Dear Gold Award Recipients,

Congratulations! You made it! You have achieved the highest honor in Girl Scouting.

As a Gold Award recipient, you are a part of an elite group of women. Since 1916, Girl Scouts have been given the opportunity to earn this prestigious award, and those who completed the journey have changed their own lives and the lives of others in amazing and significant ways. The leadership skills, organizational competence, and sense of community and commitment that come from “Going for the Gold” sets the foundation for a lifetime of active citizenship.

I see a very bright future for each of you. Today is a great day to be a girl. As a Gold Award Girl Scout, you know that you can become anything you desire to be and do anything you set your mind to do. As you make your way, it is my hope that you appreciate all the opportunities you have today and that you take your seat at the community leadership table. Say yes – to going to college, to traveling abroad, to running for office, to starting a new business, to anything that will make you happy and fulfilled. When barriers arise, remember that you are a Girl Scout. You have the courage, the confidence, and the character to tackle anything. You are prepared to change the world and we cannot wait to see what your future holds.

Though we do not get to celebrate you in person this year, it is my hope that in many years you will be able to look back at this time in your life and celebrate your resiliency and the memories you made – in spite of the uncertain times.

Always remember that you are very special. You are Solid Gold!

Yours in Girl Scouting,

Paula Bookidis
Chief Executive Officer
2019–2020
GOLD AWARD RECIPIENTS

**BOLD, DRIVEN, AND PASSIONATE.** Girl Scouts were changing the world long before women earned the right to vote, and today we continue to engage and empower girls to take the reins of female leadership and create a positive impact wherever their journey takes them.

A Gold Award Girl Scout is everything a Girl Scout should aspire to become. She exemplifies courage, confidence, and character. As rare as she is remarkable, a Gold Award Girl Scout is a true leader. Resourceful, thoughtful, engaged, and responsible, she recognizes critical issues in her community and welcomes the challenge to create meaningful and lasting change. A Gold Award Girl Scout’s impact is far reaching and knows no borders.

*Denotes the achievement of all three Highest Awards: Bronze, Silver, and Gold.*

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**Alexa Payne**
Killeen, TX

**A Dream Powered by STEAM** - Driven by her passion for neuroscience, Alexa wanted to open a dialogue about STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) with a demographic underrepresented in these areas of study, middle-school aged girls. Thus, began her Gold Award project, *A Dream Powered by STEAM*. Alexa recorded and produced a podcast highlighting the accessibility of STEAM through toy reviews, travel guides, interviews, and more. She also developed resources for parents and teachers, helping them to reach girls who may be feeling marginalized or otherwise excluded from these traditionally male-dominated fields.

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**Alyssa Curry**
Austin, TX

**To Bee or Not to Bee** - After learning about the rapidly declining bee population across the globe, Alyssa became deeply interested in educating people about the important role insects play in ecosystems. She developed her Gold Award project, *To Bee or Not to Bee*, to teach elementary school students about bees. Her project works to reconstruct the negative stigma surrounding the insect and emphasizes the importance of bees to our environment. Alyssa created curriculum, taught classes, and created a website to inform students and provide teachers with a resource they can use year after year.
**Outdoor Learning Center** - To share her knowledge and passion for ecological conservation, Amber created her Gold Award project, Outdoor Learning Center. Amber built an interactive exhibit for students at Dahlstrom Middle School to learn about the ecosystems and watersheds in their community and to help them understand their effect on the environment. Amber designed an outdoor classroom setting, engineered exhibits for science experiments, and developed curriculum to help teachers with lesson plans.

Amber Diaz
Buda, TX

**Women in STEM Career Fair** - As a member of the Lady Cans, Girl Scouts of Central Texas’ all-girls robotics team, Anaita recognized the large gender gap in STEM careers. For her Gold Award project, she created the Women in STEM Career Fair, inviting female STEM professionals to speak to girls about opportunities in their fields. At the fair, over 400 students from Bertha Sadler Means Young Women's Leadership Academy explored careers ranging from Mechanical Engineering to Pediatric Endocrinology. The event was a success, with 87% of participants reporting that they are more likely to pursue STEM in the future.

Anaita Merchant
Austin, TX

**Sheltering Love for Humans and Animals** - For her Gold Award project, Sheltering Love for Humans and Animals, Athalie developed a strategy to increase the number of dogs adopted at her local humane society. She designed and constructed a therapy playground that provides a space for potential adopters to begin building a bond with a dog. The pet playgrounds, which are ADA compliant, can be enjoyed by everyone and can be used to host pet adoption events. Athalie hopes her project will increase the number of people that find a furry best friend and the number of dogs that go to a fur-ever home.

Athalie Schooler
College Station, TX

**Pollinators and Plants** - Pollinator insects like butterflies, fireflies, and bees are rapidly going extinct due to pesticide overuse. Through her Gold Award project, Pollinators and Plants, Bethany worked to increase awareness and urge her community to take action to preserve pollinator insect populations. Bethany designed and engineered a garden filled with plants and flowers attractive to pollinators, planned and facilitated a community education fair, and developed a website to inform people regarding actions they can take to help beneficial insects.

Bethany Johnson
Pflugerville, TX
**Butterfly Garden at Community First! Village** - At Community First! Village – an organization that provides affordable housing for formerly homeless individuals in Austin, Texas – many residents have struggled with psychological and emotional trauma. For her Gold Award project, *Butterfly Garden at Community First! Village*, Brittany established a meditative butterfly garden on the property to encourage residents to practice eco-therapy while benefitting the local butterfly species. Brittany also developed a website to spread the word about her project and educate others about the mental health benefits of eco-therapy, butterflies, and gardens.

**The Mariposa Monarch Project** - Catherine has always been interested in nature and in animals. Expanding on that passion, Catherine’s Gold Award project, *The Mariposa Monarch Project*, protects the monarch butterfly species, which is in danger of becoming extinct. Working with local school districts, Catherine’s project manifested in many ways across various campuses. In some locations, she built habitats and gardens with monarch-friendly plants, in others she installed information about butterflies in the hallways. She also attended classes to give educational presentations to students.

**Horse Crossing** - For her Gold Award project, *Horse Crossing*, Tina worked with state and local officials, residents, and horse enthusiasts to install a horse crossing in Lebanon, Missouri. After consulting with the equestrian staff to design the crossing, Tina worked with contractors, riding educators, County Commissioners, residents, and others, to get areas on both sides of the road graded, a new gate installed, traffic signs erected, and a hand-held warning sign system installed. She also conducted training at a local horse camp encouraging staffers to train campers about safe road crossing.

**Project Melting Pot** - For her Gold Award project, *Project Melting Pot*, Courtney focused on shifting the narrative surrounding what it means to be an immigrant in the United States, capturing and editing a twenty-one-minute documentary on this very topic. Told through the eyes of immigrants living in Erath County, the film uses four personal accounts to convey the legal process and trials of moving from foreign countries to the United States. Passionate about art, Courtney channeled her skills in videography and video production to create this informational piece, consciously working to keep the film non-biased.
**Making Lifebook Templates for Foster Village** - Often, children in foster care possess only a few sentimental items and their adoptive parents miss monumental moments like first steps or losing the first tooth. For her Gold Award project, *Making Lifebook Templates for Foster Village*, Elizabeth used her graphic design skills to create 100 unique e-scrapbook pages in English and Spanish for use by children experiencing foster care. Her work guides creation of a sensitive record of childhood milestones that otherwise might be lost, preserving lasting and precious memories for children and their adoptive families.

**Volunteering for Dog Welfare** - Erica finds joy in working with dogs, so when she decided to tackle her Gold Award project, she naturally gravitated towards partnering with local animal and pet nonprofits. Knowing that many high school and college students need to earn volunteer hours, Erica created her Gold Award project, *Volunteering for Dog Welfare*, to help match students needing volunteer hours with a cause she is passionate about. Erica worked with local organizations to develop streamlined volunteer trainings and strategize ways to market the organizations’ volunteer opportunities to students.

**Mobile Vertical Gardens** - A student at the Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders, Erin was disappointed when on-campus construction resulted in the removal of the school’s gardens. Erin knew the gardens offered a place for her peers to learn about environmental conservation. This inspired her Gold Award project, *Mobile Vertical Gardens*. Erin used her design and engineering skills to build a mobile gardening system at the school. Garden carts allow the school to flexibly house a garden both indoors and outdoors allowing students to continue to learn about the importance of protecting the planet.

**What's Up With Blake? - An Autism Acceptance Children's Book** - Inspired by her own experiences growing up with Asperger's Syndrome, Julia put her writing skills into action with her Gold Award project, *What's Up with Blake? - An Autism Acceptance Children's Book*. Julia wrote and illustrated the book and initially planned to hold in-person workshops at elementary schools where she would read her book and give a voice to kids with autism. Though her plan was derailed due to the COVID-19 outbreak, she delivered her message to multiple classes via an online platform. Copies of her book are being donated to several elementary schools and local Girl Scout troops.
Coaching Curls - When Kamryn realized that many black girls with natural hair in the foster care system had guardians who didn’t understand the unique way to care for and maintain their child's curls, she developed her Gold Award project, Coaching Curls, to help educate these parents. Partnering with SC4Kids Salon and Foster Community Austin, Kamryn developed and hosted the Coaching Curls workshop, in which parents and their kids learn how to take care of and style natural hair. Her project helps to strengthen the bond between parent and child by mitigating cultural differences through education.

Empowering Youth Voices with Activism Club - Kate's Gold Award project, Empowering Youth Voices with Activism Club, was inspired by the school walkouts for gun control. She launched Westlake Activism Club to give youth a platform to speak out on issues they care about and to provide them tools for becoming politically engaged members of society. Kate developed curriculum and activities to teach students how to contact their representatives, fact-check news sources, and launch their own advocacy pursuits. Westlake Activism Club also hosted speakers from civil liberties organizations like the ACLU and attended protests, strikes, and activism events together.

Tranquility Quilts - People with dementia and Alzheimer's disease are known to be restless and anxious. Because dementia damages the brain, the person becomes unable to make sense of what they see and hear. For her Gold Award project, Katy invited the community to attend her Tranquility Blanket Workshop, where they made weighted blankets for dementia and Alzheimer's patients who have anxiety. Her volunteers made thirty-five tranquility quilts, lap-sized blankets that include mentally stimulating items like zippers and cloth fidgets. Through this work, her project also educated the community about dementia and inspired them to help Alzheimer’s patients.

Church Zero Waste Initiative - Lydia saw an opportunity to incorporate sustainable habits in her community to combat climate change locally. In her project, Church Zero Waste Initiative, she partnered with St. David's Episcopal Church to make the youth programs room more sustainable. Lydia created an organizational system to prevent overbuying, implemented a dishwashing system to eliminate the use of single-use plates and cutlery, promoted composting, and hosted several educational presentations with adult and youth members of the congregation to encourage sustainable practices.
**Memory through Music** - Madeline’s Gold Award project, *Memory through Music*, combines her affinity for music and her desire to help others. Working with The Gathering Alzheimer’s group in Austin, Madeline developed activities and games to help augment long term memory in Alzheimer’s patients. She also created a campaign to increase volunteer engagement at the facility. She hopes her project encourages others to find meaningful ways to engage and bond with these memory-impaired patients.

**Educational Resources for Artifacts of Human Trafficking** - After visiting the traveling art exhibition Artifacts of Human Trafficking and discovering that 75% of human sex trafficking victims are teenagers ages 12-16, Marillah knew she wanted to spread the word and educate her peers about this reality. Through short answer questions, imagination prompts, and hands-on activities, her project guides students through the exhibition. Marillah helped her peers better understand the horrors of sex trafficking, encouraged them to help advocate for victims, and bring predators to justice. She also developed a website, where the curriculum is available for download, [www.amiestoneking.com/artifacts](http://www.amiestoneking.com/artifacts).

**Take Note: Teaching Children Music Through Programming** - In today’s technologically advanced society, art is often viewed as unnecessary and detached from skills that are perceived as more practical like math or science. With a love of art and desire to share how learning music can help children with other areas of learning, Nicole earned her Gold Award with her project, *Teaching Children Music Through Programming*. She designed, created, and facilitated an Activity Kit at the Austin Children’s Museum that uses programming to assist children in creating a song. The Activity Kit resides at the Thinkery, where it can be used by any employee or volunteer of the organization.

**Closing the Math Gap** - For her Gold Award project, *Closing the Math Gap*, Quinn developed a plan to supplement the Round Rock ISD Talented and Gifted program’s math curriculum. A member of the program herself, Quinn observed a pattern of complex math principles being taught at a rapid pace, often making it difficult for students to fully grasp and commit their learnings to memory. She developed a website including resources that allow students to review lessons and build a strong foundational knowledge of math concepts.
Sarah Schneider  
Austin, TX

**Insect Hotels** - For Sarah, pollinator conservation is a very important issue. When she discovered The Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center, she knew it was an immediate fit for her Gold Award project. Sarah’s project, *Insect Hotels*, focused on building a sustainable habitat for bees and educating others about the issue of rapidly declining pollinator populations. Though Sarah admits it was a challenging aspect of her project, one of her favorite elements was when she led children’s classes at the Wildflower Center. She enjoyed teaching future generations about making a change.

Takara Holst  
Cedar Park, TX

**Flagpole Installation at Smilin’ V Scout Ranch** - For as long as she can remember, scouting has played a role in Takara’s life. For her Gold Award, she wanted to find a way to give back to her scout community. Through her Gold Award project, *Flagpole Installation at Smilin’ V Scout Ranch*, Takara helped the local BSA Capital Area Council by installing flagpoles on a newly purchased property that they plan to turn into a camp. Demonstrating critical leadership skills, Takara coordinated and delegated tasks to her team and managed the funds to facilitate purchasing the materials to install flagpoles.

Vivian Yale  
San Angelo, TX

**Veterans of Fairmount** - For her Gold Award project, *Veterans of Fairmount*, Vivian raised over $17,000 to purchase flag holders for the veterans at the Fairmount Cemetery in San Angelo, TX. She recorded their military information into the cemetery’s database and wrote an educational piece with interesting information about some of the veterans buried there. Her project will be sustained by the cemetery staff members. She was supported by the Friends at Fairmount Board and several community members who helped her project succeed.

Zoey Kemp  
Austin, TX

**All Included** - As a volunteer at Camp in Motion, a camp for children with Cerebral Palsy, Zoey has a unique perspective on the differently abled community. Spending time with the children at Camp Motion, Zoey has grown more sensitive to the challenges they face. For example, she noticed a lack of adapted sports for people with limited mobility. Zoey created her Gold Award project, *All Included*, to adapt games and therapeutic arts, modifying them to be accessible for children with Cerebral Palsy. Her project provided therapeutic benefits to the campers and allowed them to discover new interests. She also created a website documenting her project so it can be recreated by others.
Congratulations to the 2019-2020 GSCTX Gold Award Girl Scouts!

GOLD AWARD COMMITTEE

Staff
Madeline Klement
Program Specialist, GSCTX

Wendy Riley
Program Manager, GSCTX

Volunteers:
Kathy Beifuss
Doug Brown
Lisa Cairnes
Mary Ann Fitch
Kay Fitzpatrick

Patricia Hayes-Workman
Wanda Jean Freeze
Nicole Payne
Liz Poprik
Amy Wallquist
CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR’S NOMINEES!

Each year, Girl Scouts of the USA honors exceptionally outstanding Gold Award projects by selecting ten Gold Award Girl Scouts as National Gold Award Girl Scouts. We are so proud of this year’s nominees from Girl Scouts of Central Texas! Read more about their projects below.

Ashley Buschhorn  Austin, TX  

Diego’s Backpacks - For many families, back to school season brings financial stress as they gather necessary school supplies on a tight budget. To address this, Ashley created her Gold Award project, Diego’s Backpacks, which provides school supplies to children in low-income families. Supplies are gathered through local schools in Austin and are distributed through Community First! Village Mobile Loaves and Fishes program. Ashley also created a website and filmed a documentary to inspire others to get involved.

Katherine Galko  Austin, TX

Putting a New Sparkle in Graduation - Noticing a growing trend of students throwing glitter in the air to capture the perfect graduation photo, Katherine created her Gold Award project documentary, Putting a New Sparkle in Graduation, to explain how plastic glitter is harmful to the environment. Katherine’s video will be shown at the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment, which hosts 120,000 visitors per year. Katherine was invited to present her video and project at the River Guardianship Symposium and the International Union for Conservation of Nature conference.

Kyndal Workman  Pflugerville, TX

Women + Arts = Social Impact - Through her Gold Award project, Women + Arts = Social Impact, Kyndal combined her passions for social change and the arts, producing a social impact short film which features interviews of four women in the arts. The interviewees step away from the sidelines to address social issues utilizing their art as a platform. The film is supplemented with Kyndal’s photography of the women taken during the filming process. Her goal for this project is to give young people, especially those of color, the confidence to know their voices should be heard.
Kyndal,
We are so proud of your accomplishments thus far. Continue to reach for the stars. We can’t wait to see what the future holds for you!

Love Always,
Auntie Tabitha & Alyssa

Katy,
We are so proud of you with your perseverance & steadfast commitment of seeing you grow through your Girl Scout adventures over the past 13 years!
Your helping with hand tied lap quilts for a local nursing home for your Bronze award, your helping provide a well stocked & supplied reading cart at the local crisis center for your Silver Award, and your ongoing project fidget lap quilts helping with all of our county’s Dementia nursing home residents for your Gold Award - you never backed down from others during their time of need and always with a smile!!!!!
We all look forward to seeing how you will be making a difference with helping others in need as an Adult Girl Scout and where ever the future leads to helping others!

Forever and always,
Keep smiling our precious Tortoise,

Papa & Granny, Dad & Mom, Emily, Abby, & Mikey
We are so proud of Bethany Johnson and Kyndal Workman for the hard work and dedication that they showed to earn the highest honor in Girl Scouting.

Beth, your commitment to STEM and love for community service and the outdoors is a true example of traditional Girl Scouting in today’s world. As a third generation Girl Scout, you are a light for girls to follow into the future.

Kyndal, your passion for girl empowerment and social change is a guiding star to others as they seek to achieve at their highest levels. You truly represent the Girl Scouting motto of building “girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.”

CONGRATULATIONS GIRLS! WE ARE SO PROUD TO HAVE YOU REPRESENT OUR PFLUGERVILLE-AREA GIRL SCOUTS IN A TREMENDOUS WAY!

Pfirefly Service Unit
**Kyndal:**

Thirteen years ago, you began a journey in Girl Scouts that we never could have imagined. From making lifetime friends to traveling nationally and internationally, you have left no stone unturned. Your passion to try new things and explore new places has led you to unusual places and unexpected opportunities. Your willingness to take a leap of faith, even when you are not sure of the outcome, only reinforces your courage as a Girl Scout G.I.R.L.—Go-Getter, Innovator, Risk-Taker and Leader.

Your path to Gold was first paved with Bronze, earning your Bronze Award with your original troop. You layered on the Silver by serving children at the Center for Child Protection with your unique Kraft Kits. And finally, you topped it off with Gold, with your project, “Women + The Arts = Social Impact”, truly a work of passion grounded in your belief in empowering girls and women and commitment to social change.

You are a “Phenomenal Woman” in the making. We are extremely proud of who you are today and look forward to the exciting future that lies ahead. Congratulations!

*Love Always,*  
*Mom, Dad, Carson and Auntie Kelley*
Top Seller! Troop 19 top seller in fall products and cookie sales. Selling a total of $6,032 in fall product sales, 50 magazines and 12,302 boxes of cookies over 12 years.

Active! Earning 10 petals, 96 try its, 105 badges, 20 IP’s and 5 journeys! Patches on top of patches and 4 very heavy vests full of color!

Kind and helpful! Teaching 862 girls camping essentials through 15 different camps over 7 years. Teaching girls how to make dip bags, first aid kits, sit upon, cooking skills, fire safety and how to clean dishes.

Leader! As a cookie captain logged 147 hours over 7 years. Helped numerous girls learn about cookies and sales through troop meetings, cookie universities, cookie rallies and daisy troop booths.

Rewards! Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards in the books! Torch leadership awards, community service awards and a Girl Scout Scholarship Award!

Adventure and a love to travel! Buses, planes, trains, cruise ship, cars, boats, seagway and horses! Traveled to: Savannah, Orlando, Colorado, Cozumel, Belize, Honduras, Mexico, Italy, Switzerland, London, France, Puerto Rico, Alaska and California. Been to 3 WAGGGS World Houses: Mexico, London and Switzerland.
Troop 1587

Gold Award Class of 2020

Congratulations

We are proud of you

Marillah King

Welcome to our Sisterhood

Gold Award recipients with troop 1587

Mary Ruiz (18)
Isha Singh (18)
Rachel Wilkinson (18)
Marie Young (18)
Joanna Casey (14)
Sarah Young (13)

And Leader, Kate Woodward Young (85)
Kyndal,

Your achievements never surprise us. They are just the many manifestations of your absolute awesomeness! We cannot wait until you bring that greatness to California!

Love you,

The Grays

Congratulations to the 2019-2020 GSCTX Gold Award Girl Scouts!

We are so proud of you! - GSCTX Board of Directors
Girls Change the World