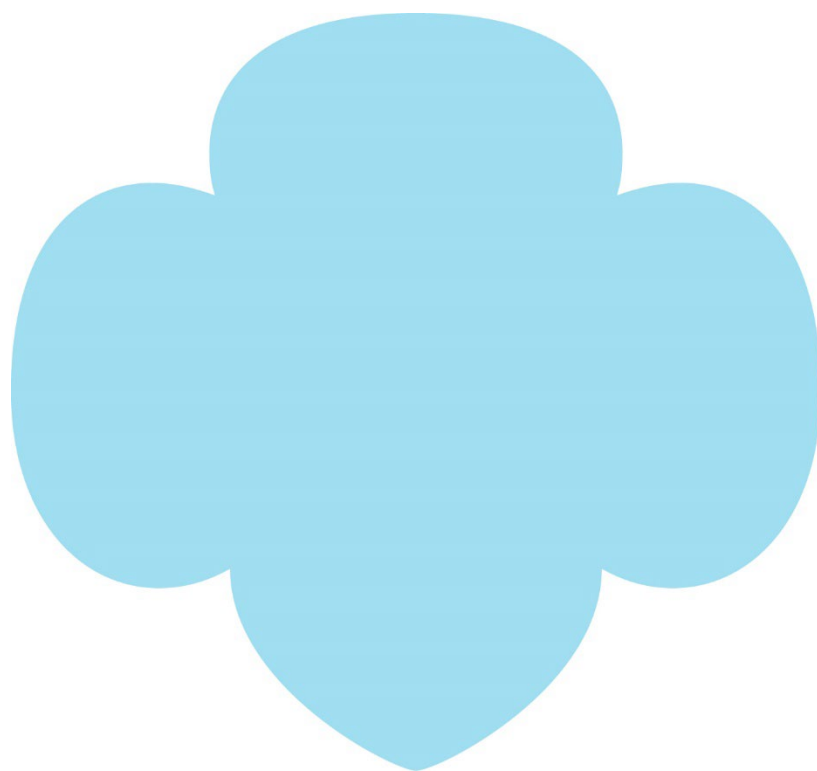


Girl Scouts of Central Texas Volunteer Recognition Planning Guide

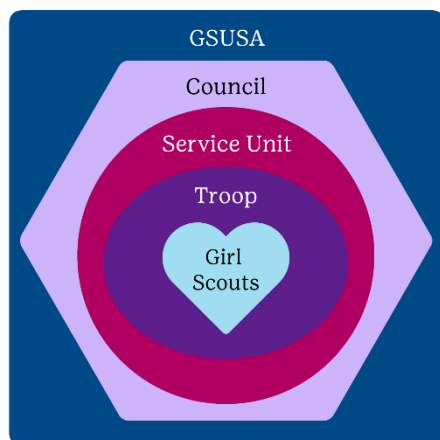


Your guide to creating a culture of
appreciation in your troop or service unit.

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Creating a Culture of Appreciation



- A culture of appreciation is an environment where everyone feels valued and celebrated for who they are and how they contribute.
- Girl Scout volunteers wear many hats and deserve to be recognized and to feel appreciated!
- A troop and service unit can create a culture of appreciation by putting a plan in place to recognize volunteers formally and informally throughout the year.

Volunteer Recognition FAQs

Why is volunteer recognition important?



Fosters a culture of appreciation.



Builds community and boosts morale.



Increases satisfaction and engagement.



Increases volunteer retention.

Big picture—recognition leads to a richer, more meaningful adult and youth member experience at the troop and service unit level.

Where do I find volunteer award resources?



The Volunteer Awards Guide, links to formal recognition forms, printable resources, and more can be found in the [Volunteer Recognition section](#) of the Service Unit Resources page on the Girl Scouts of Central Texas website.

6 Steps to a Successful Volunteer Recognition Plan

Thank you for helping create a culture of appreciation in your troop or service unit!



Step 1

Get to know your volunteers, their preferences, and if they like public praise.



Step 2

Build your team by forming or joining a troop or service unit recognitions committee.



Step 3

Explore this guide to narrow down your recognition options.



Step 4

Review the Volunteer Awards Guide to figure out if your volunteer(s) are eligible for an award.



Step 5

Create your plan using this guide.



Step 6

Put your plan in motion with help from your team.



If you still have questions after reviewing this guide, [contact us](#). We are happy to help.

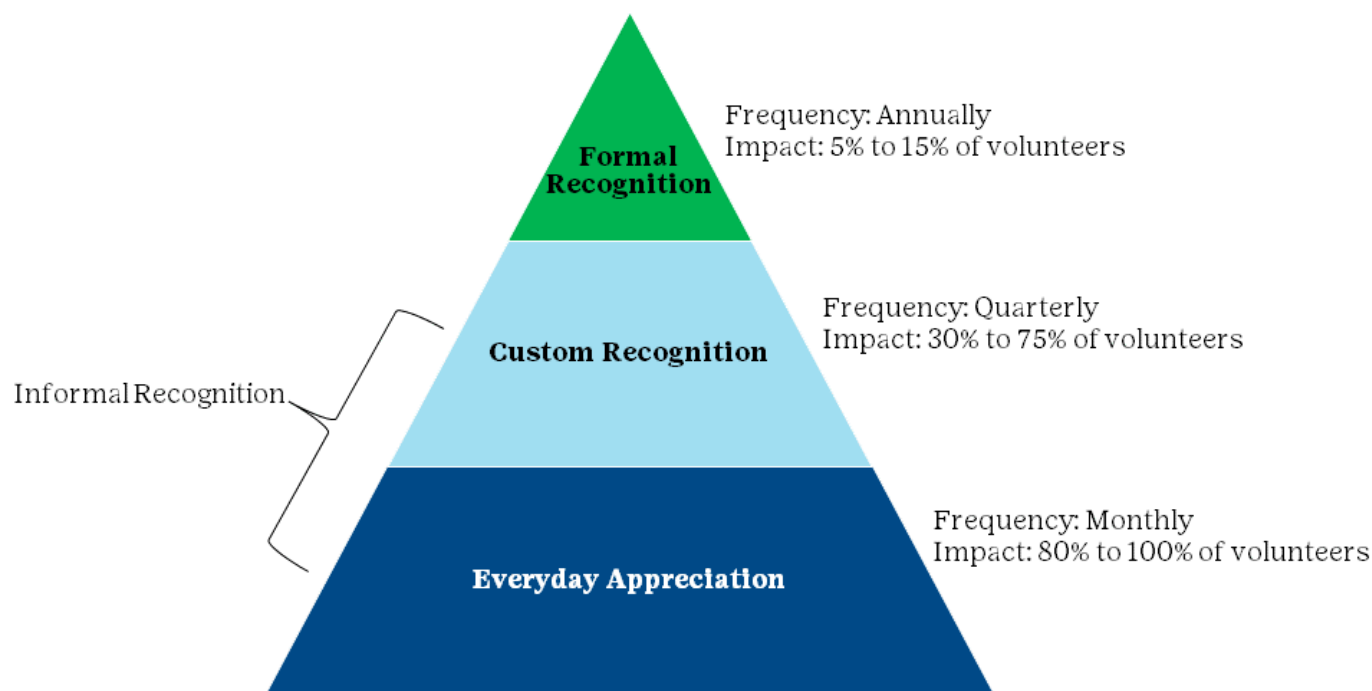
Office Depot Girl Scout Discount Program

Go to the [Office Depot Girl Scout Discount Program website](#) to sign up for this program to get discounted printing and more for all of your recognition needs. Click register and complete the new user registration.

- Login Name: Must be an email address.
- Company Name: Girl Scouts
- Number of Employees: Leave at 1-19.
- Shipping Address: 12012 Park Thirty Five Ci Austin, TX 78753
- Check the box "Register for a Store Discount Program" and submit.

After you register, [log in to your account](#), and place your order online to take advantage of the discounted pricing. Online orders can be shipped or can be placed for pick up at your favorite Office Depot® or OfficeMax® store location.

Types of Recognition



Often the focus is solely on formal recognition: service unit, council, and national awards. However, showing appreciation frequently and in a variety of ways will make the greatest impact.

Informal Recognition

There are two types of informal recognition: everyday appreciation and custom recognition. Some volunteers may be uncomfortable with public praise so get to know your volunteer(s) and their recognition preferences before forming your plan.

1

Everyday Appreciation

Everyday appreciation will reach the most volunteers in your troop or service unit, requires the least amount of preparation time, and has the lowest cost.

Check the everyday appreciation ideas that you will use each month in your recognition plan.

- ☐ Say “thank you” often and sincerely.
- ☐ Hold well-run leader and caregiver meetings that show consideration for busy schedules.
- ☐ Provide refreshments, fun table favors, and inspirational words at meetings.
- ☐ Welcome and greet people at meetings—calling them by name.
- ☐ Provide mentoring opportunities, help develop their leadership skills, or be a professional reference.
- ☐ Ask for ideas and suggestions and include volunteers in decision-making when possible.
- ☐ Recognize and accommodate personal needs, honor their preferences, and accept their individuality.
- ☐ Show interest in the volunteer’s life beyond Girl Scouts by getting to know them.

2

Custom Recognition

Celebrate troop and service unit milestones and the volunteers who help make them happen! This includes big wins, small victories, and special occasions. Look on page 10 for a list of special occasions and dates.

Check the custom recognition ideas that you will use quarterly in your recognition plan.

- ☐ Send a handwritten thank-you note, holiday, or birthday card. This can be from youth and adult members.
- ☐ Mail end-of-season thank-you postcards such as to troop or service unit Product Program volunteers or after an event to an event coordinator.

- ☐ Throw a surprise party to celebrate accomplishments. Surprise your troop or service unit volunteers with inexpensive plants and confetti party poppers at your next meeting.
- ☐ If you know that the person enjoys open praise, recognize them during a troop or service unit meeting.
- ☐ Create a “recognition edition” or “volunteer spotlight” section in a troop or service unit newsletter or email.
- ☐ [Donate to GSCTX](#) in their honor.
- ☐ Hand out daisies in honor of Girl Scouts’ founder, Juliette “Daisy” Gordon Low, at the beginning of a meeting to thank your volunteers.
- ☐ [Share an encouraging story](#) about your volunteer.
- ☐ Create a volunteer thank-you video.
- ☐ Craft small tokens or gifts with a creative thank-you message, such as a special patch, flower arrangement, scrapbook, photo collage, SWAPS, Kudoboard, or bookmark. Find printable cards and more within [Service Unit Resources](#).
- ☐ Create a punny gift for volunteers attending your next troop or service unit meeting.
 - Bag of microwavable popcorn: Just poppin' by to say thanks!
 - Highlighter: You have been a bright spot in our year.
 - Milky Way candy bar: Thanks for helping Girl Scouts reach for the stars.
 - Pretzels: Girl Scouts would be in knots without you!
 - Mints: Thanks for your commit"mint" to Girl Scouts.
 - Heart pin or stone: Because you are the heart of Girl Scouting.
 - Basil plant: Basil'cally, you're the best!
 - Chocolate, graham cracker, and marshmallow: We need s'more volunteers like you!
- ☐ Hold a volunteer dinner, picnic, potluck, or family social and give out custom awards. Look for custom award ideas on the next page.



Custom Awards

Custom awards usually include a special message or certificate and a small, inexpensive gift. Use these ideas to inspire you!

<p>The Bright Light Award Gift: Flashlight or lantern</p>  <p>Your leadership lit the way, and your vision is our guiding light.</p>	<p>The Do It All Award Gift: Mountain Dew</p>  <p>You “dew” so much for our troop/service unit!</p>	<p>The Energizer Bunny Award Gift: Batteries</p>  <p>You really added energy to our group. Thanks for charging us up.</p>
<p>The Enthusiastic Optimist Award Gift: Joy dish soap</p>  <p>It was a joy volunteering with you!</p>	<p>The Girl Scout Gardener Award Gift: Seed packets</p>  <p>Thanks for planting the seeds of our success.</p>	<p>The Golden Glue Award Gift: Glue bottled painted gold</p>  <p>For always sticking by your troop/service unit.</p>
<p>The Navigator Award Gift: Mini compass</p>  <p>For always guiding and steering us in the right direction.</p>	<p>The Sharp Thinker Award Gift: Mini cactus</p>  <p>For always having creative solutions when we were in prickly situations.</p>	<p>The Shining Light Award Gift: Candle</p>  <p>No one holds a candle to you. Thanks for your leadership and for lighting up the lives of our Girl Scouts.</p>
<p>The Superstar Award Gift: Soup and Starbursts</p>  <p>We are bursting with appreciation. Thank you for being a “souper” star volunteer!</p>	<p>The Top Banana Award Gift: Bejeweled bananas</p>  <p>Because you really get into the swing of things, don't monkey around, and do such an appealing job.</p>	<p>The Visionary Award Gift: Magnifying glass</p>  <p>Thanks for your vision and noticing key details.</p>

Formal Recognition



Formal recognition includes service unit, council, and national awards. To get started, review the Volunteer Awards Guide found in the [Volunteer Recognition section](#) of the Service Unit Resources page.

Formal Recognition Forms



[Service Unit Awards Order Form](#)

Service unit leadership or the volunteer recognitions coordinator submits this form at least four weeks before their service unit recognition ceremony.



[Council and National Awards Nomination Form](#)

Nominate an outstanding volunteer from October 1 through April 1.



[GSCTX Volunteer Awards Committee Application Form](#)

Submit your application from October 1 through April 1.



[10+ Years Volunteer Service Award Form](#)

Nominate yourself or another volunteer by April 1 to be recognized at the Volunteer Appreciation Awards Ceremony during the Volunteer Enrichment Conference in July.

Connect with Your Service Unit

Reach out to your service unit leaders to learn about your service unit award nomination process and deadline and if you are interested in forming or joining the Service Unit Recognitions Committee. [Contact us](#) if you need help connecting with your service unit.



Volunteer Recognition Plan

Who will you recruit to help make your recognition plan come to life?

Jot down informal and formal recognition ideas for your plan. The first line is an example.

Who	When	How
cookie volunteers	end of the Cookie Program	Mail a personalized thank-you card.

Check when you will recognize your volunteers:

- ☐ Birthdays
- ☐ Holidays: _____
- ☐ April Volunteer Appreciation Month
- ☐ Girl Scout Leader's Day on April 22
- ☐ Juliette Gordon Low's Birthday/Founder's Day on October 31
- ☐ Girl Scout Week in March/Girl Scouts' Birthday on March 12
- ☐ Investiture, rededication, and/or bridging ceremony
- ☐ Troop and service unit meetings
- ☐ Service Unit Recognition Ceremony
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

What is your recognition budget? _____

Volunteer Recognition Calendar

Fill in your annual troop or service unit recognition plan.

August	September
October	November
October 1: New Girl Scout Membership Year Begins and Fall Product Program Begins	
December	January
Happy Holidays!	Cookie Program Begins

February	March
April	May
<p>Volunteer Appreciation Month</p> <p>April 1: Deadline for <u>council and national award nominations</u>, <u>10+ Years Volunteer Service Award form</u>, and <u>Volunteer Awards Committee application</u>.</p> <p>April 22: Girl Scout Leader's Day</p>	
June	July
	<p>Attend the GSCTX Volunteer Enrichment Conference with your fellow volunteers.</p>

Thank you for
giving your time and
talents selflessly to
make the world a
better place.

