



2024-2025

**Adult Volunteer &
Community
Recognitions Guide**

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2024-2025 Adult Volunteer & Community Recognitions

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Recognitions 101

Formal adult awards are offered by GSUSA and by Girl Scouts of New Mexico Trails (GSNMT) to recognize exemplary service of adult Girl Scouts and community partners who go above and beyond the expectations of an individual's position. Volunteers, girl members and/or their families may nominate someone for an award.

- Adult Awards Descriptions
- Adult Awards Frequently Asked Questions

Purpose

New Mexico Trails' formal adult awards are intended to recognize exemplary service that is above and beyond what is expected for the individual's volunteer role. Formal awards should be used to honor specific service rather than longevity. Formal awards are intended to be only one part of a comprehensive recognition plan, which should also include informal recognition of volunteers.

Distribution of awards

Awards are distributed annually at the council's Appreciation Luncheon held each April. Numeral guard recognitions are given to the Service Units to distribute at their convenience, with the exception of 50+ year tenure pins will be distributed at the ceremony. There may be an occasion where a numeral guard is given at the ceremony, but this is on a case-by-case basis.

Nomination deadlines.

All awards have a deadline of January 31 annually.

Nomination applications

Online applications are available on New Mexico Trails' website. Please review the nomination criteria carefully.

Preparing & Submitting Nominations

Read the requirements for each award to make sure you are nominating the volunteer for the appropriate award. Descriptions of awards and forms are available within this booklet and on the GSNMT website: www.nmgirlscouts.org

How to Write an Endorsement

Read *Tips for Writing Endorsement Letters* at the end of this document. ***Please ensure that as the nominator, you notify your endorsers to complete the Endorsement Letter/form.*** The council will not notify the endorser to complete the endorsement. Troop members (girls) are encouraged to endorse a volunteer for his/her award; however, family members may not be endorsers for a nomination.

How to Submit

Submit Nomination and Endorsement Letters together to the council by the deadline, January 31. Nominations, endorsements, numeral guard requests, and Community/Council Awards are submitted online. No hard copy paperwork is accepted.

You and your candidate will be notified about the approval of your nomination after the applications have been reviewed and all appropriate actions of the board and/or task group are complete. If a nomination is denied, the reason is not required of the task group, but the nominating party will be notified of the denial. Due to time constraints, the task group is not able to accept requests for further review; therefore, the task group/board decision is final. Appreciation, Honor, Thanks Badge I, and Thanks Badge II must go to the board for their approval. The Juliette Low Leadership Award is submitted directly to GSUSA.

Follow Up

Pins and certificates are provided by Girl Scouts of New Mexico Trails, Inc. If your candidate is unable to attend the presentation venue to receive the award, it will be turned over to your Regional Manager for membership for presentation at another appropriate event.

Tiers and Award Levels ~ summary

The question is often asked, “Is there an order in which awards are recommended?” In an ongoing effort to provide guidance to nominators, the following information should be considered when determining which award to honor a volunteer with and in what sequence. For additional details on award descriptions, please see subsequent pages.

Name of Award	Number of Endorsements required
<i>Tier 1 Awards</i>	
Circle of Achievement	1
Circle of Excellence	1
Cookie Champ	1
Leaving Her Legacy	1
Spirit of Diversity	1
Star Trainer	1
Trails of Leadership	1
<i>Tier 2 Awards</i>	
Teola Artman	2
Volunteer of Excellence	2
<i>Tier 3 Awards</i>	
Appreciation Pin	3
Honor Pin	3
<i>Tier 4 Awards</i>	
Thanks Badge I	4
Thanks Badge II	4

Award Descriptions

Appreciation Pin

The Appreciation Pin recognizes:

- A registered adult Girl Scout's exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE)
- Has had measurable impact on one geographic area of service
- Helps reach and surpass the mission-delivery goals of the area.

Needed: The Award Nomination Form and three endorsement letters.

Example candidate: At a local event, a Troop Leader noticed that the diversity of the girls did not match the diversity of the community. She collaborated with the Service Unit to create and implement recruitment strategies to reach both girls and adults and developed new ways of work to support new members. As a result, Hispanic girl membership rose by 14 percent last year.

Circle of Achievement

The Circle of Achievement Award recognizes outstanding individuals who:

- Provide a short-term service worthy of recognition;
- Provide more than one short-term service endeavor; and,
- Is a registered Girl Scout member.

Needed: The Award Nomination Form and two endorsement letters.

Example candidate: A Girl Scout volunteer who has volunteered to be the Service Unit's Day Camp Coordinator for the summer.

Circle of Excellence

The Circle of Excellence Award recognizes outstanding individuals who:

- Provide continuing service at a consistent level;
- Provide this level of service to the same Council jurisdiction; and,
- Is a registered Girl Scout member.

Needed: The Award Nomination Form and two endorsement letters.

Example candidate: A Girl Scout volunteer who has continued to provide service as the Service Unit Treasurer and led the Service Unit in appropriate financial oversight for more than one year.

Cookie Champ Award

The Cookie Champ Award recognizes product program volunteers – cookie program specifically – for the time, energy, and effort displayed during the annual cookie program.

- A registered adult Girl Scout's exemplary service in support of the troop, Service Unit, or council-level cookie program.
- Has had measurable impact on her/his troop, Service Unit, or council-level cookie partnership.
- Helps reach or surpass the goals set in place by the troop or Service Unit, all with keeping the product program vision in mind.

Needed: The Award Nomination Form and two endorsement letters.

Example candidate: A troop cookie manager has partnered with the troop leadership to have regular parent meetings and communications during the duration of the cookie program, has submitted orders and other required information to the council on behalf of the troop and its cookie program participants, and has connected with the council's Product Program Manager on a regular basis to ensure deadlines are met.

Honor Pin

The Honor Pin recognizes:

- A registered adult Girl Scout's exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience
- Has had measurable impact on two or more geographic areas of service
- Helps reach and surpass the mission-delivery goals of the area.

Needed: The Award Nomination Form and three endorsement letters.

Example candidate: A facilitator realized that although the council created online courses and resources on the GSLE, at volunteer meetings she heard comments indicating that many volunteers still were hesitant to use Journeys to deliver the GSLE to girls. She worked with the Volunteer Development Manager on staff to create a GSLE coach role, which would support all direct-service volunteers as they implemented what they learned in the courses and put Journeys into action. This role was piloted in four service-delivery teams where, after the first year, Journey participation increased by 30 percent; girls shared the impact of 14 new take-action projects via the council's Web site; and the volunteer-satisfactions scores increased by 12 percent.

Leaving Her Legacy Award

The Leaving Her Legacy Award is a new award that recognizes a Troop Leader or Assistant Leader that started a troop of Kindergarten Daisies and continued with the same troop until the girls became graduated Ambassadors.

- The recipient must be an active, registered adult Girl Scout.
- The recipient must be in a trained, active leadership role (Troop Leader or Assistant Leader) with the same troop for the entire 13 years.

Needed: The Award Nomination Form and two endorsement letters.

Spirit of Diversity Award

The Spirit of Diversity Award recognizes fellow volunteers for their commitment to diversity and inclusion throughout their Girl Scout program.

- A registered adult Girl Scout's exemplary commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion within her/his troop, Service Unit, or council-level partnership.
- Has increased the number of diverse Girl Scouts in her/his troop or Service Unit.

Needed: The Award Nomination Form and two endorsement letters.

Star Trainer

The Star Trainer Award recognizes outstanding individuals who:

- Provide training at the Service Unit or council level in a manner that exceeds the expectations of the position;
- Exhibit exceptional diligence in performing his/her training responsibilities;
- Exceed the expectations for the position in the following areas:
 - Initiative
 - Teamwork and Versatility
 - Enthusiasm and Creativity
 - Attitude and Leadership
 - Communication
 - Dedication
- Is a registered Girl Scout member.

Needed: The Award Nomination Form and two endorsement letters.

Teola Artman

The Teola Artman Award recognizes:

- An adult volunteer, active within her/his Service Unit who is the “glue that holds things together”
- This pin is given to a volunteer only once.

The award is named after long-time Girl Scout volunteer, Teola Artman, who was an active volunteer in the Clovis area for over 60 years.

Needed: The Award Nomination Form and three endorsement letters.

Example candidates: An event coordinator who has managed several successful events while encouraging an increasing degree of girl planning and participation. Or, the troop/group chair for the family partnership campaign who has increased support for the local community and families and who gives a personally significant donation.

Thanks Badge I

The Thanks Badge I honors

- A registered adult Girl Scout whose ongoing commitment, leadership and service has had an exceptional, measurable impact on meeting the mission-delivery goals and priorities
- Affects the entire council or entire Girl Scout Movement.

Needed: The Award Nomination Form and four endorsement letters.

Example candidate: A volunteer saw an opportunity to use Journeys to increase membership in one of the council's target markets through the camp participation. She helped the council partner with local companies and groups to provide in-kind, financial and volunteer support to build a Tree House at each camp through a Take-Action project. She led a task group of girls to design and develop progressive programming, based on girl-led processes and Journey content, which culminated in take-action projects. The three year project brought in 300 new Girl Scouts, a 5 percent overall increase in camp registrations the following year, 90 new volunteers and new partnerships with 11 local organizations.

Thanks Badge II

The Thanks Badge II honors

- A previous Thanks Badge award recipient who has continued to provide exemplary service in a leadership role, resulting in a measurable impact
- Benefits the entire Girl Scout Movement.

Needed: The Award Nomination Form and four endorsement letters.

Example candidate: After receiving the Thanks Badge, the volunteer from the Thanks Badge example was motivated by the success of the Tree House Take-Action project and submitted to present this best practice at a GSUSA conference. She then served two years on a national task group to help educate and support all Girl Scout councils across the Movement to create long-term plans that integrate all council departments to implement the camp pathway to grow membership and deliver the Girl Scout Leadership Experience through Journey use.

Trails of Leadership Award

The Trails of Leadership Award recognizes:

- An entry-level recognition of a Girl Scout volunteer.
- An adult Leader, Assistant Leader, or parent whose performance as a volunteer and whose interaction with the girls is so outstanding that it merits council-level recognition; and,
- Is a registered Girl Scout member.

Needed: The Award Nomination Form and two endorsement letters.

Example candidate: A Troop Leader who partners with assistant leaders and parents to make his/her girls' troop experience a positive and fulfilling time for all girls involved – no matter what the program age level. The Troop Leader also allows girls to be girl-led and make decisions as a troop, while stepping back and guiding as necessary.

Volunteer of Excellence:

The Volunteer of Excellence award recognizes a volunteer who has:

- Contributed outstanding service while partnering directly with girls in any pathway to implement the Girl Scout Leadership Experience through use of the national program portfolio;
- Who has contributed outstanding service in support of the council's mission delivery to girl and adult members; and,
- Is a registered Girl Scout member.

Needed: The Award Nomination Form and two endorsement letters.

Example candidate: A volunteer program advisor works over the course of the year with a teen advisory committee. Thirty current Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors plan and deliver a day camp in the Service Unit, using content from the aMuse journey, targeted to girls in underserved areas in the council. As a result, those areas had a combined total of 210 new Junior girl members and 16 new adult volunteers.

GSUSA Award ~

Juliette Low Leadership Award

The Juliette Low Leadership Award is a national award and recognizes:

- Individuals and councils who have enriched and leveraged the global understanding of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting to grow responsible global citizens
- Approved by the Girl Scouts of the USA National Board of Directors
- The recipient must show:
 - His/her impact on girls
 - Commitment to Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting
 - Promote global awareness of the Movement
 - Leverage his/her leadership for the betterment of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting
 - Currently registered membership of Girl Scouts

Needed: The Girl Scout Council or individual nominates a candidate or council that meets the above criteria and who has not previously received this award. The nomination form must be obtained from GSUSA and completed in full, along with two letters of endorsement. Upon approval, the GSUSA Vice President of Global Girl Scouting will coordinate the presentation of the award to the nominee.

Example candidate: A volunteer who has a passion for travel, international volunteering, and Girl Scouting who highlights global awareness of a girl issue that she may have experience first-hand.

Community & Council Service Awards

~We could not do it without our community partners~

Community Service Award

The Community Service Award recognizes an individual or group, not registered with Girl Scouts, who has rendered service to the Girl Scouts of New Mexico Trails, Inc. in at least one jurisdictional area. The candidate or candidate's organization has provided outstanding support that furthers the Girl Scout program and lack of that support would have seriously constrained delivery of the Girl Scout program or made it unavailable. The Community Service Award is a certificate of appreciation.

Needed: The Community/Council Service Award Nomination Form.

Example candidates: A church or school that has permitted use of their facilities for meetings, events or trainings that benefited Girl Scouting within one service area. Or, an individual, who developed, presented, sponsored or significantly contributed to a project or event that benefited Girl Scouting within one service area.

Council Service Award

The Community Service Award recognizes an individual or group, not registered with Girl Scouts, who has rendered service to the Girl Scouts of New Mexico Trails, Inc. in more than one jurisdictional area. The candidate or candidate's organization has provided outstanding support that furthers the Girl Scout program and lack of that support would have seriously constrained delivery of the Girl Scout program or made it unavailable. The Council Service Award is a certificate of appreciation or, if appropriate, an engraved plaque with the Girl Scout logo on it.

Needed: The Community/Council Service Award Nomination Form.

Example candidates: An organization who has provided a program opportunity to girls in a particular region of the council or council-wide. Or, an individual, who developed, presented, sponsored or significantly contributed to a project or event that benefited Girl Scouting across the council's 23-county jurisdiction.

Years of Service & Numeral Guards Membership Numerals

This is a GSUSA award that recognizes tenure in Girl Scouting. Numeral guards are available in five-year intervals to recognize total girl and adult membership years. Numeral guards will be provided to the recipient by the Council at no cost.

Awards Frequently Asked Questions

What are adult volunteer and community awards?

These are formal awards designed by Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) or Girl Scouts of New Mexico Trails (GSNMT) to be used to recognize exemplary volunteer or community service that goes above and beyond what is expected in a volunteer or community partner role.

When should adult volunteer awards be used?

An effective recognition program is made up of informal and formal recognition. Formal adult volunteer awards are not intended to be used to honor or recognize annual service or good performance. Informal recognition should be used for recognition in these cases. Formal awards are to recognize exemplary service, not to recognize longevity. Nominate someone for a formal award when they have completed a project or year of service where they have made significant **measurable** contributions.

Who can nominate a volunteer for an award?

All Girl Scout volunteers and girl members may submit a nomination. New Mexico Trails' staff may also nominate a volunteer, but we strongly encourage Girl Scout members to nominate peers. *Note to Service Units:* It is helpful if you designate a contact person in your Service Unit and instruct volunteers and families to include that person's name on the nomination application under the "designated contact person" field.

Who can endorse a volunteer for an award?

Endorsers may be fellow volunteers, Service Unit Managers, girls from a troop, or staff. Family members may not be endorsers.

How are pins distributed?

Awards are distributed at the council's annual Appreciation Luncheon held each April. Any volunteer receiving an award who is not able to attend the ceremony will receive their award from their Regional Manager for membership at a later date. Numeral guards less than 50+ years will be distributed to the Service Unit for formal recognition at a Service Unit meeting. Numeral guards more than 50+ years will be recognized at the ceremony.

When are nominations due?

All nominations and endorsements are due to Council by January 31.

Can adult volunteer awards only be earned once during someone's Girl Scout volunteer career?

No. One shift GSUSA is trying to make in the area of recognition is that volunteers receive these specific high awards for the **contribution that they did** (exemplary service) and **not** as a way to recognize the longevity of their service. As a movement, we have a large number of volunteers who continue to contribute for decades which can lead to many outstanding contributions. In GSUSA's revised adult awards program there is nothing stating that a volunteer cannot receive the same high award more than once; however, the nominator is encouraged to nominate a volunteer for a different award than he/she has received in the past. The Volunteer Recognition's Committee

will review each nomination very carefully to ensure that it effectively demonstrates that the applicant met the award criteria specific to the nomination. If you are not sure whether a formal award is appropriate, ask yourself if you want to acknowledge the individual because they work hard, have a great attitude and/or have been volunteering a long time, or if you want to recognize specific contributions the individual made that resulted in measurable impact. If you answered that you want to acknowledge hard work, than an informal recognition is appropriate. If you answered that you want to acknowledge specific measurable contributions, then a formal award nomination would be appropriate.

What if the person I'm nominating has already received that particular award?

If the volunteer you are nominating has already received that award, the volunteer will receive a rocker that they can then include with their previously earned award.

I should be receiving my 30 Years of Service pin this year. Do I need to do anything?

Please complete the Numeral Guard request form with information on your years of service so that the appropriate year pin may be provided to you.

What help is available?

Contact Customer Care at customercare@nmgirlscouts.org with questions or to discuss an individual's service to see which, if any, award would be most appropriate; your email will be directed to the appropriate staff person. Resources including award descriptions and tips for writing endorsement letters are available in this packet or on the GSNMT website www.nmgirlscouts.org

Tips for Writing Endorsement Letters

All award nominations are reviewed by the Volunteer Recognition's Committee, a group of Girl Scout governance and operational volunteers who are committed to recognizing exemplary service to Girl Scouts of New Mexico Trails. The endorsement letter should illustrate to the committee that the nominee meets the award's requirements and that their service in the previous Girl Scout membership year is worthy of a Girl Scout award.

1. All of the awards require more than one letter of endorsement. If you are the nominator coordinating the nomination, provide this **Writing Endorsement Letters** document to the individuals writing letters to ensure that they document the relevant and specific information needed.
2. Carefully review the nomination application for the award. Pay close attention to the award's requirements and questions to address in the endorsement letter.
3. Provide objective, results-oriented information on how the nominee's service has benefited the target audience (depending on the award this may be a troop/group, Service Unit, or council).

Document this information per the award requirements.

- What has the nominee done?
- When did this occur?
- Who benefited?
- How did they benefit?

4. Provide details such as relevant facts and specific actions and behaviors that demonstrate the requirements were met and that the nominee went "above and beyond" the expectations of their position.
5. Most likely, the committee members reviewing the letter will not know the nominee. Write your letter assuming that the only information the committee will have to make their decision is what you provide to them. Take the time to construct a well-written letter and be as specific as possible. It is possible for someone whose service warrants an award to not be approved because the endorsement letters do not sufficiently convey their service to the committee.
6. Use abbreviations only after defining the definition for the abbreviation. Example: Service Unit Manager (SUM).
7. Be sure to describe or define "local" words or phrases.
8. Include your name, address, and phone number.
9. Include how you know the nominee.
10. All Girl Scout leaders are wonderful people, many put a lot of time into the Girl Scout program, most are liked by everyone, all should believe in the Girl Scout Promise and Law, and for most, their dedication to Girl Scouts is apparent. Please stay away from only "feel good" statements in your letter. It is difficult to determine if the

nominee's service went "above and beyond" and warrants recognition without specific details.

11. If you are writing letters for multiple nominees, please make sure each letter is unique and speaks to that individual's specific service and value. Please do not create "form" endorsement letters for multiple nominees even if what they did was similar. Using "form" letters or "cutting and pasting" standard statements and using in multiple letters takes the sincerity out of the letter and may give the committee cause to question if the nominees' service is deserving of recognition.

12. Remember, if approved for the award the nominee may receive the endorsement letters. For many the letters are more special than the actual award.

Compare the following sets of excerpts:

A. "Feel good" statements only. "Sue is an outstanding event planner committed to girl planning. Her dedication to Girl Scouting is apparent. She is a well liked and well respected Girl Scout volunteer."

B. Statements with relevant facts and specific actions/behaviors

"Sue ensured that the Service Unit event was girl led by establishing a planning team made up of ten girls from various troops that met on five different occasions. She acted as an advisor and assisted the girls by offering suggestions on how they could organize their ideas. She helped guide the discussion, when needed, by asking open ended questions, such as "have you considered... or how do you plan to handle...". These questions helped girls consider all angles of their ideas and evaluate what would and would not work.

Ask yourself, what did this person do? For whom? When did it happen? Who benefited and in what way?

C. "Feel good" statements only

"Bonnie is a great person. Everyone knows Bonnie and just loves her. She loves her job and shares it with Girl Scouts. All of the Girl Scouts in our service unit benefit. You can truly see that Bonnie is dedicated to Girl Scouts and what it means to girls." *Ask yourself, what did this person do? For whom? When did it happen? Who benefited and in what way?*

D. Statement with relevant facts and specific actions/behaviors

"In the past two years the girls in the XYZ Service Unit have benefited greatly from Bonnie's professional relationship with the local history museum. Bonnie worked with the Girl Scout Junior troops to determine common questions that they had about the local history. She then arranged for speakers to offer programming to troops (an oral history project) through the local Museum for Scouting. The event was well attended, with more than 100 Girl Scout Juniors from the possible 200 Girl Scout Juniors in the service unit attending. The evaluations of the event were so positive that this year Bonnie helped with the program development for a service unit event in October at the local historic site. This was the first time that an event for the Girl Scouts had ever been held at this location. Again, more than 100 girls (Girl Scout Brownies and Juniors) and their families from the service unit attended the event. The event was so popular that the county historical society is planning to begin offering regularly scheduled

programs for Girl Scouts.”

Informal recognition

Though formal awards are nice they are not the only form of important recognition. Informal recognition is equally as important. A simple thank you, a compliment on Facebook or a card are just a few ways you can let a volunteer know that what they do matters.

Questions?

If you have questions regarding New Mexico Trails’ volunteer recognitions, including constructing your endorsement letter or determining which award best fits the nominee’s service, contact customercare@nmgirlscouts.org.