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34 GSNYPENN Girl Scouts Earn Prestigious Gold Award for Creating Lasting Change in Their Communities



Editor's note: View a short video about our Class of 2022 Gold Award Girl Scouts [via YouTube here](#). This video and the group photo above can be used by the media. Individual photos of most Gold Award recipients are available upon request.

Cicero, N.Y. (December 13, 2022) — The [Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways](#) (GSNYPENN) Council is proud to recognize the 34 members of its Gold Award Class of 2022 who invested countless hours and made a sustainable impact addressing causes they care about within their communities. GSNYPENN's most recent class turned their passions into action with projects that demonstrate the breadth of issues American teens feel are most prevalent in society today.

Girls were recognized for earning their Girl Scout Gold Award during the 2021-2022 membership year at a luncheon in late November at Drumlins in Syracuse, N.Y. Event attendees included award recipients and their families, council staff and board members. Keynote speaker was Deryn Pomeroy, a Girl Scout alum who serves as a trustee and Director of Strategic Initiatives for the William G. Pomeroy Foundation in Syracuse.

"I'm inspired by our Class of 2022 Gold Award Girl Scouts. They identified the root cause of pressing issues in their communities, created sustainable solutions and took action to earn one of Girl Scouting's highest achievements. Each embodies our Mission, Promise, and Law, and completed a project with lasting impact," says GSNYPENN CEO Julie Dale.

Since 1916, the Gold Award has stood for excellence and leadership for girls everywhere. It is the highest and most prestigious award that Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts can earn. Through their work on sustainable Take Action projects, Gold Award recipients gain tangible skills and prove they are the leaders our community and the world need.

2022 Gold Award Scholarship Recipients

Class of 2021 Girl Scout Kynzee Sethi of Binghamton, N.Y., was named a recipient of a Girl Scouts of the USA National Gold Award Scholarship for her project The Pandemic Records. A member of the Class of 2021, Kynzee's project completion date fell within the deadline of when GSUSA's 111 councils were provided the opportunity to nominate one outstanding Gold Award Girl Scout. The Pandemic Records gave youth ages 12-22 a voice during these unprecedented times by providing an outlet for personal expression through storytelling focused on mental health. The online photo blog chronicled 50 stories from 11 U.S. states, nine countries and four continents. GSUSA scholarship recipients represent \$225,000 invested (\$2,000 per girl) made possible by [Insight Global](#), [The Coca-Cola Foundation](#) and [Kappa Delta Foundation](#).

Eight Class of 2022 Girl Scouts were selected for Council Scholarships because their projects demonstrated the highest level of the award's core standards. A total of \$13,000 was awarded in memory of special GSNYPENN Girl Scout sisters lost in 2019 in addition to several more scholarships than usual thanks to funds raised from the council's annual Women of Distinction breakfast held in September. *(Read about each Girl Scout's project in the full bios below.)*

- **Marie Hepworth Scholarship in the amount of \$4,000 to Ana Dobrot of Farmington, N.Y., for her project Passing the Torch at Seneca Falls Convention Days**
Ms. Hepworth dedicated her life to supporting girl development through her 20-plus years serving as executive director of GSNYPENN legacy council Indian Hills and various volunteer activities in her community of Johnson City.
- **Kelly Perkins Scholarship in the amount of \$3,000 to Kathleen Glass of Camillus, N.Y., for her project Preserving Camillus History**
Ms. Perkins, a lifelong Girl Scout and GSNYPENN summer camp staff member, impacted the lives of campers and younger Girl Scouts in her community of Newark Valley.
- **Kerrie Black Scholarship in the amount of \$2,000 to Anabella Dentler of Manlius, NY., for her project Crafts and Care**
Ms. Black, a lifelong Girl Scout, was a GSNYPENN Regional Support Manager for Broome and Delaware counties who served her volunteers with excellence and was always willing to lend a hand to her colleagues.
- **Additional scholarships**
 - **\$1,000 to Ella Chilson of Sayre, Pa., for her project Hammock Hideaway**
 - **\$1,000 to Hannah Cooley of Carthage, N.Y., for her project Pollinator Garden and Awareness Events**
 - **\$1,000 to Natalie Thompson of Oneonta, N.Y., for her project What's in Your Mind**
 - **\$500 to Hannah Holt of Richford, N.Y., for her project Outdoor Classroom**
 - **\$500 to Emmalee White of Redwood, N.Y., for her project The Mental Health Project**

GSNYPENN Class of 2022 Gold Award Girl Scouts *(Individual photos of Girl Scouts available upon request)*

Kathryn Artz

Syracuse, N.Y. (Onondaga County)

Take Action Project: The New Driver Project

Kathryn's project was about bringing awareness to new drivers. She created vehicle magnets to affix to their cars that said, "Hey, I'm a new driver! Please be patient. Thank you!" One of her favorite Girl Scout memories is when her troop visited Hershey Park and the car in which they were riding kept bottoming out on the uneven roadway to their campsite, causing everyone to laugh hysterically.

Abigail Black

Victor, N.Y. (Ontario County)

Take Action Project: Musical Memories: Connecting Seniors to Teens

Abi's project addressed the issue of aging populations experiencing an increased risk for loneliness, isolation and depression. She established a program and process for meaningful connections between senior citizens (who possess valuable knowledge and experiences) to busy high school teenagers. Abi created a pathway for teens to partner with residents of area senior centers for the purpose of interviewing them about their past and discovering their favorite songs from their teens. The

students then learned these musical pieces and returned to perform them at the center. Her favorite Girl Scout memories are camping with her troop on a variety of outings from Camp Seven Hills and Piperwood to a backpacking weekend in Sonyea State Forest. She also loved visiting the birthplace of Juliette Gordon Low during the Centennial Celebration. An honors graduate of Victor Senior High School, Abi now attends Cornell University where she studies business and is the principal flute in the orchestra.

Elizabeth Casalmir

Lyons, N.Y. (Wayne County)

Take Action Project: Veteran Book of Lyons Rural Cemetery

After many years of participating in grave flag placements, Ellie realized there was a lack of communication and documentation regarding veterans buried in Lyons Rural Cemetery. Her project addressed this issue by creating photographic records available digitally and in binders to be used during placement. Her favorite Girl Scout memory is visiting the home and grave of Juliette Gordon Low in Savannah, Ga., with girls in her Service Unit in March 2017. Ellie is a 2022 graduate of Lyons High School and currently attends Hamilton College where she studies neuroscience.

Ella Chilson

Sayre, Pa. (Bradford County)

Take Action Project: Hammock Hideaway

Ella noticed a lack of progressive camping opportunities in her council camps. After researching many opportunities other councils provide, she created a new hammock unit at Camp Amahami. Ella's favorite Girl Scout memory is when her troop took a weeklong trip to Florida as Girl Scout Seniors. Ella is currently a senior at Sayre High School and plans to attend college to major in early childhood and special education.

Katie Cieplinski

Ontario, N.Y. (Wayne County)

Take Action Project: 911 Math

Katie's project addressed the needs of students in her community requiring assistance with math. She created a website with videos, notes, online activities and supportive materials students can access in their own time to receive the help they need to be successful in their classes. Her favorite Girl Scout memory is her troop adopting a family at Christmastime each year because she believes it's better to give than to receive. Katie is a graduate of Sodus Junior-Senior High School and currently attends the State University of New York at Fredonia where she is studying childhood inclusive education. Her goal is to become a preschool teacher in her hometown of Sodus, N.Y.

Mackenzie Coleman

Victor, N.Y. (Ontario County)

Take Action Project: Courage Pillows for Camp Onseyawa

Mackenzie addressed the issue of confidence in children with disabilities by making a customizable pillow and teaching the growth mindset to children with disabilities at Camp Onseyawa summer camp. One of her favorite Girl Scout memories is spending the night at the zoo and getting a behind the scenes tour. Mackenzie is a graduate of Victor High School and currently attends Nazareth College where she is studying childhood education.

Hannah Cooley

Carthage, N.Y. (Jefferson County)

Take Action Project: Pollinator Garden and Awareness Events

Hannah addressed the global decline of pollinators and raised awareness in her community through multiple educational events and making seed bombs with her troop and community members. She also built a pollinator garden with the help of her team and classmates. One of her favorite Girl Scout memories is visiting Camp Trefoil with her troop where they conquered the ropes course and camped. Hannah is a graduate of Carthage High School and currently attends Jefferson Community College. She hopes to transfer to Rochester Institute of Technology to pursue a career in medical illustration.

Madelynn Cummings

Greene, N.Y. (Chenango County)

Take Action Project: Greene Youth Theatre Workshop

Madelynn organized a youth theatre workshop for children in her community. Her goal was to spread her love of music and to help make theatre accessible to all. Her favorite Girl Scout memories are the lock-ins at her local high school. Madelynn is currently a senior at Greene High School and plans to attend college to pursue a degree in communications.

Anabella Dentler

Manlius, N.Y. (Onondaga County)

Take Action Project: Crafts and Care

Anabella addressed the issue of mental health by introducing adolescents to the concept of art therapy and how it can be used as a coping mechanism for stress and anxiety. In weekly classes, students participated in a variety of lessons on mental health and many art therapy activities. One of Anabella's favorite Girl Scout memories is when she went on a camping trip with her troop.

Ana Dobrot

Farmington, N.Y. (Ontario County)

Take Action Project: Passing the Torch at Seneca Falls Convention Days

Ana addressed a lack of youth involvement in gender equality work in Seneca Falls, the hub of the Women's Rights Movement, by creating and running the first event during Seneca Falls Convention Days tailored to youth. She introduced young teens to prominent gender equality activists of both the past and present, and helped them practice advocacy and speaking skills. Ana is currently a senior at Victor Senior High School and plans to major in genetics or biophysics on a pre-med track to eventually become a developmental pediatrician. She hopes to continue her activism work for the rest of her life.

Sasha Dudek

Oneonta, N.Y. (Otsego County)

Take Action Project: Recycling Film Plastics

Sasha addressed the issue of film plastic recycling and its effects on the environment by creating an informative podcast, "Plastic Film Recycling: How and Why?" which won WSKG's Student Podcast Challenge in 2020. (WSKG is the NPR/PBS affiliate in Vestal, NY.) She also created a brochure and children's activity which she shared at the Oneonta World of Learning, a local children's museum. Her favorite Girl Scout memory is writing and filming a short mystery movie while earning a badge.

Anita Edgar

Camillus, N.Y. (Onondaga County)

Take Action Project: Baltimore Woods Nature Book Walk

For her project, Anita addressed the rise in childhood inactivity leading to health problems like obesity and diabetes and the everlasting impact and disruption the coronavirus pandemic caused for childhood learning. Through research, she found that combining a fun outdoor activity to get kids moving with an educational component would be a great way to address both issues. Working with Baltimore Woods Nature Center, she created an accessible and immersive Nature Book Walk that provides exposure to a fun reading, age-appropriate story book with the pages being spaced out along a nature trail to get kids moving. Her project empowered kids with the chance to learn, read and exercise all while having fun.

Megan Evans

Owego, N.Y. (Tioga County, N.Y.)

Take Action Project: Emergency Preparedness for Seniors

Megan's project addressed emergency preparedness for senior citizens residing in her community. She led her team in building and delivering 50 free kits to inform local seniors about emergency preparedness and offered free virtual classes for all. She also placed binders around community centers with emergency preparedness information inside. One of her favorite Girl Scout memories is traveling to Washington, D.C., with her troop. Megan is a graduate of Owego Free Academy and currently attends Cazenovia College where she is studying criminal justice and psychology.

Abigail Fahey

Owego, N.Y. (Tioga County, N.Y.)

Take Action Project: O WE GO Green

Abigail organized a local community swap to reduce landfill waste in her area. She also helped educate her community about the importance of recycling through various media. One of her favorite Girl Scout memories is going to Camp Hoover every February with her troop and having cooking competitions. Abigail is currently a senior at Owego Free Academy and plans to attend a four-year university after graduation.

Madison Feely

Trumansburg, N.Y. (Tompkins County)

Take Action Project: Children's Farmers Market and School Snack Program

Madison worked to address food insecurities in her community by hosting a free children's farmers market and implementing a free snack program in her school. Her favorite Girl Scout memory is camping at Camp Comstock with her troop and making s'mores. Madison is a graduate of Trumansburg High School and currently attends Cornell University where she studies textile sciences and apparel design.

Kathleen Glass

Camillus, N.Y. (Onondaga County)

Take Action Project: Preserving Camillus History

After dozens of hours of research, Kate created a website containing highlights of the history of Camillus including photos, fun facts and information on various locations in the town. In addition to the website, she created a curriculum for 4th grade students in the West Genesee school district to learn about the history of Camillus. Kate's favorite Girl Scout memory is traveling to Puerto Rico with her troop to explore the island and celebrate 13 years as Girl Scouts. Kate currently attends the University of Florida where she's majoring in anthropology on a pre-med track.

Emily Goodstal

Binghamton, N.Y. (Broome County)

Take Action Project: Color Coding Fire Hydrants

Emily improved the safety of residents of the Village of Montour Falls, N.Y., by painting fire hydrants per the NFPA color code. The hydrant color communicates to fire fighters how much water each hydrant will deliver when fighting a fire. Emily has great memories of all the service projects her Girl Scout troop completed for their community. Her favorite is filling Operation Christmas Child boxes. Emily is a graduate of Chenango Valley High School and currently attends the State University of New York at Buffalo where she studies psychology and art therapy.

Lilly Hampp

Apalachin, N.Y. (Tioga County, N.Y.)

Take Action Project: A Taste of Dance

Lilly provided dance exposure to several children who were unable to previously receive it due to daycare, expenses and lack of knowledge. She presented a dance camp followed by video-recorded lessons available in several local libraries. One of Lilly's favorite Girl Scout memories is traveling to Boston with her troop and staying in a long-standing Girl Scout house. Lilly is a graduate of Vestal High School and currently attends Nazareth College where she studies occupational therapy.

Lily Herman

Trumansburg, N.Y. (Tompkins County)

Take Action Project: Cooking for Kids!

Lily addressed middle school-aged children within her community and school district who may not feel safe and comfortable in the kitchen by holding cooking classes and creating a cookbook written for a younger audience. Her favorite Girl Scout memories are camping and taking trips across New York State with her troop. Lily is a graduate of Charles O. Dickerson High School and currently attends the State University of New York at Geneseo.

Elizabeth Hotalen

Vestal, N.Y. (Broome County)

Take Action Project: Audition Masterclass

Elizabeth worked with the Bold Local Artists of the Southern Tier along with Broadway and tour actors to create The Performing Arts Project. Her project was a free workshop where teens learned how to have a successful audition. Her favorite Girl Scout memories are Rainbow World and her troop's senior trip to Washington, D.C. She is thankful for Girl Scouting because she met her two best friends and learned how to be an effective leader. Elizabeth is a graduate of Vestal High School and currently attends SUNY Broome Community College where she is studying to become a teacher.

Hannah Holt

Richford, N.Y. (Tioga County, N.Y.)

Take Action Project: Outdoor Classroom

Hannah addressed stress and anxiety among high school students by creating a memorial outdoor classroom for her school's courtyard. One of her favorite Girl Scout memories is riding the Flying Squirrel at Frost Valley with her fellow Girl Scouts. Hannah is a graduate of Newark Valley High School and currently attends the State University of New York at Cortland where she studies early childhood education.

Cassidy Holz

Baldwinsville, N.Y. (Onondaga County)

Take Action Project: Cpl. Kyle Schneider Memorial Garden

Cassidy addressed the need for fresh vegetables at food pantries by building and planting a community garden where the produce was donated to a local food pantry. One of her favorite Girl Scout memories is attending the 100th anniversary in Washington, D.C., and fire trucks spraying water to cool the girls off on that hot day. Cassidy is a graduate of C.W. Baker High School and currently attends Onondaga Community College where she is studying American Sign Language.

Katelyn Johnson

Cato, N.Y. (Cayuga County)

Take Action Project: Explore the Area to Defeat Childhood Obesity

Katelyn helped keep kids healthy and active through various means, such as holding a “Get Moving Carnival” and making a book that includes exciting places to visit around New York State. One of her favorite Girl Scout memories is whale watching in Boston. Katelyn is a graduate of Cato-Meridian High School and currently attends the University at Buffalo where she studies medicinal chemistry.

Elizabeth Komara

Farmington, N.Y. (Ontario County)

Take Action Project: Project G.L.I.D.E.

Elizabeth addressed the need for safe spaces in schools through Project G.L.I.D.E., which stands for Growing a Loving, Inclusive, Diverse, Environment. She started her school’s Asian Student Association, created the Interfaith Space for girls of diverse religious backgrounds, and planned and held a culture week filled with special meals and various activities highlighting different cultures. Elizabeth’s favorite Girl Scout memory is the mall lock-in where her troop danced and laughed the entire night! Elizabeth is a senior at Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women.

Lauren McCay

Victor, N.Y. (Ontario County)

Take Action Project: Veterans to Always Be Honored

Lauren is passionate about showing respect and appreciation to military members who have given so selflessly to their great nation. Her project addressed honoring veterans at a local cemetery by recording all veteran graves onto a map and spreadsheet and placing flag holders next to each veteran’s headstone. One of her favorite Girl Scout memories is when her troop hosted a weekend-long encampment. The theme was “Around the World” and included a cooking station, fashion show, arts and crafts, and many outside games. Lauren graduated from Victor Senior High School and currently attends the University of Pittsburgh College of Business Administration.

Hannah Mazzone

Syracuse, N.Y. (Onondaga County)

Take Action Project: Farm Friends Mission

Hannah’s passion for animals was the center of her project. A vegetarian herself, she helped educate the public on the benefits of a vegetarian lifestyle, along with the environmental effects of factory farming and mistreatment of those animals. This involved public presentations with an exhibit, as well as a digital format, now available on social media. Hannah also constructed a one-of-a-kind coop that is currently in use at Briarwood Sanctuary, where she volunteers. Her favorite Girl Scout memory is during of her troop’s camping trips where they all enjoyed singing, the human knot game, and a giant board game where they were the pawns.

Lily Ocque

Ontario, N.Y. (Wayne County)

Take Action Project: School Composting System

Lily addressed the importance of composting within her school. She created a campaign including PSA videos, in-person presentations, and other forms of social communication while including various community members to assist with her project. Her favorite Girl Scout memory was the New York City trip when she was a Girl Scout Junior. Lily is a graduate of Wayne Central High School and currently attends Rochester Institute of Technology where she’s pursuing a degree in film production.

Grace Payne

Clifton Springs, N.Y. (Ontario County)

Take Action Project: The Outhouse Project

Grace addressed problems with women’s and children’s access to simple toiletries through various media, including Facebook and YouTube. She built a hollow, four-foot-tall outhouse to collect toiletry items which were then taken to various organizations such as the Salvation Army, Canandaigua Churches in Action and Care Net. One of her favorite Girl Scout memories is spending the night at the Seneca Park Zoo in the polar bear viewing building. Grace is a graduate of Midlakes High School and currently attends Finger Lakes Community College where she is studying childhood education.

Mariah Salter

Owego, N.Y. (Tioga County, N.Y.)

Take Action Project: The Staff Project

Mariah informed her local community of the importance of music education for youth. She did this through many different media, including radio interviews, new articles and social media. This helped spread her message and encouraged others to do their part. She encouraged the public to donate instruments and make monetary donations to her project, which benefited the Owego Apalachin Central School District music program and children who participate in school bands.

Delaney Schoenfeldt

Vestal, N.Y. (Broome County)

Take Action Project: Ross Park Zoo Garden Trail

Delaney helped design and build a garden trail at the local zoo by creating signs to teach the public about local plants and fun facts about them. Visitors can also create rubbings of all the leaves and flowers to take home. Delaney's favorite Girl Scout memory is building fires and competing in the cooking competition at Rainbow World.

Adrianna Schwartz

Auburn, N.Y. (Cayuga County)

Take Action Project: Cayuga's Recreation Trail Renovation

Adrianna addressed the issue of run-down trails in the Village of Cayuga by making it a better place to walk and relax. She built new benches, put in a birdwatching area, made new signs, and cleaned up trails. Adrianna's favorite Girl Scout memory is traveling to The Birthplace in Savannah, Ga., and learning about all the history that took place there.

Natalie Thompson

Oneonta, N.Y. (Otsego County)

Take Action Project: What's in Your Mind

Natalie's project focused on educating kids and teens about the topic of mental health with a safe, friendly, and knowledgeable online platform. Her What's in Your Mind website allows visitors to read articles, watch videos, and have discussions about their mental health. It is run by volunteers with an avid interest in the topic and designed to allow kids and teens to take control of how they learn about their mental health, and how they can break the negative stigma around it. One of Natalie's favorite Girl Scout memories is serving as a National Delegate for GSNYPENN at the National Council Session in 2020. Natalie is a graduate of Oneonta Senior High School and currently attends the Crane School of Music at the State University of New York at Potsdam where she is studying music education.

Emmalee White

Redwood, N.Y. (Jefferson County)

Take Action Project: The Mental Health Project

Emmalee's project focused on educating adolescents on not only mental illnesses but also the importance of taking care of our mental health. With her advisor and team, she created five videos discussing anxiety, depression, perfectionism, eating disorders, and coping with stress. In May, she gave a presentation titled "Back to Basics," which coincided with the theme of Mental Health Month. One of Emmalee's favorite Girl Scout memories is completing this Gold Award. She feels that she really made a difference and hopes her project will leave a lasting impact on students. Emmalee is a graduate of Alexandria Central School and currently attends the State University of New York at Potsdam where she studies early childhood education.

Molly Wright

Ogdensburg, N.Y. (St. Lawrence County)

Take Action Project: Creating Mental Health Awareness in School-Age Children

Molly brought awareness to the issue of mental health by creating an informational guide on how to minimize daily stress and anxiety which was distributed to middle school students. She also gave presentations and demonstrations on calming techniques to elementary students and created a calming/sensory room to allow students to have a safe environment where they can spend time to help with self-regulation when feeling stressed or anxious. One of her favorite Girl Scout memories is going to Boston with her troop and their whale watching tour. Molly is a graduate of Morristown Central School and currently attends the State University of New York at Potsdam where she is studying education and psychology.

GSNYPENN serves girls in K-12 across 26 counties: Allegany, Broome, Cayuga, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Ontario, Oswego, Otsego, St. Lawrence, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins, Wayne and Yates in New York and Bradford and Tioga in Pennsylvania. Annual membership is just \$25; financial assistance is available. To start her adventure, visit gsnypenn.org/join. To become a volunteer, learn more at gsnypenn.org/volunteer. To help make Girl Scouting possible for girls in your community, visit gsnypenn.org/donate.

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About Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways, Inc.

Girl Scouts is the preeminent leadership development organization for girls in grades K-12. Our extraordinary journey began in 1912 when our Movement was founded by Juliette Gordon "Daisy" Low. Today, we continue the Girl Scout mission of building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. We offer every girl the chance to practice a lifetime of leadership, adventure and success. GSNYPENN is chartered by Girl Scouts of the USA to administer the Girl Scout program in 24 counties of New York and two in Pennsylvania. Learn more at gsnypenn.org.