposal or Final Project Report?

### **Project Proposal\***

The *Girl Scout Gold Award Project Proposal package* must be submitted to the Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council Service Center prior to the Gold Award Advisory meetings (see Step 5 of these Guidelines for dates when to submit your paperwork.). If you have not been notified of receipt of your Project Proposal at the council service center within two weeks of your mailing, please contact them by phone or email. Be sure to leave your name and Troop/Group number.

The Gold Award Advisory will review your Project Proposal and may make suggestions based on safety, timeline, or project standards. You **can not** start your project without approval from the Gold Award Advisory. Within two weeks of the Girl Scout Gold Award Advisory meeting, you will hear from the council service center. The correspondence will indicate if your project has been approved or if there are questions/concerns.

### **Final Report**

The Girl Scout Gold Award Final Project Report must be filled in and submitted to the Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council Service Center after your project is completely finished. If you have not been notified of receipt of your Final Project paperwork at the council service center within two weeks of your mailing, please contact them by phone or email. Be sure to include your name and Troop/Group number.

See Step 5 in these *General Guidelines* for deadlines of when to submit your paperwork in order for the Gold Award Advisory to review it.

The deadline to be included and honored at the annual Council ceremony is March 1. Girls approved after the March 1st deadline will be included in the next year's ceremonies. Ceremonies can also be planned by individuals, groups, or service units to honor girls upon completion of their project.

**TO BE INCLUDED IN THE AWARD PRESENTATIONS IN THE SPRING, YOU MUST SUBMIT YOUR FINAL REPORT NO LATER THAN MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup>.**

You can still finish your project and submit your final report after graduating from high school. However, it must be post marked by September 30 following the girls senior year in high school.



**IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT SCHOLARSHIPS:** If you want to apply for a Girl Scout Gold Award Scholarship at one of the universities that offer them, please contact the university early in the process. The university deadline may adjust the deadline for completing your project. Some of these deadlines are much earlier than the council's March 1 deadline.

## **M\*O\*N\*E\*Y and Your Project\***

One of the challenges facing every girl “going for the Gold” is financial. Often, when the planning gets serious, adjustments have to be made in the doing. On the one hand you are asked to meet a need in your community; on the other hand, you have some major financial constraints outlined in Safety-Wise and by your council. So what’s a girl to do? OK. The reality first. Then some possible ways to approach it. Think of those who have gone before you. They figured it out, and so can you! Then clear the adjustments you have made in your plan with your Gold Award Advisor and the Girl Scout council.

***Below are guidelines taken from the Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council Fund Development Guidelines, approved by the Board of Directors on August 14, 2004.***

### **Solicitation of Contributions**

Adult members in their Girl Scout capacities may not solicit financial contributions for purposes other than Girl Scouting. Adults may engage in combined fundraising efforts authorized by the Girl Scout council and in which the local council is a beneficiary. Girl members may not engage in any direct solicitation for money.

*-Blue Book of Basic Documents, 2003, page 25*

### **Fund Development vs. Fundraising**

Webster defines development as “a gradual advance or growth through progressive changes.” Fund development is the continuing and evolving process of generating public support for a not-for-profit organization such as the Girl Scout Council. Fundraising, as opposed to fund development, is characterized by irregular or occasional appeals to the public and appeals that relate to short-term needs.

Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council has in place a long-range fund development plan to ensure the future fiscal health of the council. Fundraising techniques are only a part of fund development and should be integrated into a long-term development plan.

### **Money Earning Projects**

Group money earning refers to activities following a planned budget and carried out by girls and adults in partnership to earn money for the group treasury.

Money earning projects are activities that have program value for girls. With “earning” being the operative work, the girls provide a good or service in exchange for payment.

## **Requirements/Restrictions**

- All money earning projects must be submitted for approval to the Council office no less than **ONE MONTH** in advance.
- Participation is voluntary
- Written permission of parent or guardian is obtained
- Girls must possess an understanding of and ability to interpret to others why the money is needed
- Correct business procedures must be followed
- Observance of local ordinances related to involvement of children in money-earning activities
- Planned arrangements for safe-guarding the money
- All money earning projects must adhere to Safety-Wise standards
- All money earned, raised or acquired by Girl Scouts must be expended for Girl Scout purposes
- Commercial products or services may not be endorsed or exhibited
- No financial sponsor solicitation or money earning projects may be undertaken during the fall product sale or cookie sale
- Girl Scouts are prohibited from conducting any money earning projects that require the use of the Council's 501(c)(3) letter
- No financial sponsor solicitation or money earning projects may be undertaken during the United Way campaigns. This is referred to as the "black-out" period and typically runs from September through November. Please contact the Fund Development department at the council office for specific dates that apply in your area.
- Girl Scouts, in their capacity as Girl Scouts, may not solicit money for other organizations. Girl members may support other organizations through service projects or a donation from their group treasury.
- Girl Scouts are not allowed to solicit any funding or conduct sales of any type on the internet.
- All fundraising, fund acquisition, and money earning methods employed by Girl Scout groups must be in keeping with the principles for which the organization stands.
- Any funds earned through money earning projects remain with the group even if a girl is unable to participate in a group project or event for whatever reason.
- Funds acquired through money earning projects must be reported & accounted for in the troop/group's annual financial report.

### **IMPORTANT**

Money-earning projects and financial sponsorships  
**MUST** be approved by Council  
**BEFORE**  
a request is made, a project implemented or a gift is accepted.

### Gold Award Money Earning Project Ideas\*

A few ideas for earning money for your Gold Project are listed below. You are not limited to these. Use your creative thinking. Remember, all Girl Scout activities must meet Safety-Wise and council guidelines. The money making activity must also be approved by your council.

1. Sell Girl Scout cookies. (Think big — arrange for booths at sports events or college dorms or sell cases of cookies to businesses for special treats for their staff. You end up helping your council as well as your group.)
2. Recycle aluminum cans. (How about a community can-a-thon? Involve small businesses as well as families.)
3. Put on a gigantic garage sale. Don't forget to make refreshments to sell!
4. Provide classroom or home birthday parties on order (cupcakes and games for the busy mom).
5. Pet care
6. Babysitting
7. Lawn care (mowing, raking)

### Some Frequently Asked Questions on Money\*

#### **Q: Can I use my own money on the Girl Scout Gold Award Project?**

**A:** Yes. If you want to use your own money, you can. You may receive help from your family, too. However, we encourage you to work with others to earn the money. That's part of the process. "Going for the Gold" is not meant to be a hardship on a family or individual. When designing your project, it's important to think creatively about how you can make a difference with little or no money.

#### **Q: Can I ask friends and neighbors for help?**

**A:** You can't ask for donations of money. You can ask for donations of time and goods, depending on the nature of your project. For example, if your project is to do a clothing drive for victims of a "hurricane" then yes, you can ask for donations such as clothing. Think through your project. Should you have questions on what you can and cannot do, discuss it with your project advisor, the Gold Award Advisory or the council. Note: **if the person making the donation wants to claim the donation as a tax deduction, he or she will need to make the donation to the council for IRS purposes and get a receipt signed by a council staff person.**

**Q: What if what I want to do costs too much?**

**A:** It's better to succeed with a smaller project that is within your budget than to be unable to complete a larger project because it exceeds your budget. Be realistic about what you can and can't do. Work with your adult advisor to develop a reasonable budget for your project. If your resources are not sufficient for you to realistically accomplish your goal, then you need to rethink the project. Planning is the key to a good Girl Scout Gold Award Project.

**Q: Is it all right to seek help from other organizations when doing my Girl Scout Gold Award?**

**A:** Yes, with some qualifications. Many service organizations do community projects. Do some research on local service organizations. Even some businesses give workers time for community service hours and projects. For example, after doing research in your community, you discover that your local Animal Shelter is having trouble feeding all of the animals during the year. You could possibly work with this organization to find out what they need, and then base your project around that need. Don't let the organization's agenda drive your vision for your project.

## **Girl Scout Gold Award© FAQs\***

(Some FAQs adapted from “Girls Want to Know” section in “Go for It” STUDIO 2B Girl Scout Gold Award insert.)

### **Q: Who can earn the Girl Scout Gold Award?**

**A:** Girls must be a registered Girl Scout and be 14–18 (grades 9–12) to work on STEPS 1-3 leading up to the Girl Scout Gold Award Project. Girls must be 15–18, or grades 10–12, when they work on STEPS 4-7 related to the Girl Scout Gold Award Project. Remember, as always, the project must be completed by September 30 following a girl’s senior year in high school. If she graduates early, she has until she is 18 to complete the project.

### **Q: Can a girl work on the prerequisites for her Girl Scout Gold Award the summer after she has bridged, rather than wait until the new membership year begins October 1.**

**A:** YES! We want girls to be excited about these awards and to use the time they have, rather than trying to cram it all into the school year or lose the momentum and interest over the summer. However, a girl must be 14 to start work on the award; and 15 to start on the project.

### **Q: Is the Girl Scout Gold Award Project an individual project, or can it be worked on by a team of girls?**

**A:** Girls may work with other girls, but they must keep track of their specific work and hours. Working on a project team is a life-skill and there are many different ways of assuming leadership. For more than one girl to earn her Girl Scout Gold Award doing a similar project, the girls might:

- Meet with and form collaborations with other community organizations that focus on serving the elderly.
- Expand the number of nursing homes served.
- Secure a larger grant for the project.
- Design a way for the activities to continue even after the girls have earned their awards: for example, working with the local colleges and the nursing homes to set up internships for college credit for students who participate in the project.
- Offer a greater menu of art therapy activities.
- Train a wider pool of volunteers.
- Create a tool kit or packet for nursing homes and residents that defines the project, lists available activities, and provides community contacts.

### **Q: Can a girl earn the Girl Scout Gold Award even if she hasn’t been in Girl Scouts very long?**

**A:** Yes! She just needs to be a registered Girl Scout and be willing to complete the hours necessary to earn this award.

**Q: Does a girl have to have earned the Girl Scout Silver Award in order to do the Girl Scout Gold Award?**

**A:** No. Not at all. However, it's a great foundation for the process.

**Q: Does a girl need to do the steps in any particular order?**

**A:** She can do the Girl Scout Gold Leadership Award and the Girl Scout Gold Career Award in any order, even work on them simultaneously, but she should do STEP 4, the Girl Scout Gold 4 B's Challenge prior to working on the Girl Scout Gold Award project, STEP 5. STEPS 1-4 must be completed and the girl must be 15 or in 10th grade to begin STEP 5. A girl MUST receive council's approval before starting the Girl Scout Gold Award project (STEP 5).

**Q: What is the difference between a troop/group advisor and a Girl Scout Gold Award project advisor in the Girl Scout Gold Award process? Do girls need both?**

**A:** A troop/group advisor is the adult who is working with an ongoing troop or group. She can work with girls in the first three steps of their Girl Scout Gold Award — helping them get initial information, working on the Girl Scout Gold Leadership Award, and the Girl Scout Gold Career Award. Some resource consultants may be brought in while girls are working on specific Interest Project Awards. The role of the advisor is to make suggestions about resources which the girl may not have knowledge, to assist in facilitating access to those resources and to remind the girl to use the tools, skills and resources she has developed. The troop/group advisor may help girls with the initial activities in working on the 4B's. Once a girl (or girls) develops her vision statement, the advisor might help her identify a person in the community who might be a great project advisor. Girls are encouraged to go beyond the group when seeking specific knowledge for a project. However, the troop/group advisor may act as the project advisor if she can fulfill that role and it is a decision arrived at by the girl. It is highly recommended that leaders/advisors who are parents of the girl NOT act as a girl's Gold Award Project Advisor. The whole idea is to connect with the community when doing one's Girl Scout Gold Award. That means working beyond the family and the troop/group and the council.

The Girl Scout Gold Award Project Advisor is an adult who has specific experience related to the project. For example, if a girl is doing a project to address a concern about AIDS in her community, the advisor might be someone from a non-profit that works with teens and health issues or an AIDS educator; or if girls are doing a literacy project for children of migrant workers, the project advisor might be an "English as a second language" teacher or a social worker giving assistance to the migrant camp. It is also possible that the troop/group advisor can work in partnership with the project advisor.

**Q: At what point should a Girl Scout Gold Award project advisor be identified?**

**A:** It's great to have a project advisor to expand the network of adults and provide expertise for a girl's project. If a girl has an idea before she starts any work on her Girl Scout Gold Award, she might want to identify her project advisor from the very beginning. A girl's group advisor can act as the project advisor on the Girl Scout Gold Award through step 4, but GSUSA highly recommends that a project advisor be

available when the project starts to come into focus during STEP 4, the Girl Scout Gold 4 B's Challenge phase. The project advisor should be identified in the planning phase before the Girl Scout Gold Award application is turned into the council. If a girl is having difficulties identifying an advisor for the project, she or her troop/group advisor should feel free to contact the council for assistance **before** the project application is submitted. A troop/group advisor may assume the role of project advisor if necessary or if she is truly qualified to oversee the topic area chosen.

**Q: What if a girl has already done some similar activities while doing other Girl Scout awards? Can these activities count toward her Girl Scout Gold Award?**

**A:** Activities done prior to working on the Girl Scout Gold Award may not count toward the number of hours for this award. However, if a girl has earned the charm for a STUDIO 2B Focus book that is one of the requirements for one of the awards, she will need to set new goals for herself in that Focus book.

**Q: What is the role of the council's Girl Scout Gold Award Advisory?**

**A:** This is usually a group of adult volunteers, including past recipients of the Girl Scout Gold Award, dedicated to helping a girl succeed. They will review the size, scope, and cost of a project and make recommendations to ensure that it is in fact an appropriate project to earn a Girl Scout Gold Award. They might also be aware of community issues and dynamics that impact the project and may be able to introduce a girl to other adults who can assist her in her project.

**Q: What is the Girl Scout Gold 4 B's Challenge?**

**A:** The 4 B Challenge will help girls be better prepared and informed before choosing a project to spend many hours on. It was initiated to end the frustration girls expressed about the difficulty of coming up with ideas for projects.

**Q: Do the hours put into planning and researching for the 4 B's Challenge count towards the hours needed for the Girl Scout Gold Award project?**

**A:** Yes. Even if a girl decides not to do the project she comes up with in the "4B's visioning process" when she gets down to planning with her advisor, she has not wasted the time in learning the process required to focus on a vision. A girl shouldn't be focusing on a project that she really doesn't want to be doing, or isn't able to do because of something she's discovered in her research or community networking. A girl might even discover a project advisor in the community networking process who sparks a different twist on her vision. The more that is found out about something, the more possibilities there are — the trick is to end up with a project that meets needs of the community and that allows a girl to be effective and passionate in what she is doing. For example, a girl may find that a safety program is not what is needed to prevent accidents in her community — what's needed is a stop light at a dangerous intersection. That will require focusing on a different network as she works with the community to make that kind of a change and her project advisor may need to be someone from the city council instead of a safety educator.

**Q: The focus books seem to be so easy compared to Interest Project Awards.**

**A:** The STUDIO 2B Focus books look deceptively simple (it must be all the pictures); however, the most important component of each booklet is the goal setting. Yes, it is possible to breeze through one, but if a girl is really true to the concept, and working “on her honor” she will set goals that involve stretching and learning — allowing for a thorough exploration of the topic in order to meet her goals. The role of the advisor is key to the goal setting process.

**Q: How can we assure that Girl Scout Awards represent quality projects? In the past we have had some projects that resemble service projects signed off by advisors.**

**A:** The best way to assure that a girl is doing the best of her ability is to ensure that both she and her advisor receive orientation about the award and about the difference between a service project and a Girl Scout Gold Award project — whether it is through training, Web site information, or a marketing piece. The last thing a Girl Scout Gold Award Advisory or council wants to do is to be put in the position of telling a girl her project isn’t a Girl Scout Gold Award when the final report comes in. The project at that point reflects on the adults who are advising her and it would be unacceptable to refuse her the award if she had put in the hours and gone through with the process.

**Q: Is it recommended that a girl’s parent be her advisor for the Girl Scout Gold Award?**

**A:** GSUSA strongly recommend against it, even if a girl’s parent is her leader/advisor. Ideally, she should have an advisor that has experience in the area of her project. Avoid situations where parents do a girl’s work, even when it comes to calling and asking questions. If money earning is involved, the girl and her advisor can act as a team, with the girl doing the planning and the adult doing the “ask.”

**Q: What if a girl is 16 and graduating? Can she complete her project when she is in college?**

**A:** Yes. A girl has until she turns 18 or until the end of the Girl Scout membership year when she is a senior in high school.

**Q: What if a girl graduates and is 18 and doesn’t have her project completed?**

**A:** In this case the girl would have until September 30 of the year she graduates.

**Q: What if a girl’s project is not completed by the council ceremony time?**

**A:** This is up to the girl. She might be recognized for her work in progress at the Girl Scout Gold Award Ceremony for her peers, or she can be honored in a separate ceremony or come back for the council-wide ceremony the next year. If the council has a set time for honoring Girl Scout Gold Awardees, this should be part of the orientation to girls planning their Girl Scout Gold Award. Girls and their advisors should be encouraged to work within the council timeline; however, the ceremony time should not dictate whether a girl is able to earn her Girl Scout Gold Award or not.

**Q: Can a girl who is developmentally disabled/delayed earn the Girl Scout Gold Award? Don't we need a different set of requirements?**

**A:** The Girl Scout Gold Award is something done to the best of a girl's ability. It is totally possible to work with someone who needs to adapt the program with the existing requirements. For example, a young woman who will never hold a job because of the severity of her disabilities was able to adapt the career component, turning it around so that she learned how to select her personal caretaker, how to evaluate her caretaker, and how to let her go. Her project focused on a community awareness program involving the group home that she lived in and was overseen by her caretaker. Her troop/group helped do the "legwork" and she provided the vision. There is not a need to have special requirements for girls who are disabled — encourage flexibility and the recruitment of advisors that can work with the girl individually.

**Q: How do we get letters of congratulations?**

**A:** The Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council has a system in place for requesting letters of congratulations and certificates from Girls Scouts of the USA and other organizations.

**Q: Who purchases the Girl Scout Gold Award for the girl?**

**A:** This can be determined by Girl Scout council. The Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council provides the award pins as part of the recognition ceremony. The miniature Girl Scout Gold Award pins are available to girls as a "thank-you" presentation for parents or advisors through the Council Shop.

**Q: Where does a girl wear her related Girl Scout Gold Awards?**

**A:** If a girl wears the Girl Scout uniform for girls 14-18, she can choose to wear her earned charms on the STUDIO 2B Bracelet or on the STUDIO 2B Charm Holder pinned to the sash or vest with other earned insignia. She can wear the STUDIO 2B Bracelet and Charm Holder and the Girl Scout Membership Pin and Girl Scout Gold Award with regular clothing as well. See "Girl Scout Central" on [girlscouts.org](http://girlscouts.org) for more information. If a girl has chosen to accept the "old" Girl Scout Gold Award related pins in place of the charms (the Girl Scout Leadership Pin, the Girl Scout Challenge Pin and the Girl Scout Career Exploration Pin) she should wear them on her uniform as shown in diagrams. The official Girl Scout Gold Award pin goes to the left of the Girl Scouts of the USA Membership Pin on the girl uniform and can be worn on the right side of the adult Girl Scout uniform in line with membership pins or on regular clothing. The miniature pin can be worn on the lapel of regular clothing.

## **Ways Parents/Guardians Can Support Girls Working on the Girl Scout Gold Award®\***

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest award in Girl Scouting that girls 14-18 can earn. It represents a girl's commitment to herself and to her community, as she focuses on leadership, career exploration, personal challenges and completing a lasting project that will benefit her community. It takes many hours of preparation, planning and work to accomplish the goals a girl has set for herself.

Parents/guardians play a significant role in supporting a girl's path to the Girl Scout Gold Award. As a parent you may be called upon to be coach, mentor, cheerleader, sounding board and chauffeur. As a parent, you are not expected to be a taskmaster — this is the girl's project. However, you can assist a girl by:

- Reading through the materials provided to girls regarding the Girl Scout Gold Award so that you feel comfortable offering support.
- Helping her choose a topic that will become the basis for her project if she asks for ideas. Remember, however, that the topic is based on her passion, not yours.
- Encouraging and supporting her, but not pressuring her. "Going for the Gold" is something that a girl has to want to do herself.
- Recognizing that your daughter is capable, competent and worthy of respect as she assumes greater citizenship and responsibility. You can help provide her with positive and constructive support on this journey.
- Aiding her in accessing a network of adults who can lend insight, provide contacts, and point to resources. You may work with someone who has just the skill set your daughter needs in an advisor, or someone who belongs to a service club that your daughter and her advisor can approach for financial assistance.
- Practicing good parenting when it comes to making sure she gets enough rest, eats well and is supported by the whole family in her endeavor.
- Helping and supporting girls in any Girl Scout safety or money earning guidelines during her path to the Girl Scout Gold Award. These are important to assure the safety of your daughter and the integrity of the Girl Scout program.



- Allowing your daughter to stumble and learn the lessons that come with the Girl Scout Gold Award project. She will be working with a Girl Scout Gold Award Project advisor, an adult who has been trained to assist her in partnership who has skills specific to the project, and a council Gold Award Mentor Committee.
- Helping with the project as asked or cheerleading from the sidelines if appropriate. Joining in the celebration as she is honored for her accomplishments.

## Girl Scout Gold Award At-A-Glance

### Girl, Troop/Group Advisor and Project Advisor Roles/Description

(Based on a chart developed by Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri, Inc.)

Girl Role	Troop/Group Advisor Role	Project Advisor Role
<p>Step 1: Organize – Build a Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council's 4 documents related to the Gold Award process</li> <li>• Identify and meet with troop/group advisor</li> <li>• Create timeline for 7 steps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council's 4 documents related to the Gold Award process</li> <li>• Learn the process</li> <li>• Support and encourage</li> <li>• Help girl create timeline</li> <li>• Advise on <u>Safety-Wise</u> and budget matters</li> <li>• Help girl identify options for Girl Scout Gold Award project advisor</li> </ul>	<p>The project advisor is an adult with expertise in the area covered by the project. This person can get involved early on or later, depending upon the needs of the girl.</p> <p>Role may be assumed by the troop/group advisor; however, GSUSA strongly encourages that it not be a parent/guardian and that there be consultation with community members with an expertise in the project area.</p>
<p>Step 2: Lead – Earn the Girl Scout Gold Leadership Award</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three Interest Projects</li> <li>• Studio 2B Focus Book</li> <li>• 30 hours in leadership role</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage use of Gold Award Guidelines, Journal and Proposal</li> <li>• Advise on setting goals for each Interest Project and Focus Book</li> <li>• Approve activities and sign off on awards</li> <li>• Provide avenue for girl to mark milestones of achievement</li> </ul>	<p>Note: This person may not be on board at this step. If she/he is, follow the troop/group advisor role.</p>
<p>Step 3: Network – Earn the Girl Scout Gold Career Award</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 hours career related activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage use of Gold Award Guidelines, Journal and Proposal</li> <li>• Advise on related careers</li> <li>• Approve activities</li> <li>• Sign off on award</li> <li>Provide avenue for girl to mark milestones of achievement</li> </ul>	<p>Note: This person may not be on board at this step. If she/he is, follow the troop/group advisor role.</p>

Girl Role	Troop/Group Advisor Role	Project Advisor Role
<p>Step 4: Explore – Earn the Girl Scout 4B’s Challenge Award</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become: Goals 1 &amp; 2</li> <li>• Belong: Community Profile &amp; reflect on project plan</li> <li>• Believe: Vision statement</li> <li>• Build: Identify networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support where needed/let go when needed</li> <li>• Help girl identify person who will be her project advisor (or act as project advisor with additional input from community specialist)</li> <li>• Help project advisor understand role</li> <li>• Sign off on Girl Scout 4B’s Challenge Award</li> <li>• Provide avenue for girl to mark milestones of achievement</li> </ul>	<p>Note: This person may not be on board at the beginning of this step. If not, girls are encouraged to find project advisor during this exploration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in shaping vision statement</li> <li>• Advise on project timeline</li> <li>• Work with troop/group advisor if needed (see troop/group advisor role)</li> </ul>
<p>Step 5: Create – A Project Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit Girl Scout Gold Award Project Proposal packet to Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council</li> <li>• WAIT to receive written approval before Step 6</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support where needed/let go when needed</li> <li>• Make the ask for any solicitation of funds</li> <li>• See project advisor steps if acting as project advisor</li> <li>• Assist project advisor with matters that are Girl Scout policy if project advisor is not a registered Girl Scout</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contract with girl</li> <li>• Advise on budget, safety matters (see <u>Safety-Wise</u>)</li> <li>• Coach girl in project planning</li> <li>• Establish regular touch base meetings with girl</li> </ul>
<p>Step 6: Act – Do the Girl Scout Gold Award Project!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TAKE ACTION! Track your 65 project hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support</li> <li>• See project advisor steps if acting as project advisor</li> <li>• Assist project advisor with matters that are Girl Scout policy if project advisor is not a registered Girl Scout</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach girl in project implementation and record keeping</li> <li>• Coach in safety and topic areas</li> <li>• Sign off on hours for project and project planning</li> </ul>
<p>Step 7: Reflect – Reflect and Evaluate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete and submit Final Project Report to the Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support</li> <li>• See project advisor steps if acting as project advisor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach girl with self evaluation</li> <li>• Sign off on the project evaluation and final report</li> </ul>

## Definitions\*

**TROOP/GROUP ADVISOR** – An adult registered and trained Girl Scout who can guide you through the pre-requisites such as the timeline, the leadership award, interest projects, Focus books, and the career/school exploration activities. This adult is there to answer questions, insure safety, facilitate access to resources, provide encouragement and follow GSUSA and Council policies, but not to do the project for you. This adult can also assist you with locating a project advisor. Throughout your project, you are responsible for maintaining contact with your troop/group advisor.

**PROJECT ADVISOR** – While your troop/group advisor can guide you through the pre-requisites, you may need to seek a project advisor once you have determined or narrowed down your project. You are encouraged to use resource people who are knowledgeable in the field in which you are doing your project. This advisor must be agreeable to supporting you in your project planning and execution. Throughout your project, you are responsible for maintaining contact with your project advisor. The role of project advisor may or may not be assumed by the troop/group advisor.

**COMMUNITY ASPECT** - The idea of the Girl Scout Gold Award is that you do something to benefit your community and learn those skills that make you a citizen of your community and the world. The Gold Award project should reach beyond the “world” of Girl Scouting and extend into the surrounding community. If you do something for your council, it needs to involve and benefit the community as well.

**CONTINUING IMPACT** - Gold Award projects should be ongoing in their effort or have trained others to carry on the work. How can this project continue when you are gone? If the project is an event, the event should be something that people will want to continue for the next year; if it is a service, it should be something that creates change or action with long-term possibilities, empowering others besides just the girl; if it is something tangible, it should come with a plan for use and maintenance within the community.

**FINANCIAL PLAN/BUDGET** - Will you need money for your project? How much will it cost? How will you get the money? List all your expenses and talk with your advisor or Council about how to cover these expenses. Projects should be financially **realistic**. You must obtain approval from the Girl Scout Council if you plan to raise funds or solicit donations. Remember, girls cannot solicit funds or donations. \*\*\*See MONEY and Your Project\*\*\*

**COLLABORATIVE ORGANIZATIONS** – If your project is focused on an existing organization or program, then your project must expand its work. The project must meet a need that is currently not being met. If you are working with an existing organization get a letter in writing from that organization approving the work of your project. Submit this letter with your project proposal.



**GROUP PROJECTS** - The Girl Scout Gold Award project is your **personal** action plan to utilize your values and leadership skills in order to serve your community. For group projects, each girl will need to define her individual responsibilities and leadership skills used. Each girl must be responsible for a specific part of the project and must evaluate her participation as an individual and a member of the group. Girl Scouts of Shagbark Council does not recommend large group projects. See the "Tips for Selecting a Girl Scout Gold Award Project" section of this document.

## **Documents & Forms List**

The following documents and forms make up the entire package needed to prepare, document, propose and report on your Gold Award project.

### **Gold Award General Guidelines**

This document contains a basic description of the steps required to earn your Gold Award. It has lots of tips, deadline information and definitions – a “must read” for project success.

### **Gold Award Project Journal**

This booklet is the place where the girl records the stepping stones of her journey to the Gold. Generally, this document is retained by the girl. However, the Girl Scout Gold Award Advisory and/or council may ask the girl to present this document in support of her project proposal.

### **Gold Award Project Proposal**

This document contains the following forms:

- Written project proposal (used in Step 5 of the journey)
- Form A – Timeline (used in Step 1 of the journey)
- Form B – Leadership Hours Time Log (used in Step 2 of the journey)
- Form C – Career/College Time Log (used in Step 3 of the journey)
- Form D – Proposed Project Budget (used in Step 5 of the journey)

### **Gold Award Final Project Report**

This document contains the following forms:

- Written report (used in Step 7 of the journey)
- Form E – Project Time Log (used in Step 4 and Step 6 of the journey)
- Form F – Project Budget (used in Step 6 of the journey)
- Form G – Brag Sheet (used in Step 7 of the journey)
- Form H – Photo Consent Form for Minors (used in Step 6 of the journey)