

# National & Council Awards Packet

## Adult Recognition



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*Girl Scout  
Volunteers Make the  
Difference*

# Adult Recognition in Girl Scouts

Girl Scouts of Northern California is fortunate to have so many individuals who share their time, talents, and skills to be a positive influence in the lives of others, and we want to make sure our dedicated volunteers are recognized! Volunteers want to know that their time and energy are appreciated and that they are valued, and recognition is an important way to retain the invaluable adults who volunteer with Girl Scouts.

## Formal Recognitions

National and council Girl Scout awards recognize an individual or group's outstanding accomplishments that go well beyond what would be expected for the position held. These recipients are presented their awards at council recognition events.

Adult volunteers and people or organizations outside Girl Scouts who provide invaluable support to Girl Scouts can be nominated.

Submit online nomination and endorsement forms by **June 30**.

## Informal Recognitions

Volunteer appreciation can happen all year long! Recognitions might be made on special Girl Scout holidays, at service unit meetings, at a recognition event, immediately following service rendered, at community recognition events, etc.

Check the [Service Unit Awards Packet](#) for service unit level awards like Volunteer of Excellence, Family of the Year, customizable certificates, and other ways to show appreciation.

## Where to Place Award Pins



# Nomination Process: National and Council Awards

- 1 Review the **Award Criteria** (pgs. 4-7) to find the right award for your nominee.
- 2 Check the **Past Awardee List** ([Excel Download](#) | [Google Sheets](#)) to see what awards your candidate already earned.
- 3 Complete the **nomination form** online and include the name(s) of who will be writing the letter of endorsement. Endorsers will be emailed the link to their form.
- 4 Endorser: Complete the **Letter of Endorsement** form and note the required number of “signers”, or additional individuals supporting the letter.
  - *Individuals listed as signers will receive an email notification with a copy of the letter. No action is required of a signer.*

**DEADLINE: JUNE 30th**

All forms can be found under [Forms and Documents](#) on our website. Nominations and Letters of Endorsements need to be submitted by this date each year in order to be reviewed and approved for recognition in the fall.



## Nominator/Endorser Tips:

Any Girl Scout individual, service unit, or council staff can nominate a volunteer for an award.

### Nominations

- How the candidate met the award criteria
- Specific accomplishments
- The impact the candidate has had
- How the candidate exceeded expectations for their role
- Growth - candidate’s new accomplishments and service since receiving their last award.

### Endorsements

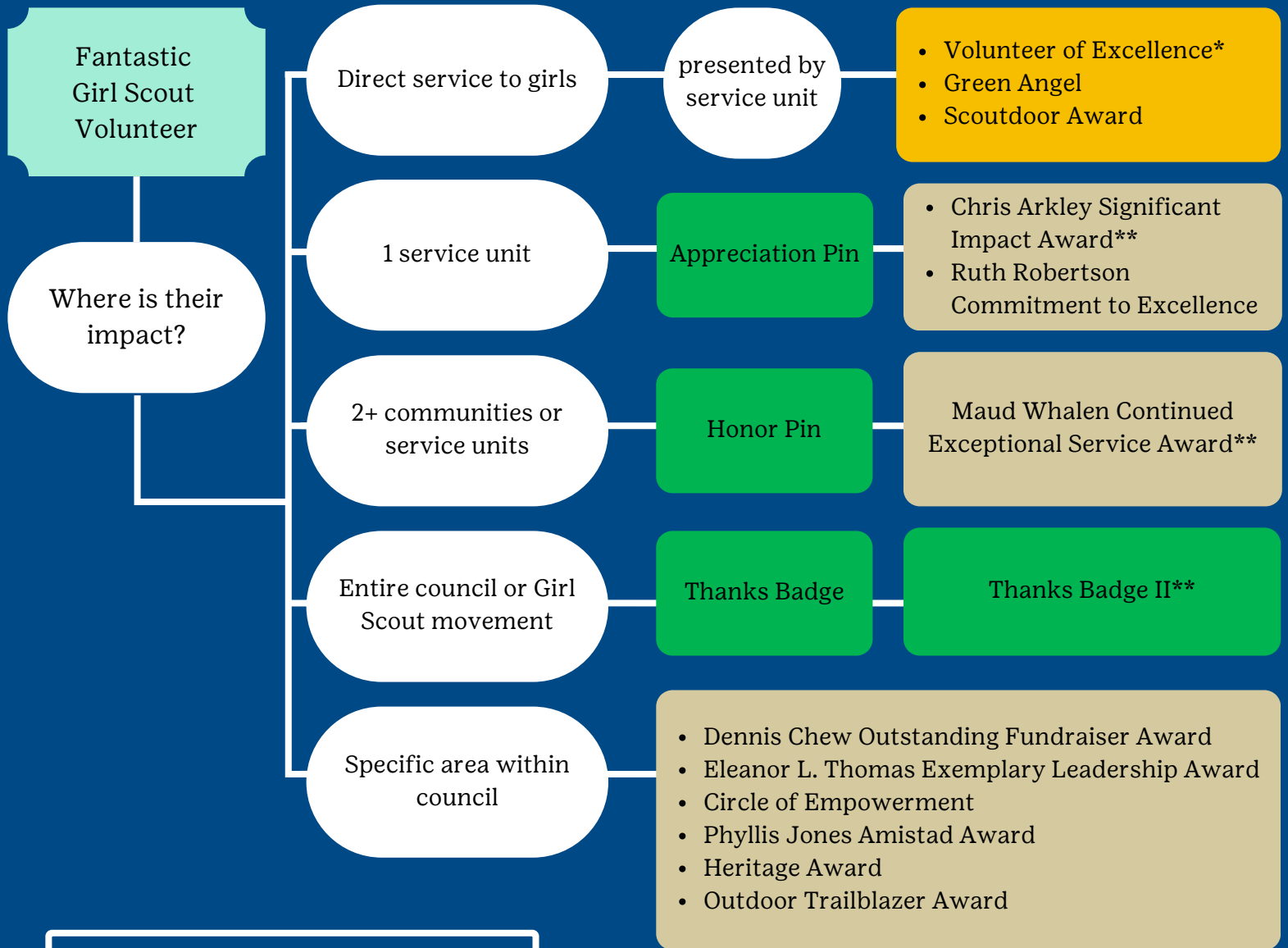
- Only ONE adult letter of endorsement form with multiple signatures is submitted
- Endorsers cannot be the same person writing the nomination
- Youth submitting letters can use the endorsement form or send their letters by email
- Additional signers need to be different individuals than the endorser and nominator
- Endorsement letter should give a different perspective than the nomination statement

**Example:** Peggy wants to nominate a local volunteer for the Appreciation pin. She completes the nomination form, connects with John to write a Letter of Endorsement, and asks Traci if she is willing to be listed as a signer on the endorsement.

**Questions?** Contact Lauren Uda, Membership Director  
LUda@gsnorcal.org or 408-288-4190

# Which Award? How to Decide

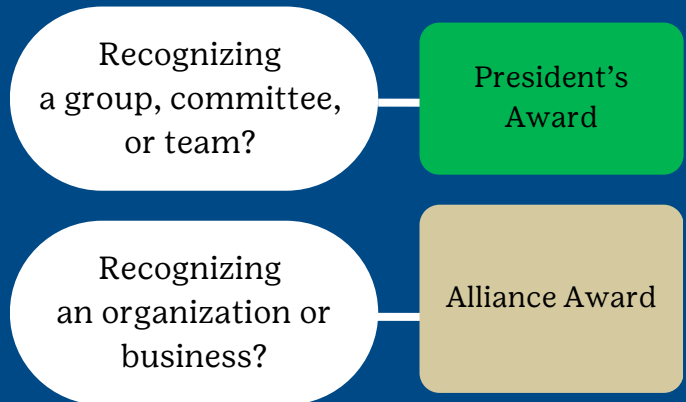
## Service Unit, Council, and National Awards



**Nominate a Volunteer**

- GSUSA National Award
- Service Unit Award
- GSNorCal Council Award

\*National Award presented by the service unit  
 \*\* Must be earned in order





# Award Criteria

## GSUSA National Awards

For the following national awards, the nominee must be an active Girl Scout volunteer with a current Girl Scout adult membership and an eligible background check or fingerprints on file.



### Appreciation Pin

- Service performed by the nominee is above and beyond the expectations for the position held
- Service made an impact on **one** geographic area within the council's jurisdiction

*Requires:* 1 nomination + 1 letter of endorsement with 1 additional signature



### Honor Pin

- Service performed by the nominee is above and beyond the expectations for the position held
- Service made an impact on **two or more** geographic areas within the council's jurisdiction

*Requires:* 1 nomination + 1 letter of endorsement with 2 additional signatures (It is recommended that the endorsement is from the second area of service)



### Thanks Badge

- The nominee's ongoing commitment, leadership, and service has had an exceptional, measurable impact on meeting the mission-delivery goals and priorities of **ALL of Girl Scouts of Northern California or the entire Girl Scout movement**
- The outstanding service performed by the nominee went above and beyond the expectations of the position held and benefited the entire council or Girl Scout Movement
- Service is so significantly above and beyond the call of duty that no other award would be appropriate

*Requires:* 1 nomination + 1 letter of endorsement with 3 additional signatures



### Thanks Badge II

- The nominee's ongoing commitment, leadership, and service has had an exceptional, measurable impact on meeting the mission-delivery goals and priorities of **ALL of Girl Scouts of Northern California or the entire Girl Scout movement**
- The outstanding service performed by the nominee went above and beyond the expectations of the position held and benefited the entire council or Girl Scout Movement
- Service is so significantly above and beyond the call of duty that no other award would be appropriate
- Nominee has **previously received the Thanks Badge**

*Requires:* 1 nomination + 1 letter of endorsement with 3 additional signatures



### President's Award (certificate)

- Recognizes the efforts of a service delivery team or committee
- Provided exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience
- Surpassed team goals
- Service resulted in a significant, measurable impact toward reaching the council's overall goals

*Requires:* 1 nomination



# Award Criteria

## Council Awards

The nominee must be an active Girl Scout volunteer with a current Girl Scout adult membership and an eligible background check or fingerprints on file, unless otherwise noted on the award.



### Alliance Award (plaque)

- An organization or business that has developed a council-wide alliance that facilitates Girl Scouting on a significant level (i.e. co-sponsor council-wide activities, provides substantial in-kind gift that impacts council service).
- Girl Scout volunteer status not required unless working directly with youth.

Requires: 1 nomination + 1 letter of endorsement



### Chris Arkley Significant Impact Award

- Service performed by the nominee is above and beyond the expectations for the position held
- Service made an impact on **one** area of council operations or policy, such as: service unit, Board of Directors, council task group.
- **Continued** outstanding service for **3 years after** receiving the Appreciation Pin

Requires: 1 nomination + 1 letter of endorsement with 1 additional signature



### Dennis Chew Outstanding Fundraiser Award

- Promote and expand business and community support to Girl Scouts of Northern California
- Significantly contributed to a substantial increase in contributions received by the council
- Perform at a level that exceeds the expectations of the position held as outlined in the position description
- Girl Scout volunteer status not required unless working directly with youth members.

Requires: 1 nomination + 1 letter of endorsement with 1 additional signature



### Heritage Award

- Has been a Girl Scout member for 10 or more years
- Promotes the history of Girl Scouts through artifact preservation, restoration, sharing and/or by planning and attending heritage events/programs
- Is knowledgeable of the history of Girl Scouting and uses history to help the council reach its service delivery goals

Requires: 1 nomination + 1 letter of endorsement with 1 additional signature



### Outdoor Trailblazer Award

- Demonstrates outstanding leadership in expanding outdoor recreational and educational opportunities to a wide number of new and returning Girl Scouts, regionally or council wide, beyond the troop experience.
- Collaborates directly with youth and adult members to facilitate meaningful outdoor experiences, training, or mentorship that inspires self-discovery, teamwork, and skill development, in alignment with the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

Requires: 1 nomination + 1 letter of endorsement with 1 additional signature

**Revised: March 2025**





## Phyllis Jones Amistad Award

- Has demonstrated commitment to diversity by contributing to help the council reach its strategic goal of diversity and inclusion through significantly increasing the number of diverse Girl Scouts in a troop, service unit, outreach program, or camp over a period of time (not just one event).
- Is an active adult Girl Scout member or a group of registered Girl Scouts (groups can be a service unit team, group of teens, or group of adults).

*Requires:* 1 nomination + 1 letter of endorsement



## Maud Whalen Continued Exceptional Service Award

- Significantly contributed to meeting one or more council goals in membership growth and retention, fund development, or increased community visibility in **two or more** geographic areas over a sustained period of time
- Consistently perform at a level that exceeds the expectations of the position as outlined in the position description
- Serve as an exceptional role model for other adults and girls
- **Previously received the Honor Pin**

*Requires:* 1 nomination + 1 letter of endorsement with 2 additional signatures  
(It is recommended that the endorsement is from the second area of service)



## Eleanor L. Thomas Exemplary Leadership Award

- Have an extraordinarily profound impact on girls' lives through her/his empowerment of those girls as shown in the girls' endorsement letters
- Provide the girls with exceptional leadership opportunities through exemplary implementation of the girl led model for at least **five years**
- Serve as an exceptional role model for girls and other adults
- Is an active troop/group leader that has completed the required troop leadership courses.

*Requires:* 1 nomination + 1 letter of endorsement with 2 additional adult signatures + 3 additional letters of endorsement written by youth members.



## Ruth Robertson Commitment to Excellence Award

- Provide service that essentially changes the organization for the better
- Actively recognize, understand, and practice the Girl Scout philosophy and values
- Demonstrate a high level of volunteer commitment in various fields
- Demonstrate long-term commitment to the Girl Scout organization through at least **ten years** of service

*Requires:* 1 nomination + 1 letter of endorsement with 3 additional signatures



## Circle of Empowerment

- Empower others to deliver the Girl Scout mission by providing support, guidance, and professional development to other Girl Scout adults
- Serve as an exceptional role model, mentor and coach whose guidance enables others to realize their full potential in Girl Scouting
- Shares their passion and vision for the Girl Scout movement in a way that lights a flame in others to serve girls and youth
- Demonstrate long-term commitment to the Girl Scout organization through at least **ten years** of service.

*Requires:* 1 nomination + 1 letter of endorsement with 3 additional signatures

# How to Write a Strong Nomination



We want to know how fabulous your award candidates are so we can recognize them! This chart shows how a statement, with a little thought, can become a stronger nomination statement for the Volunteer Recognition Committee’s review.

Initial Statement	Thoughtfully Consider	Strong Nomination Statement
“She has been a leader for a long time.”	How many years? Through which levels?	“For 11 years, she has led a large troop from Daisies, persevering through the difficult middle school years, to their current Senior Troop.”
“Our leader is great.”	What kind of leadership qualities do they bring? What makes them stand out?	“Our leader continually brings leadership opportunities to the girls. They encourage a girl-led approach by allowing girls to vote on and implement their activities.”
“Our leader always goes above and beyond.”	Be specific! Tell a story about the great benefits received by those around them due to their efforts.	“Her troop voted to start the aMuse Journey. Because she has never considered herself a “creative soul” when it came to artistic endeavors, she recruited troop parents, artists and actors as resources for her girls to draw from. As a result, the girls have had a great time meeting community experts and discovering parent talent in their own troop! They now have several opportunities for Take Action projects.”
“They have been the best camp administrator we have ever had.”	Be specific! Tell a story about the support given to the girls and volunteers, and how the camp benefitted.	“For the past ten years this fabulous volunteer has headed up a day camp that supports 200 – 300 girls yearly. This year day camp was in danger of being cancelled until this volunteer stepped in and started an email and phone campaign to recruit the needed volunteers to hold the camp. As a result 20 adult volunteers were successfully recruited and trained, and a new plan was created to ensure future recruitment of adult volunteers.”



# National & Council Awards Timeline



## Key Dates:

- June 30 - Nominations/Endorsements due
- Late August - Nominators notified of award status
- Early September - Appeals
- Fall - Recognition Events

## Timeline:



# Additional Recognition

## GSUSA Numeral Guard

This pin recognizes the number of combined years as a girl and adult Girl Scout member. Pins are available in 5-year increments and those celebrating 30 years and above are recognized at Council Adult Recognition Events.



## GSUSA Volunteer Years of Service Award

This pin recognizes the number of years of active service as an adult volunteer in Girl Scouts. The pin comes in 5-year increments from 5-40 years and then in 10-year increments from 40-60 years. Those celebrating 30 years and above are recognized at Council Adult Recognition Events.



### Numeral Guard & Volunteer Years of Service Form

"On My Honor" - Due to changing registrations systems over the years, we are unable to look up membership and volunteer years at the GSUSA or Council level, before 2020. These two pins are self-reported and don't require a formal nomination. Those eligible for a pin should fill out the form **by June 30** to be recognized at council recognition events in the fall.

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## Resources

- Past Awardee List ([Excel Download](#) | [Google Sheets](#))
- [Nomination Form](#)
- [Letter of Endorsement Form](#)
- [Numeral Guard & Volunteer Years of Service Pin Form](#)
- gsHelpCenter Article: [National & Council Awards](#)
- [Service Unit Awards](#)

