



*Tips and Tricks
for hosting your own
Higher Awards event!*

Let's Celebrate!!!

You can recognize Gold Award recipients in many different ways—at a troop ceremony, with family and friends, during a service unit meeting, at a bridging ceremony with the entire service unit—or in any other special way you can imagine. Gold Award recipients in Girl Scouts of Heart of the South are recognized with a certificate and letter of congratulations signed by our CEO and Board Chair, a Gold Award pin (purchased by Girl Scouts Heart of the South) and a certificate from GSUSA. They will also be invited to attend and participate in our special, council-wide G.I.R.L. Celebration held each spring. We encourage troop volunteers, service unit members and families to provide additional tokens of appreciation. Please visit [our website](#) for more information about requesting letters from elected officials, scholarship opportunities and additional forms of recognition.

In any case, remember that Girl Scouts includes learning by doing, cooperative learning and girl-led activities into all that we do. It's always great to include girls in the planning and hosting of any special event or ceremony. Maybe troop members, camp friends or other peers of the Gold Award recipient would like to help plan!

100 Years of History The Gold Award has its roots in early Girl Scout history—beginning with the Golden Eaglet of Merit that was created in 1916. Since that time, it has changed names: Golden Eaglet (1919), First Class Rank (1938), Curved Bar (1940), First Class (1963), and in 1980 it was renamed the Gold Award. Girl Scouts' highest award has always focused on leadership and service.

The Gold Award is the highest award that a Girl Scout Senior (grades 9-10) or a Girl Scout Ambassador (grades 11-12) may earn. Gold Award recipients complete two Leadership Journeys before beginning their Gold Award Take Action project. Then she must work individually to design and implement a project that solves a specific community need. While earning the Gold Award, girls connect with experts, community members and other Girl Scouts to create lasting change in her community. Gold Award recipients devote at least 80 hours to their projects and truly accomplish the Girl Scout mission of developing courage, confidence and character to make our world a better place.



Basic Ceremony

Opening with Flag Ceremony - Younger troop members or other Girl Scouts lead a flag ceremony. Contact your local Regional Girl Scout Office or Center for more information and to request flag materials.

Promise and Law – You may incorporate the Girl Scout Promise and Law into the flag ceremony, or incorporate a candlelight Promise & Law ceremony at another time during your celebration.

Welcome Message/Keynote speaker – Invite the Gold Award project advisor, a mentor or another special individual to speak. The welcome message may be very simple or it may include a more detailed call to action or motivational message.

Invocation (optional) - If appropriate, invite a spiritual or religious person to lead an invocation. Please keep in mind that Girl Scouts is an inclusive organization and be respectful of all participants.

Introduction of the Gold Award Recipient(s) - You may want to offer a special seat to the Gold Award recipient and/or her guests. Include a personalized introduction of each Gold Award recipient into the ceremony script.

Introduction of Honored Guests (optional) - If special guests are present, you may want to introduce them as well such as family members, Girl Scout staff or volunteers, local elected officials, etc.

Introduction or Definition of the Gold Award – Explain the Gold Award merits and process to all guests. You may want to ask a Girl Scout staff member, previous Gold Award recipients, troop members or another volunteer to share this.

Focus on the Recipient(s) - Have a person who knows the Gold Award recipient speak about her Girl Scout experience, her goals or other basic biographical information.

Recipient(s) Qualifications – Invite the Gold Award project advisor (or another appropriate person) to talk about the specific Gold Award Take Action project(s) being recognized.

Presentation of the Gold Award – Gold Award project advisor, parent/guardian, service unit manager, or Girl Scout staff member (etc.) presents the Gold Award pin to the award recipient. Your troop/service unit/group may choose to create and present a Gold Award certificate at this time. (Gold Award recipients will have already received certificates from our organization’s CEO and Board Chair and may already have the Gold Award pin).

Acknowledgments from Recipient(s) (optional) - Invite Gold Award recipients to speak about their Gold Award experience and Take Action project. They may also share encouragement or advice for younger Girl Scouts. (Please let recipients know ahead of time so they can prepare). The Gold Award recipients may also choose to present a family member/parent/project advisor with the smaller Gold Award parent pin.

Congratulations and Closing Comments – Have a volunteer or troop member share additional congratulations and close the ceremony. During this time, you may want to present a “challenge” to all award recipients. (See the following page for more information about a challenge and search online for even more ideas!)

Closing Song (optional) - Words can be printed in the written program.

Closing Flag Ceremony - Younger troop members/other Girl Scouts.

Reception (optional) - Offer time for guests to visit, provide refreshments or host a reception pot-luck style.



Sample Script Ideas

(for GS Gold Award Presentation Ceremony)

Welcome/Opening comments:

Thank you for joining us here today. We're here to honor these exceptional girls for completing their Girl Scout Gold Award. This is the most prestigious award in all of Girl Scouts. These girls have shown they are committed to working toward the goals they set for themselves and improving the world around them. These young women have dedicated tremendous amounts of energy to discovering the needs in our communities, connecting with experts and volunteers and taking action to create true and meaningful change in our world. They are amazing leaders and we are glad you all can be here to celebrate their achievements.

Introduction of the Gold Award:

The Gold Award is the most prestigious award that a Girl Scout Senior (grades 9-10) or a Girl Scout Ambassador (grades 11-12) may earn. The Gold Award has its roots in early Girl Scout history, beginning with the Golden Eaglet that was created in 1916. With a history of more than a century, we celebrate girls changing the world! Gold Award recipients complete two Leadership Journeys before beginning their Gold Award Take Action project. Then she must work individually to design and implement a project that solves a specific community need. While earning the Gold Award, girls connect with experts, community members and other Girl Scouts to create lasting change in her community. Gold Award recipients devote at least 80 hours to their projects and truly accomplish the Girl Scout mission of developing courage, confidence and character to make our world a better place.

While earning this award, girls explore possible careers, practice public speaking, improve communication skills, research and share their knowledge and often gain practical life skills such as learning to use a new piece of technology. Earning this award truly represents an incredible undertaking and a great learning experience.

Challenge/Closing (option 1):

I challenge you, today's Gold Award recipients, to accept this Award in the spirit in which it is given to you. Know that with this award comes responsibility. As you enter this covenant of esteemed women, know that you are regarded with honor and respect.

- I challenge you to seek beauty in all around you. Know that art, in all forms, both defines and bridges cultures. I challenge you to honor the earth and its living things.
- I challenge you to respect yourself and to continually strive to improve mind, body, and spirit.
- I challenge you to remember the founder of Girl Scouting, Juliette Gordon Low and the beginning of Girl Scouting in the U.S.A. Know that Girl Scouts and Girl Guides around the world are part of your family.
- I challenge you to give service. Give freely of yourself, expecting nothing in return. Celebrate the diversity of those around you. Seek to improve life for others.
- I challenge you to strive for excellence in all you do. Recognize the accomplishments of yourself and those around you. Know how today's achievements affect the world around you.
- By accepting this challenge you become a changed woman. You become part of an elite group who recognize that receiving this Gold Award is not one celebratory moment, but a lifetime commitment.



Sample Script Ideas *(for GS Gold Award Presentation Ceremony, cont.)*

If you accept this challenge, please repeat after me:

I affirm my dedication to live by the Girl Scout Promise and Law. I understand my obligation to live with honor and to lead by example because the highest award of Girl Scouting has been entrusted to me. I will do my best to support other Girl Scouts on their road to Gold. I will give back to Girl Scouting what it has given me. I will respect others and live worthy of respect, as one forever bound to the ideals of Girl Scouts.

Thank you and congratulations, Gold Award recipients. We will now end with a closing song (*include song title & words*), followed by a closing flag ceremony. Then, we invite all participants to join us for refreshments. Thank you for being here and supporting these amazing young women along their Girl Scout journey.

Challenge/Closing (option 2):

I challenge you, today's Gold Award recipients, to accept this Award in the spirit in which it is given to you. Know that with this award comes with responsibility. As you enter this covenant of esteemed women, know that you are regarded with honor and respect. Live worthy of this by living by the Girl Scout Law.

- I challenge you to remain honest and fair in all your dealings in this world. Never sell out and never give less than your very best. Always remain true to yourself. Always guard your honor.
- I challenge you to be friendly and helpful to everyone you meet as you go through life. Celebrate the diversity of your fellow human beings. Give service freely, expecting nothing in return. Seek to improve life for others.
- I challenge you to be considerate and caring to all living things, human and animal. Always being mindful of those in need, and the feelings of others. Treat others as you would like to be treated.
- I challenge you to be courageous and strong in all you do. Stand strong in the face of adversity and share your courage with those around you, especially those smaller and weaker than you.
- I challenge you to be responsible for what you say and do. Think before you speak and act. Be sure everything you say and do reflects well on you and your family.
- I challenge you to respect yourself, so you may respect others. Continually strive to improve your mind, body and spirit. Strive for excellence in all you do and recognize the accomplishments of others.
- I challenge you to respect authority. Follow the laws of your country and nature. Be mindful of your rights as well as your responsibilities as a citizen of this great nation. Remember that freedom is not free.
- I challenge you to use resources wisely. Never waste the resources of nature or those of yourself and the people around you. Use your talents to better the world, and to protect our planet. Seek out the beauty that is all around you.
- I challenge you to make this world a better place. Use all your abilities to leave this world in a better condition than you found it. By your words, actions and deeds you can make a difference.
- I challenge you to be a sister to every Girl Scout. Help younger girls to reach the top as you have. Support them on their road to the Gold. Do your best to give back to Girl Scouting, that which has been given to you, and a little more.

We invite you to accept this challenge along with your Gold Award. You become part of an elite group who recognize that receiving this Gold Award is not one celebratory moment, but a lifetime commitment.



Sample Script Ideas *(for GS Gold Award Presentation Ceremony, cont.)*

If you accept this challenge, please repeat after me:

I affirm my dedication to live by the Girl Scout Promise and Law. I understand my obligation to live with honor and to lead by example because the highest award of Girl Scouting has been entrusted to me. I will do my best to support other Girl Scouts on their road to Gold and to give back to Girl Scouting, what it has given me. I will respect others and live my life by the Girl Scout Law. I will remain worthy of respect as one forever bound to the ideals of Girl Scouting.

Thank you and congratulations, Gold Award recipients. We will now end with a closing song (*include song title & words*), followed by a closing flag ceremony. Then, we invite all participants to join us for refreshments. Thank you for being here and supporting these amazing young women along their Girl Scout journey.

Sample Ceremony - “Metal Ore” *(for Combined Bronze, Silver & Gold Award Presentations)*

Metal Ore Ceremony

Materials:

- Use metallic paint or spray paint to color three large rocks (one bronze, one silver and one gold). You can paint actual rocks, or make cardboard cut-outs. The idea is for them to look like large chunks of precious metals.
- Permanent markers or paint markers
- Decorations such as a bronze/silver/gold tablecloths, metals/mining-themed décor, strings of lights, flowers, etc.
- Memento(s) for each girl such as a certificate, bookmark, sticker, silver charm (there are lots of recognitions that can be purchased for Higher Award recipients through our council shops)

*Recommended: ask girls to prepare a couple sentences about her/their project ahead of time to share during the ceremony. You may want to give more time to Gold Award recipients because of the scope of their projects.

Procedure:

This ceremony can be planned as a stand-alone ceremony for Higher Award recipients and begin with a flag ceremony, the Pledge of Allegiance, the Girl Scout Promise and a song. Or, pieces of this ceremony can be incorporated into a larger service unit celebration.

Ask other special people to get involved with the ceremony--readers could be parents/family members, other Girl Scouts, troop leaders, community members/role models (such as a school principal), etc.

READER: Today we're celebrating the accomplishments of our Higher Award recipients--girls who have put a lot of time and effort into Taking Action within their communities to make our world a better place.



Metal Ore Ceremony (continued)

Earning a Higher Award takes a lot of dedication and a willingness to work hard, try new things and be flexible. This involved process is much like the process of a gold miner uncovering precious metals in the earth, refining them and bringing bright and polished treasures to our world.

READER: We will start by honoring our Junior Girl Scouts who have earned the Bronze Award. This award is the highest award that can be earned by a Junior Girl Scout. To earn this award, girls in grades 4-5 must first complete one of the Girl Scout Leadership Journeys. Then girls work as a troop on a Take Action project—a project that benefits the Girl Scout community or their local neighborhood. Working as a team, the girls mine their communities for information about local resources. Girls dig deeper to discover problems that need fixing. And they polish their ideas to find a creative solution. Each Bronze Award project brings a bit of brightness to our world.

Call Bronze girls by name or troop to come up. If time allows, you can have girls/troop leaders share a few sentences about their project. Hand out mementos and shake hands with each girl. Once she receives her recognition, she can sign the Bronze rock.

READER: Next, we'll recognize our Silver Award recipients. The Silver Award is the highest award that can be earned by a Cadette Girl Scout. Just like a miner who must sharpen the ax and check the flashlight before heading to work, Cadettes must complete an age-level Leadership Journey before working on the Silver Award. Completing this Journey helps girls stock their toolkit full of communication skills and added confidence.

READER: With these honed skills, Cadettes can work individually or in a small group to complete the Silver Award. A typical Silver Award involves at least 50 hours of service per girl. To earn the award, girls must discover a need in the community and develop a sustainable solution. Just as silver is a metal that endures the test of time, every single Silver Award project will keep benefiting our world for many years to come.

Call Silver girls by name or group to come up. If time allows, you can have girls/troop leaders share a few sentences about their project. Hand out mementos and shake hands with each girl. Once she receives her recognition, she can sign the Silver rock.

READER: Now we will move on to recognize girls who have earned the Gold Award, the highest award in all of Girl Scouting symbolized by the most precious metal.

READER: As with the other High Awards, Seniors and Ambassadors must lay the foundation work. Gold Award recipients complete two Leadership Journeys before beginning their Gold Award Take Action project. Then she must work individually to discover resources and problems in her community. She does this by connecting with experts and meeting with community members. Once she identifies a specific community need, she hones in on a sustainable solution. Throughout the process, she brings people to join her team. She reaches out to other Girl Scouts, friends, family members, community organizations and the media to get involved. This is like the process of a gold miner pulling hunks of metal from the ground and refining it and polishing it until it shines bright. Gold Award recipients devote at least 80 hours of work to refining their Take Action projects. These projects create lasting change in the community that we can all benefit from for years to come. Gold Award recipients embody the Girl Scout mission by developing courage, confidence and character.



Metal Ore Ceremony (continued)

Call Gold Award recipients by name one by one. This is truly an honorable accomplishment, so be sure to give each girl a couple of minutes to talk about her Gold Award project. Once she's spoken, hand out mementos and shake her hand. Once she receives her recognition, she can sign the Gold rock.

READER: We're very proud of all of the award recipients honored today. We know that many others support girls along the way and we'd like to take a minute to thank all of the family members, troop leaders, project advisors and others who supported these girls. Let's give them a round of applause.

READER: As we have seen today, an award is a symbol of achievement—showing that you have learned something new and that you provided service to others. Girl Scout Higher Award recipients join a special group of girls and women who have dedicated themselves to their communities. With each new award, a Girl Scout takes on new responsibilities. Strive always to be worthy of the symbols you wear, and wear them with pride. I encourage you to take the next step in Girl Scouting—to earn the Silver Award, to earn the Gold Award, or for those of you who have already earned the highest award, to mentor those coming up through the ranks behind you. Together we can all uncover precious metals within our communities and within ourselves. Best wishes to each of you.

Ceremony can be completed with a closing flag ceremony. Once the ceremony is complete, you may want to save time to take photos of all of the award recipients with their signed Bronze, Silver and Gold rocks. The rocks will become great recognitions for the service unit to keep and can be signed year after year until all of the space on a rock is filled and a new one can be started. These would be great to display during bridging ceremonies or other special events throughout the year. Feel free to [share your photos or a story](#) about your event with us.

Sample Ceremony - “Three Candles” (for Combined Bronze, Silver & Gold Award Presentations)

Three Candles Ceremony

Materials:

- Three tall candles, either green or white (these should be lit just before the ceremony starts)
- One candle per girl being honored (It's nice to have three different types of candles, such as bronze, silver and gold. If you have a lot of girls to recognize, you may want to use LED tea lights so you don't have to worry about the candles burning out)
- Candle holders
- Long-handled lighter
- Decorations can include green tablecloths (or bronze/silver/gold cloths), flowers, etc.
- Memento(s) for each girl such as a certificate, bookmark, sticker, silver charm (there are lots of recognitions that can be purchased for Higher Award recipients through our council shops)

* Recommended: ask girls to prepare a couple sentences about her/their project ahead of time to share during the ceremony. You may want to give more time to Gold Award recipients because of the scope of their projects.



Three Candles Ceremony (continued)

Procedure:

This ceremony can be planned as a stand-alone ceremony for Higher Award recipients and begin with a flag ceremony,

The Pledge of Allegiance, the Girl Scout Promise and a song. Or, pieces of this ceremony can be incorporated into a larger service unit celebration.

Ask other special people to get involved with the ceremony--readers could be parents/family members, other Girl Scouts, troop leaders, community members/role models (such as a school principal), etc.

READER #1: Today we are honoring girls who have earned the higher awards in Girl Scouts--the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards. Each of these girls has achieved the high ideals and goals expressed by Juliette Gordon Low, who founded the Girl Scout movement in 1912.

READER #2: The three tall candles symbolize the threefold purpose of Girl Scouting as expressed in our Promise.

READER #3: "On my honor, I will try: To serve God and my country..."

READER #4: "...To help people at all times..."

READER #5: "...And to live by the Girl Scout Law."

READER #1: Today, we will hear from many Girl Scouts about how they represented the Girl Scout Promise through their projects. As we hear about these incredible projects, girls will light candles to symbolize the brightness their projects brings to our world.

READER #1: First we will honor our Bronze Award recipients, Juniors who have served their community with hard work. To earn the Bronze Award, girls first complete a Leadership Journey to improve their teamwork skills. Then, they work as a group to develop a Take Action project that benefits Girl Scouts or their local neighborhood. Each troop honored here today will tell us a little about their project.

Readers 2-5 can help call up Bronze Award girls by troop and ask them to present their project. Present a small memento to each girl, shake her hand and help her light one of the candles on the table. Based on time/number of award recipients, you may want to read each girl's name aloud.

READER #1: Now we will honor our Silver Award recipients, Cadettes who have represented the Girl Scout Promise in many ways. These girls have achieved the highest award that Cadettes can earn. First, they must develop their leadership and interpersonal skills by completing a Leadership Journey. Once that is completed, girls can work individually or in a small group to identify a need within the local community and develop a creative solution. As girls work toward this award, they develop leadership skills, give back to their communities and make our world a better place. A typical Silver Award involves at least 50 hours of service per girl.



Three Candles Ceremony (continued)

Readers 2-5 can help call up Silver Award girls individually or by group and ask them to present their project. Present a small memento to each girl, shake her hand and help her light one of the candles on the table. Based on time/number of award recipients, you may want to read each girl's name aloud.

READER #1: Finally, we will now recognize our Gold Award recipients. The Gold Award is the highest award that a Girl Scout Senior (grades 9-10) or Girl Scout Ambassador (grades 11-12) may earn. Gold Award recipients complete two Leadership Journeys before beginning their Gold Award Take Action project. Then she must work individually to design and implement a project that solves a specific community need. While earning the Gold Award, girls connect with experts, community members and other Girl Scouts to create lasting change in her community. Gold Award recipients devote at least 80 hours to their projects and truly accomplish the Girl Scout mission of developing courage, confidence and character.

This would be a great time to invite an important community figure to speak for a few minutes about the value of the Gold Award, Girl Scout service, values, being a positive role model, etc. If you have a special speaker, invite the Gold Award girls up one by one after the speaker is finished. Ask the speaker to help award the mementos and congratulate the recipients. Readers 2-5 can help call up Gold Award girls individually and ask them to present their project. Present a small memento to each girl, shake her hand and help her light one of the candles on the table.

READER #1: We're very proud of all of the award recipients honored today. We know that many others support girls along the way and we'd like to take a minute to thank all of the family members, troop leaders, project advisors and others who supported these girls. Families and communities pitch in to make these Take Action projects and this leadership development a true success for all of these girls. Let's give them a round of applause.

READER #2: As we have seen today, an award is a symbol of achievement--showing that you have learned something new and that you provided service to others.

READER # 3: Girl Scout Higher Award recipients join a special group of girls and women who have dedicated themselves to their communities.

READER #4: With each new award, a Girl Scout takes on new responsibilities.

READER #5: Strive always to be worthy of the symbols you wear, and wear them with pride. Take what you have learned from this experience and continue to embody the values of the Girl Scout Promise.

READER #1: I encourage you to take the next step in Girl Scouting—to earn the Silver Award, to earn the Gold Award, or for those of you who have already earned the highest award, to mentor those coming up through the ranks behind you. Best wishes to each of you.

Ceremony can be completed with a closing flag ceremony. Once the ceremony is complete, you may want to save time to take photos of all of the award recipients. Feel free to [share your photos or a story](#) about your event with us.

Contact Us! To invite a staff representative, for additional support, or to share your ideas about celebrating Higher Award recipients, please contact us via info@girlscoutshs.org or 1 (800) 624-4185. We're here to help and we hope to hear from you!

