



Service Unit Team Guide

You're their hero - and ours too!



"On behalf of Girl Scouts of Northern California, I want to take a moment to personally thank you for taking on a service unit team role.

Your dedication and willingness to step into this leadership position make a profound impact - not only on the youth you serve, but on our entire community. We understand the time and effort required to fulfill these responsibilities and we truly appreciate your commitment to making the world a better place, one Girl Scout at a time.

Your leadership and compassion are key to helping us achieve our mission and we are here to support you every step of the way. Together, we are building a brighter future for our youth and for their communities."

A handwritten signature in green ink, appearing to read 'MJ Strom', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mary-Jane Strom

Interim CEO

Girl Scouts of Northern California

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The Service Unit



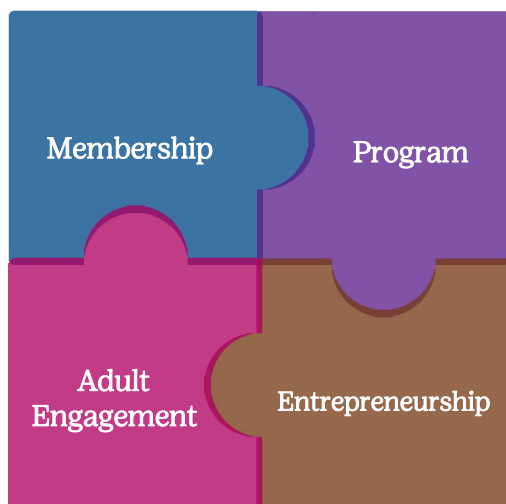
Our council, Girl Scouts of Northern California, serves girls and gender expansive youth across 19 counties from Santa Clara to the Oregon border.

These 19 counties are divided into geographic areas for staff support purposes, and into 78 service units.

A service unit is a local community of Girl Scouts with a team of dedicated volunteers who provide support for troops in their area. This team ensures that Girl Scouting is active and accessible within their community and provides opportunities for adult volunteer engagement and learning.



Working Together to Lead



The service unit team is divided into committees, with each committee focusing on a common area of responsibility and partnering with the others to ensure a collaborative and supportive experience for all volunteers and members of the service unit.

Great team members always strive to:

- Be active participants and active listeners
- Be flexible and understanding
- Communicate effectively
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Understand their role and welcome collaboration
- Remember the big picture perspective
- Build an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect
- Follow the Girl Scout law in their interactions with others

Service Unit Team Overview



Each committee in the service unit team is responsible for supporting the troops, adult volunteers, and service unit in a different way. Committee chairs coordinate the activities of that committee.

Adult Engagement

Responsible for engaging leaders and ensuring learning needs are met.

Service Unit Advisor

Program Level Mentors

New Leader Mentor

Recognitions Coordinator

Communications / PR Organizer

Service Unit Delegate

Program

Responsible for providing and supporting program for troops.

Program Advisor

Event Planners

CSA Advisor

Troop Outdoor Mentor

Event First Aiders

Membership

Responsible for membership goals for recruitment and retention.

Membership Advisor

Recruitment Specialist

Retention Specialist

School Reps

Entrepreneurship

Responsible for supporting troops through product program opportunities.

Cookie Program Advisor

Initial Order Coordinator

Cookie Booth Coordinator

Cookie Program Mentor

Rewards Coordinator

Fall Product Program Advisor

Treasurer

Structuring Your Service Unit

Service unit teams may need to be restructured according to the size of the service unit and the number of volunteers.

Begin With the Basics

All service units should:

- Provide advice and support for all troop volunteers, but particularly new troop leaders and admin;
- Build relationships through regular communication, meetings and adult learning opportunities;
- Prioritize growing Girl Scout membership with a cohesive recruitment and retention plan.

Key roles:

SU Advisor, Treasurer, Membership Advisor, Product Program Advisors

Add in the Extras

Mid-sized service units should:

- Support new troops by assigning a New Leader Mentor;
- Meet as a service unit team at least 6 times per year;
- Provide engaging and valuable volunteer support meeting and learning opportunities at least 6 times per year;
- Host youth-facing events;
- Host recruitment and retention events;
- Recognize and appreciate volunteers.

Key roles:

New Leader Mentor, Program Advisor, Event Planners and First Aiders, Recognitions Coordinator

Put the Cherry on Top

Large service units should:

- Mentor troops by level and activity;
- Host school-based recruitment where possible;
- Provide specific opportunities to engage and retain CSA troops and youth;
- Utilize local media to promote Girl Scout activities in the area.

Key roles:

Program Level, Outdoor, and CSA Mentors, School Reps, Recruitment and Retention Specialists

Qualifications and Core Competencies

Term of Appointment

All positions are appointed by council staff.
Ideally, service unit team members hold their positions for 3 years:

Year One

Shadow the existing team member to gain a full understanding of the role.

Year Two

Make the role your own and implement your vision!

Year Three

Focus on finding and coaching a new team member for the upcoming year.

*Remember to step back
when needed and allow
others to step forward!*

All service unit team members should meet the following qualifications:

- Registered and approved GSNorCal volunteer in good standing
- Completed relevant training for their role
- Able to maintain confidentiality
- Able to respond with professionalism both verbally and in written communication
- Able to work with people of diverse backgrounds and experiences
- Willing to uphold the Girl Scout mission and the values of the Girl Scout law
- Flexible in their outlook and willing to embrace new ideas

Core Competencies

Discretion and positivity - conduct all interactions in a positive and helpful manner and maintain confidentiality.

Youth focused - ensure the GSLE is at the forefront of all decisions and activities.

Personal integrity - dependability and honesty are a must!

Foster diversity - take action to ensure the team is a representative sample of Girl Scouting in your community.

Adaptability - be willing to adjust your own behavior and remain tolerant in response to change.

Leadership - utilize your skills for service unit succession, and helping team members grow!

Expectations for Team Members

The following is a guide to conducting meetings and managing potential conflict as a representative of Girl Scouts and in accordance with the tenets of the Girl Scout Law. If personal conflict arises within the team, seek support from your council staff member as early as possible.

Respect Myself and Others

- Practice active listening - listen to understand, not to respond.
- Don't interrupt or talk over another team member.
- Address the problem, not the person.
- Think before you speak!
- Listen with an open mind.

Use Resources Wisely

Time is one of our most valuable resources!

- Keep comments productive and relevant.
- Discuss one topic at a time.
- Table agenda items for further discussion to avoid derailing meetings.
- Schedule topic-specific meetings as needed.

Be a Sister to Every Girl Scout

- Conflicts happen because we are passionate, and we are passionate because we care!
- Remember that while we may disagree on the specifics, we all have a common goal; to support and nurture the Girl Scouts in our service unit.

Friendly and Helpful

- Turn disagreement and conflict into a positive force!
- Keep discussions solutions-based; learn from past mistakes and resolve, as a team, to take steps to avoid them in the future.

Managing Conflict

As a service unit team member, you may find yourself in a position where conflict resolution is needed, whether that be within the team or in a troop support capacity. Remember that conflict doesn't necessarily have to be bad: progress, change, and growth often arise from a position of conflict, which can be as simple as a difference of opinion. If at any point you need guidance or do not feel comfortable handling a situation, reach out to your council staff liaison for support.

Strategies

Keep it confidential

Unless you need to consult with another involved party or with council staff, keep conflict confidential. Sharing "gossip" can lead to the conflict spreading.

Be an active listener

Focus on what each party is saying and determine what they want (their position) and why they want it (their interest). Repeat what they have told you back to them to ensure your understanding is correct and ask questions to clarify your understanding of the issue.

Strive for fairness

If all participants view the process as fair and do not perceive any bias, they are more likely to accept the result. Discussion should always be rooted in common ground, i.e. the best interests of the youth members that we serve and should separate the people from the problem. If you are unable to remain unbiased, ask for help from an uninvolved party.

Ask the right questions

Using a combination of closed and open-ended questions can help to increase understanding of each person's position and interest, the outcome they are looking for, and why that outcome is important to them.

Create an agreement

Having an unbiased mediator can often help conflicted parties to reach their own resolution. Wrap up by stating what each party has agreed to and what the next steps are. If necessary, put the agreement in writing.

Adult Engagement Committee

Role	Time	Key Responsibilities
SU Advisor	🌸 🌸 🌸	Coordinate the service unit team and ensure provision of regular team and volunteer meetings. Facilitate annual planning, and team recruitment and succession planning.
Program Level Mentor	🌸 🌸	Support adult volunteers with troops at your program level and facilitate opportunities for learning and collaboration.
New Leader Mentor	🌸 🌸	Connect with and welcome new leaders; offer support and guidance, and utilize SU meeting time to provide content specific to new leaders.
Recognitions Coordinator	🌸	Promote service unit and council/national awards. Ensure that appreciation of adult volunteers and recognition of the achievements of youth members are priorities.
Communications/PR Organizer	🌸 🌸	Record meeting agendas and minutes, maintain communication platform, and share council and SU news. Utilize media outlets to promote achievements and raise public awareness of Girl Scouts.



Higher time commitment, usually year round



Medium year-round time commitment or seasonal (2-4 months)



Low year-round time commitment or seasonal (1-2 months)

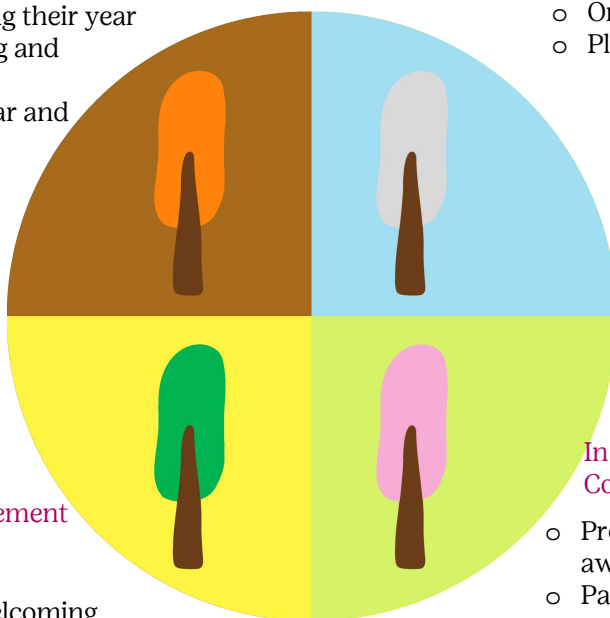
Year at a Glance

In the fall, the Adult Engagement Committee is:

- Welcoming new and returning leaders
- Assisting troops with planning their year
- Identifying volunteer learning and support needs
- Updating service unit calendar and communications

In the winter, the Adult Engagement Committee is:

- Supporting new leaders
- Organizing a holiday social for leaders.
- Planning for volunteer appreciation.



In the summer, the Adult Engagement Committee is:

- Completing annual planning.
- Formulating a strategy for welcoming new leaders for the upcoming year.

In the spring, the Adult Engagement Committee is:

- Promoting volunteer appreciation and awards nominations.
- Partnering with the Program Committee to celebrate youth achievements.
- Supporting bridging troops as they prepare for the next year.
- Recruiting SU team members for next year.

Program Committee

Role	Time	Key Responsibilities
Program Advisor	Higher time commitment, usually year round	Recruit and support event planners and adult trainers. Support troop volunteers with program-related questions and training.
Event Planner	Medium year-round time commitment or seasonal (2-4 months)	Ensure the smooth running of service unit event/s, following all safety guidelines. Plan and implement a varied and balanced program.
CSA Specialist	Low year-round time commitment or seasonal (1-2 months)	Partner with adults and youth in CSA troops as well as Juliette Girl Scout families, and ensure they have access to programs and opportunities.
Troop Outdoor Mentor	Low year-round time commitment or seasonal (1-2 months)	Support troops with trip/outdoor planning and ensure the learning needs of troop volunteers are met.



Higher time commitment, usually year round



Medium year-round time commitment or seasonal (2-4 months)



Low year-round time commitment or seasonal (1-2 months)

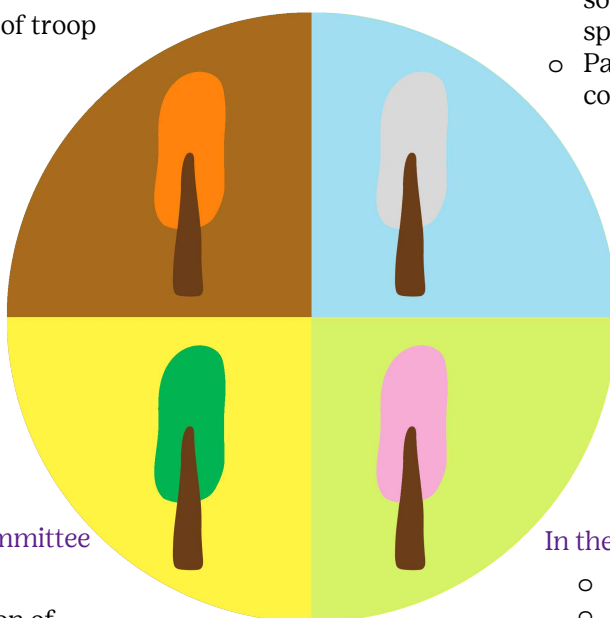
Year at a Glance

In the fall, the Program Committee is:

- Identifying training needs of troop volunteers.
- Facilitating fall events.

In the winter, the Program Committee is:

- Facilitating winter events.
- Filling training gaps for troop volunteers so they are ready to get outdoors in the spring.
- Partnering with the Entrepreneurship committee on a Cookie Rally.



In the summer the Program Committee is:

- Participating in the completion of annual planning.
- Beginning planning for next year's events.
- Partnering with the Membership Committee on an early-renewal event.

In the spring, the Program Committee is:

- Facilitating spring events.
- Supporting troop volunteers with outdoor activities.
- Hosting a CSA activity.
- Hosting bridging and/or higher awards recognition events.

Membership Committee

Role	Time	Key Responsibilities
Membership Advisor		Recruit and coordinate Recruitment and Retention Specialists. Ensure that membership is a priority for the service unit. Partner with council to meet membership goals.
Recruitment Specialist		Recruit and coordinate School Reps. Plan and host SU-wide and targeted recruitment events in partnership with council staff.
Retention Specialist		Partner with council staff and the SU team to ensure the service unit meets retention goals. Identify troops in need of support, and assist individual members looking for new troops.
School Rep		Identify recruitment opportunities at your school, gather interest lists, and assist with troop formation. Liaise with other troops at your school to facilitate connections.



Higher time commitment, usually year round



Medium year-round time commitment or seasonal (2-4 months)



Low year-round time commitment or seasonal (1-2 months)

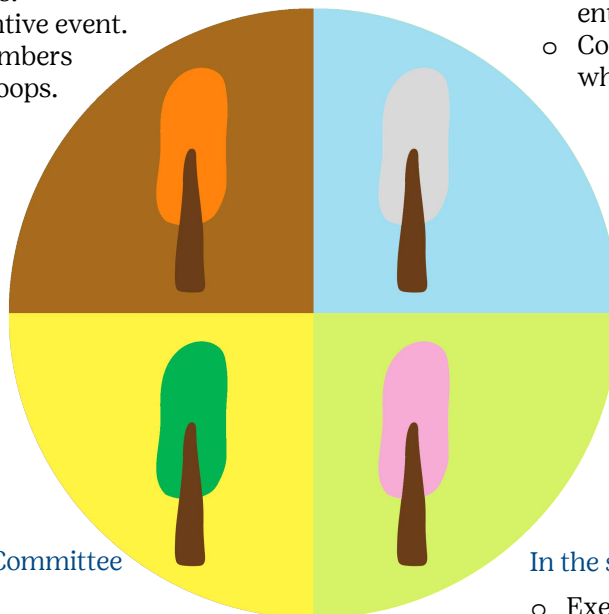
Year at a Glance

In the fall, the Membership Committee is:

- Conducting recruitment events.
- Hosting an early renewal incentive event.
- Placing new and returning members without troops into existing troops.
- Promoting on-time renewals.

In the winter, the Membership Committee is:

- Planning spring recruitment strategy for entering-K.
- Continuing targeted recruitment events where needed.









In the summer, the Membership Committee is:

- Participating in annual planning.
- Planning recruitment strategy for the beginning of the school year.
- Identifying new placements for any members from disbanding troops who wish to continue.

In the spring, the Membership Committee is:

- Executing entering-K recruitment strategy.
- Recruiting new committee members.
- Executing early renewal promotion and incentive strategy.

Entrepreneurship Committee

Role	Time	Key Responsibilities
Cookie Program Advisor		Coordinate the cookie committee. Support and guide troop and SU volunteers. Communicate regularly with troops and council. Use provided software to access and finalize data.
Initial Order Coordinator		Secure a distribution site, coordinate initial delivery and pick up, and complete required paperwork.
Cookie Booth Coordinator		Build partnerships with local businesses to schedule booth locations. Ensure completion of contracts and insurance. Support and guide booth selection process and help resolve issues.
Cookie Program Mentor		Guide, support, and mentor troop volunteers and/or Juliette caregivers who are new to the program
Rewards Coordinator		Receive, sort, and distribute rewards.
Fall Product Program Advisor		Provide training, support, and guidance to troop volunteers on all aspects of the fall product program including order and reward distribution.



Higher time commitment, usually year round



Medium year-round time commitment or seasonal (2-4 months)

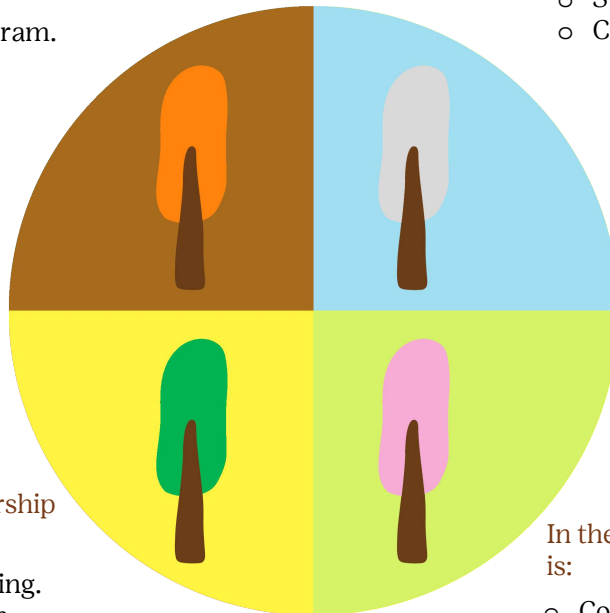


Low year-round time commitment or seasonal (1-2 months)

Year at a Glance

In the fall, the Entrepreneurship Committee is:

- Coordinating fall product program.
- Supporting troops with fall product sales.
- Beginning planning for cookie season.
- Planning a cookie rally.



In the summer the Entrepreneurship Committee is:

- Participating in annual planning.
- Finalizing reward distribution.

In the winter, the Entrepreneurship Committee is:

- Hosting a cookie rally.
- Coordinating initial order distribution.
- Supporting troops with cookie sales.
- Coordinating booth sales.

In the spring, the Entrepreneurship Committee is:

- Coordinating rewards receipt and distribution.

Building the SU Team

Step 1: Get to know your volunteers

- Before, during, or after service unit meetings, strike up a conversation with a volunteer you don't know: ask what their troop has been doing, and find out what they do outside of Girl Scouts.
- At service unit events and activities, observe the adults as they interact with others. Who seems to be friendly, approachable, and warm? Who is the center of attention? Who is engaged and interested in the activities?
- Talk to other team members: who is reliable and organized? Who is the first to sign their troop up for events? Who is responsive and willing to help?

Step 2: Gather information

- Make sure the skills you have identified in the volunteer are a good match for the position you are asking them to fill!
- Using the information you have, try to uncover what motivates this person.
- Use a service unit roster to jot down notes about volunteers as you go.
- Ask other team members for their input.

Step 3: Extend the invitation

- Be sure you are the right person to make the request - maybe someone else knows them better, or the request may be best coming from the committee lead for that role.
- Personalize the invitation - general requests rarely work. Make sure they know which skills you have identified that would make them a great fit and how they would be able to fill an important need.
- Ask positively and enthusiastically! Think about how your request will sound to the volunteer - enthusiasm is contagious!
- Be courteous - schedule an appropriate time to talk, accept "no" graciously, and thank them for their time.
- Agree on a follow-up time if needed, and follow-up on schedule!
- Provide them with details such as role description, team meeting schedule, and training.

Welcoming New Leaders

The Why

Think back to when you were getting started as a brand new troop leader. Did you feel overwhelmed by all the training and resources? Lost? Confused by the new terminology? A little isolated? These are all feelings that new troop leaders may experience. Their introduction to your community can make all the difference to their journey and, ultimately, how likely they are to become an active member of your service unit and continue as a leader for years to come.

The How

- Reach out with a warm welcome to the service unit as soon as possible. Include some information about yourself and your role, what a service unit is/does, and about any regular meetings and upcoming events.
- Share your communication platform information and invite them to join.
- Reach out again in advance of your next upcoming volunteer meeting with a reminder and invite.
- Ensure that a member of the team or other experienced leader sits with the new leader at your meeting and introduces them to other service unit volunteers.
- Ask questions about their experience and help troubleshoot if needed. Connect them to others in the service unit who can help, according to role.
- Check in on a regular basis to provide ongoing support and advice.
- Provide/promote training as needed and support with utilization of gsLearn and the Volunteer Toolkit

The Outcome

Supporting a positive experience for first-year troop leaders empowers them to deliver a robust and well-rounded Girl Scout experience to their youth.

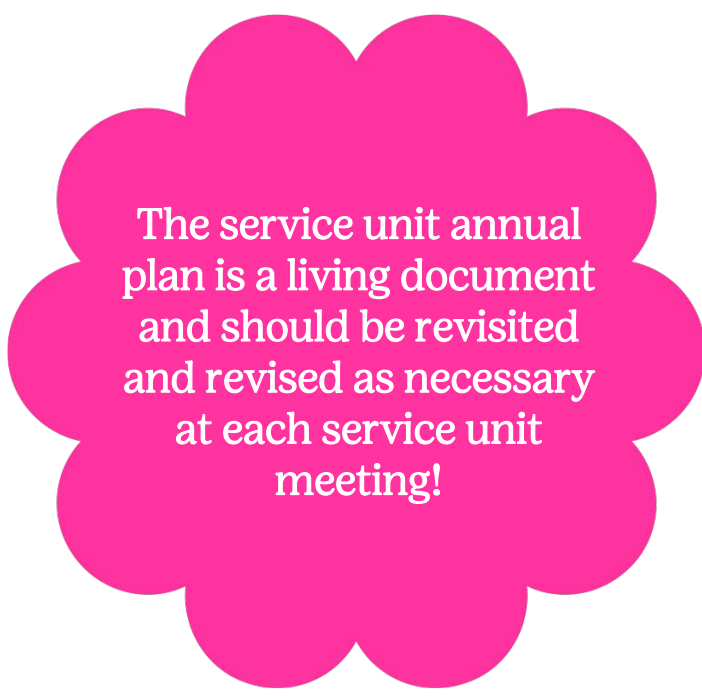
Providing ongoing training and mentoring enables them to continue their leadership growth.

Building in-person connections with new leaders as they join your service unit helps to strengthen the community as a whole, grow attendance at events, and even assists with succession planning for the team in the future!

Annual Planning

Remember that service unit annual planning should be a holistic process, with input from all committees and with particular attention given to recruitment, retention, and volunteer support.

In order for council staff to appropriately support the service unit, the roster and meeting schedule should be completed in full: this ensures that staff members can attend meetings, and volunteers can be assigned to the correct role and receive relevant information directly.



The service unit annual plan is a living document and should be revisited and revised as necessary at each service unit meeting!

The events tab is designed to assist teams in planning and discussion of events in advance in order to create and publish calendars containing meaningful program for service unit members.

Smaller teams should be sure to prioritize, and only document plans that can be realized given the constraints of the team members.

Consider reaching out personally to identified troop leaders to invite them to come to the meeting to provide their input.

The annual planning document can be found in the council Google drive so that real-time updates can be made in an easy and efficient manner, without multiple versions being sent out. This ensures that both volunteers and council staff always have access to the most current information.

Volunteer Recognition

Adult Recognition Overview

Adult recognitions create a culture where Girl Scout volunteers feel valued for their service and contributions. Recognition at the service unit level can take place at any time of year and can include both a formal process, where awards are given at a meeting or ceremony in the spring, or informal acts of appreciation throughout the year.

Check out the [Service Unit Awards Help Center article](#) for the awards and insignia a service unit can present to volunteers, as well as other appreciation ideas.

Timeline

- Service Unit Recognitions Coordinator creates and publicizes a nomination form (early spring).
- SU team/Recognitions Committee reviews nominations and approves or denies submissions according to award criteria.
- SU hosts a meeting or ceremony to present awards to volunteers (late spring or early fall).
- SU Recognitions Coordinator adds awardee information to an SU awards tracking sheet to maintain records.

National and Council Awards

For significant service, there is a formal adult recognition process: national and council awards recognize outstanding accomplishments that go beyond what would be expected for the position held. Check the [National and Council Awards Help Center article](#) for the available awards and nomination form.

- Spring - promote national and council awards.
- June 30th - due date for nominations and endorsements.
- Late August - nominators contacted regarding approval/denial of nominations and have 5 business days to appeal.
- Fall - Board of Directors gives final approval, awardees are notified, and local recognition events take place.
- For a full overview of all awards and the nomination process, see the [National and Council Awards Packet](#)

Service Unit Events

Service unit events form an important piece of the Girl Scout program for troop members and volunteers. In many cases, these events have become much heralded and looked-forward to traditions within a service unit area. But they're much more than that! Did you know...

Service Unit Events Can...

1. Provide fun, laughter, and create everlasting memories
2. Engage families with Girl Scouts
3. Create leadership opportunities for older youth
4. Provide networking and connection opportunities for volunteers
5. Increase Girl Scouts' community visibility
6. Promote retention
7. Provide recruitment opportunities
8. Connect troops to each other, to create a larger sisterhood
9. Help troop volunteers to learn new skills
10. Provide important program

When planning your event calendar, consider the following:

- Who? Does the team have enough volunteers to be able to provide a range of events, or do more event managers and/or committees need to be recruited?
- When? In order to ensure your events are well attended, avoid busy times such as cookie season, and publish your event dates at the beginning of the year.
- Why? Does your event calendar offer a good mix of program outcomes from badge-earning to traditions, and 'just for fun' events?

**For more information on planning and executing service unit events, see the Service Unit Event Planner Guide (coming 2025)*

Key Events

These key events incorporate long-held Girl Scout traditions and special days, and can help volunteers and Girl Scouts alike to feel connected to the organization and to each other, so consider adding one or more of these to your calendar!

World Thinking Day

Sometimes known as International Fair, this event has traditionally been a way for Girl Scouts to explore other cultures as well as to learn about global issues faced by women and girls.

Cookie Rally

Cookie rallies don't just get our youth members excited for the upcoming sale, they also help to teach entrepreneurial skills and support adult volunteers.

Volunteer Appreciation

Volunteer appreciation events help to recognize and reward service unit and troop volunteers for their commitment and contributions. Consider presenting Service Unit awards at an annual ceremony!

Bridging

What better way to build a sense of community than to bring volunteers, caregivers, and Girl Scouts together annually to celebrate all of their accomplishments throughout the year?

Songfest

Songfest is a traditional event which is easy to organize (the Girl Scouts provide the program!), inexpensive, and fun for everyone!

Daisy Launch

Held early in the membership year, a Daisy Launch can be a great way to recruit new members and give them an introduction to traditional activities such as SWAPs, s'mores, and songs.

A Guide to GSNorCal Forms/Documents

All of the forms below are online fillable forms which are submitted to council and are found on our website via the Forms & Documents link at the top. Forms and documents which are not submitted to council can be found in the Help Center.

Delegate and National/Council Awards

National & Council Award Nomination Form - nominate an individual for a national or council award
Council Award Endorsement Form - submit an endorsement for a nominated individual for national or council awards

Numeral Guard & Years of Service Request Form - request recognition of 30 years or more (in 5 year increments) of membership and/or volunteer service

Financial

Adult Financial Aid - request financial aid for an adult membership. Available in English and Spanish.

Bank Account Request and Signer Change Form - use to open a new account or make changes to an existing one.

Donation Form - report all monetary and in-kind donations above \$250 (or when acknowledgment for tax purposes is requested by the donor).

Entrepreneurship Money-Earning Application - apply to participate in a money-earning activity.

Expected Monetary Donation Form - notify the Fund Development department of donations or matching gifts that are expected so that they can be processed and redirected.

PCI Compliance Info Packet and Acknowledgment Form - if a troop, service unit, or group wishes to process credit cards from members and/or the public.

Service Unit Finance Report - annual service unit financial report, due September 30th of each year.

Troop Finance Report - annual troop financial report, due June 30th each year.

Uniform Aid Request Form - request financial aid for the purchase of a Girl Scout uniform. Available in English and Spanish.

Highest Awards

Silver Award Project Proposal Form - for Girl Scouts working on their Silver Award to submit their project proposal for approval.

Silver Award Final Report Form - for Girl Scouts who have finished their Silver Award project to submit for final approval.

Gold Award Social Media Release Form - for Gold Award Girl Scouts to submit details of their project to be published to GSNorCal social media.

Bronze Award Final Report Form - for troop leaders to submit a report for their troop's Bronze Award project to be recorded by council.

Highest Awardee List, Ceremony Recognition Request Form - request a list of youth award recipients from your service unit for recognition at a SU-hosted ceremony. You may also request council staff recognition or presence.

Forms and Documents

Insurance

Certificate of Insurance Request Form - request a certificate of insurance when required by a vendor.

Interest

Alum Registration Form - register as an alum to receive periodic mailings.

Facility Use Application - reserve GSNorCal office space in Chico, Redding, Eureka, or Santa Rosa.

Facility Use Check Out Form - check out after using one of the GSNorCal offices and report any facility issues.

Partner Interest Form - for new and returning partners who are interested in collaborating with GSNorCal on program and events.

Retail Store Order Form - place your GSNorCal store order online. Available in English and Spanish.

Share Your Story - share your troop or Juliette's story to be featured on our blog or social media.

Support Girl Scouts after the NorCal fires - request assistance to replace any Girl Scout items that were lost during a Northern California fire.

Entrepreneurship

ACH Credit Form - used by troops to request reimbursement of product program-related bank fees and/or to request a change to their ACH withdrawal.

ACH Debit Form - used by troops to submit banking information for automated withdrawal of council proceeds.

Cookie Remind Me Form - for use by the public to be reminded when cookies go on sale and to be provided with options for purchasing.

Product Program Council Credit Conversion Form - for troops, service units, and caregivers to request disbursement of reward card funds for approved activities.

Parent Past Due Cookie Account Form - for troop leaders/cookie chairs to report any outstanding funds owed by troop parents.

Service Unit Council Credit Redemption Form - for service units to request reimbursement for event fees paid using cookie reward cards.

Trip and Safety

Accident-Injury Report - report any accident or injury that occurred during a Girl Scout activity.

Approved Vendor of GSNorCal - for vendors who wish to be added to the GSNorCal approved vendor list.

Incident Report Form - report any non-injury incident that occurred during a Girl Scout activity.

Trip or High Adventure Approval - for troop use to submit details of upcoming trips and high adventure activities for council approval.

Forms and Documents

Troop

Disbanded Troop Form - for inactive and graduating troops to officially disband.

Opt-In, Update & Grow Your Troop Form - adjust your troop's listing in the online catalog.

Troop Meeting Request Form - for troops to reserve meeting space at A Girl's Place, Hayward Cabin, or Rainbow's End.

Troop/Member Change Form - request changes to troop participation, member information, and/or adult volunteer roles.

Troop Number Request Form - begin the process of starting a new troop by requesting a troop number.

Service Unit Events

Service Unit Priority Property Reservation Request Form - request a GSNorCal property reservation during the priority reservation window.

Event/Camp Notification & Approval Form - notify council of any planned SU camp or event.

Event Final Report Form - completed by service units to report on the outcome of events.

Volunteer

Confidentiality & Non-Disclosure Agreement - to be completed by all SU team members with Looker access.

Council Award Endorsement Form - to be completed when endorsing an award nomination.

National/Council Award Nomination - to be completed to nominate an individual or group for a national or council award.

Volunteer Appreciation eCard Generator - send an appreciation eCard to an amazing volunteer!

Volunteer-Run Camp

Event/Camp Notification & Approval Form - notify council of any planned SU camp or event.

VRC Council Credit Reimbursement Form - for volunteer-run camps to request reimbursement of payments accepted through cookie rewards cards.

VRC Financial Aid Reimbursement Request Form - for volunteer-run camps to request reimbursement of financial aid offered to campers in accordance with the financial aid guidelines.

VRC Pre-Camp/During Roster Form - for volunteer-run camps to upload rosters at least 2 weeks prior to the beginning of camp, and to update rosters as needed.

VRC Final Camp Roster - for volunteer-run camps to upload a final roster on completion of camp.

VRC Looker Request Form - to request Looker access for camp volunteers.

Service Unit Looker Accounts

Service unit volunteers in the following roles have access to Looker:

SU Advisor, Treasurer, Membership Advisor, Retention Specialist, Program Advisor, Cookie Program Advisor, Fall Program Advisor

Accessing Your Looker Account

https://www.gsnorcal.org/content/dam/gsnorcal-redesign/documents/volunteer_resources/service-unit/looker-login-instructions.pdf

An account has been created for you with the email address associated with your MyGS account. On your first visit, use the 'reset password' link to set the first name, last name, and password for your account.

Confidentiality

When handling sensitive personal information, confidentiality is a must.

DO

1. Access data only for the authorized purpose.
2. Maintain privacy and confidentiality.
3. Keep personal/confidential information secure.
4. Notify GSNorCal of any breach of confidentiality.
5. Check with your council staff member if in doubt.

DON'T

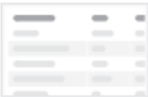


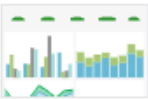


1. Use data for personal interest or advantage, or for business purposes.
2. Disclose information to others unless authorized.
3. Retain copies or notes after completion of duties.
4. Share youth and family information with anyone other than the troop leader.

Using Looker

SU members with Looker access will be able to see the following 6 reports:

Dashboards

☐ Name ^



<input type="checkbox"/>		Contact Lists 85 Views, 2 Favorites,
<input type="checkbox"/>		Full Roster 780,858 Views, 1,931 Favorites,
<input type="checkbox"/>		gsLearn Summary 32,543 Views, 262 Favorites,
<input type="checkbox"/>		Membership Analysis 175,663 Views, 514 Favorites,
<input type="checkbox"/>		New in the Last Two Weeks 149,219 Views, 495 Favorites,
<input type="checkbox"/>		Troop Details Dashboard used to show Troop Details for the Current Membership Year. 144,022 Views, 853 Favorites,


You will usually be able to access all of these reports from your homepage, or by clicking on 'Shared folders' and 'SU Roster' from the menu on the left.

Contact Lists

Change the filters as needed to create rosters of e.g. all members of a specific troop, all youth members in one grade, or an SU team roster. Click on 'Update' when you're ready.

SU Roster

Contact Lists  

[Update](#) 

Year *	Service Unit	Troop or Group	Role Name	Participation/Role Active Flag	Background Check Status
<input type="text" value="Is Current Year"/>	<input type="text" value="Is SU324"/>	<input type="text" value="Is any value"/>	<input type="text" value="Is SU Cookie Manager or SU Fall Product Ma..."/>	<input type="text" value="any value"/>	<input type="text" value="any value"/>
Background Check Expiration	Youth Grade	Youth School			
<input type="text" value="Is any time"/>	<input type="text" value="Is any value"/>	<input type="text" value="Is any value"/>			
Troop Sub-Type	Is Membership New?	Is Memt	is		
<input type="text" value="Is any value"/>	<input type="text" value="any value"/>	<input type="text" value="any v"/>			
Does Guardian Allow Email?	Registration Date	School Salesforce			
<input type="text" value="Is any value"/>	<input type="text" value="Is any time"/>	<input type="text" value="Is any value"/>			

SU Cookie Manager

SU Fall Product Manager

SU Leader Support Man...

SU Program Support M...

Full Roster

Contains very similar information to the contact lists, with slightly more detail. Use this report if, for example, you need to know school attendance information or the date that an adult started their role. Filter and update in the same way.

Membership Analysis

Use the Membership Analysis report data to track your adult and youth membership year on year, and to identify target grades for recruitment potential.

New in the Last Two Weeks

This report allows you to identify and reach out to your service unit's new members. Whether it's a welcome email to a brand new Girl Scouting family, or an offer of mentorship to an adult taking on a new role - connect with your new families and let them know how you can support them!

Note that adults taking on new roles will appear on this report, even if they are not new to the service unit.

Troop Details

A snapshot of all the active troops in your service unit, including program level, grade, and school affiliation.

Use the 'Youth Openings Remaining' and 'Display in Catalog' filters to identify open troops with spaces available.

Display in Catalog: is any value

Program Grade Level: is any value

Troop Grade: is any value

Meeting: is at

Youth Openings Remaining: is > 0

Troop Sub-Type: is any value

is >

is

is >=

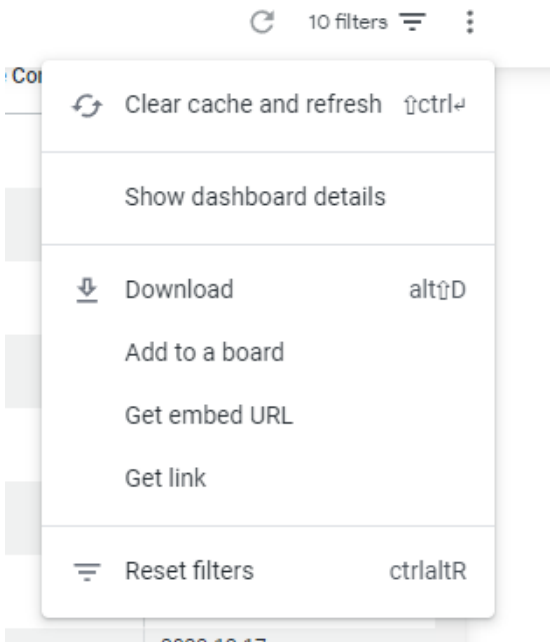
is at

gsLearn Summary

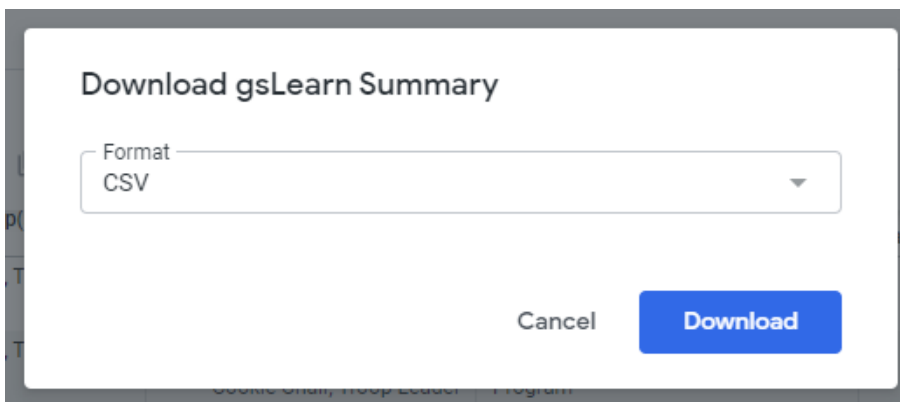
If you need to know which training a volunteer has completed, this is the report for you! Select the name of the volunteer from the 'Full Name' dropdown or, if you need to know all of the adults in your service unit who have completed a particular course, filter by the course title instead.

Downloading Reports

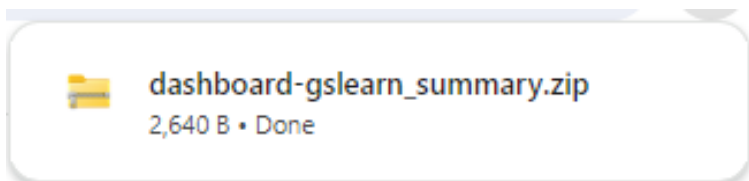
To download a full or filtered report and save it for offline use:



Click on the ellipsis in the top right and select 'Download'.

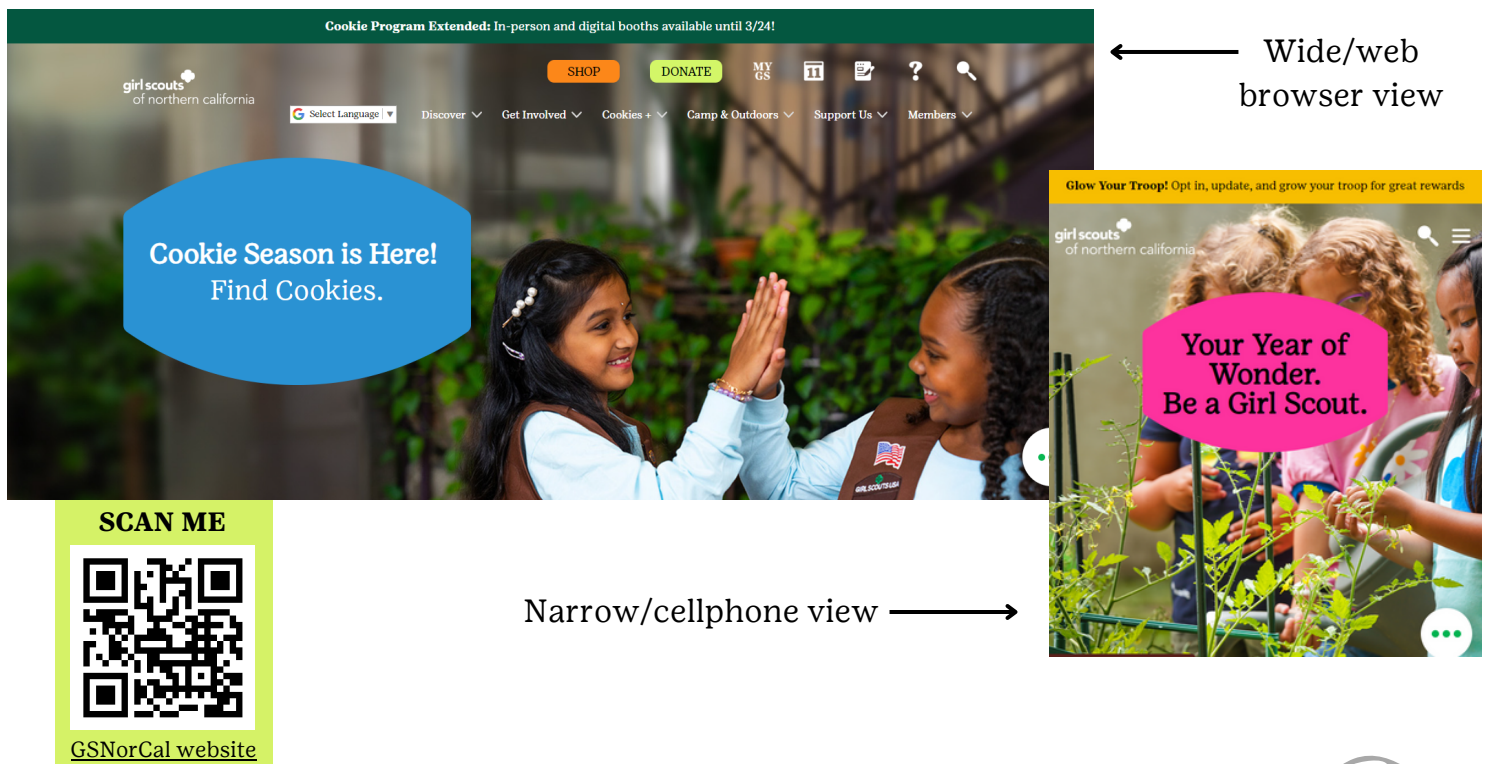


Download as a CSV file so that you can sort and filter in Excel.



Access and unzip the downloaded file.


Navigating the Website




Quick Link Icons

 MyGS

My Account (registration/renewal/roster), Volunteer Toolkit (meeting plans), gsLearn (new training hub)

 Events Calendar

Council Event Calendar, includes Program Partner Days, all-council SU events, and more

 Forms and Documents

Quick Navigation to Forms & Docs page

 gsHelpCenter

GSNorCal Resource Hub; searchable articles and resource documents

Tips and Tricks



Forms & Documents

"Online Fillable Forms Index" has all online fillable forms that are submitted to council.

Examples: Trip or High-Adventure Approval, Money-Earning Application, Troop Finance Report, Insurance Request, Highest Award Submission Forms, Event Notification Forms, ACH Debit Form etc.

"Document Index" (lower section with search bar) includes PDF resource documents, and forms that need to be downloaded and filled out because they require signatures.

Examples: Health History Form, Permission Forms, Troop Bank Account Creation Packet, Change of Signers Request Form, Travel Progression Chart, Program Guide, Safety Activity Checkpoints, etc.



gsHelpCenter

Search using key words to locate articles, resources, documents etc.

Check out the News Feed for articles and information on current happenings at council!

The Help Center contains many great resources, including position descriptions, event manager resources, social media graphics and flyers for recruitment, as well as



Events Calendar (events.gsnorcal.org)

Search for events hosted by council, Program Partners, and service units across GSNorCal.

Use the search bar at the top to type in 1-2 keywords or use the filters on the left to narrow the results. Click on a specific event to find out all the details, including: price, location, registration link, description, and who to contact for more support.

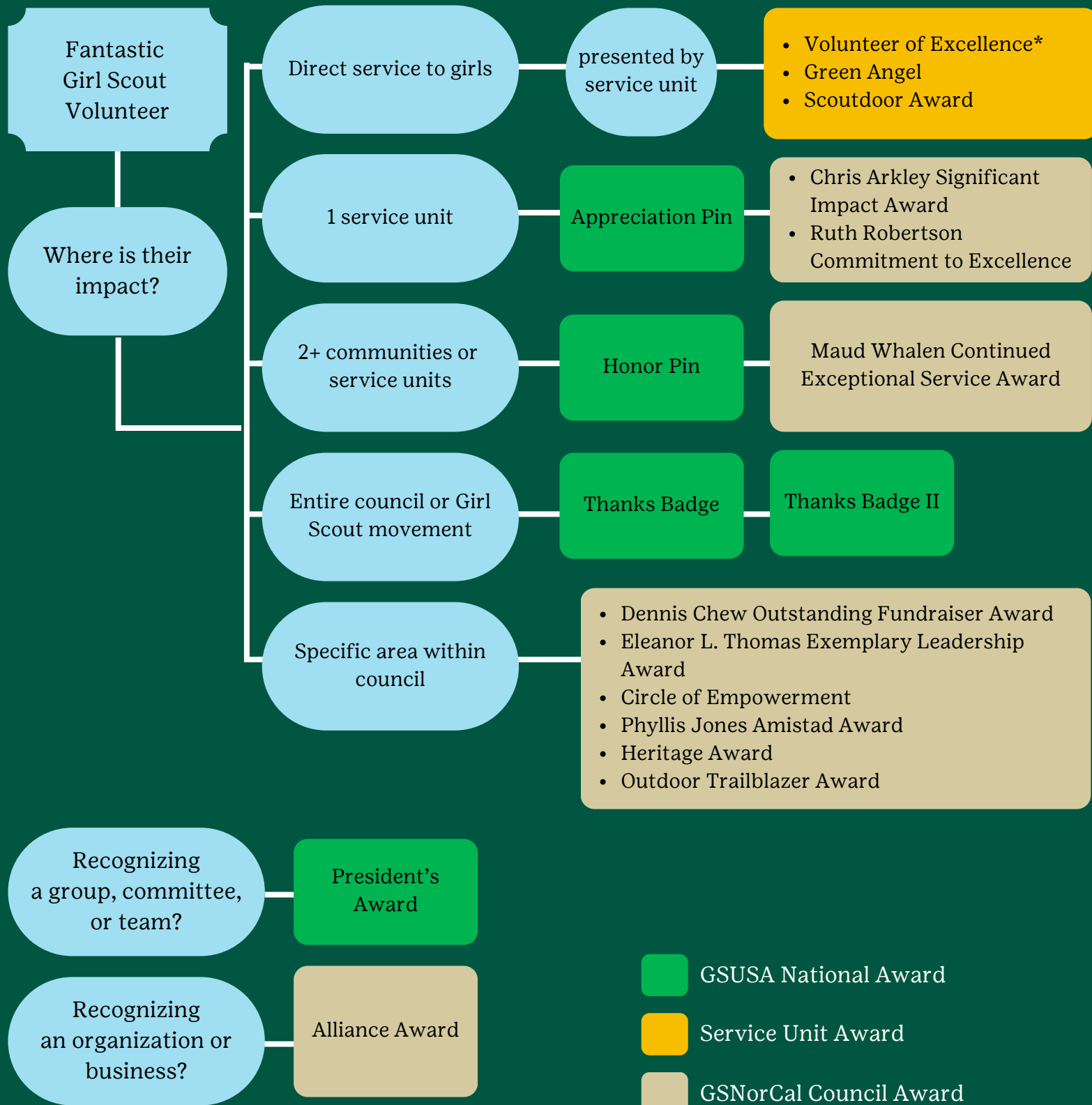


Camp (camp.gsnorcal.org)

This is the online resource hub for all things outdoors, including council and volunteer run summer camps; family camp; property rentals; volunteer resources etc. Troops or service units can request an adventure program such as archery, ropes course, or hatchet throwing.

Volunteer Recognition

Service Unit, Council, and National Awards



The President's Volunteer Service Award

In 2003, the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation founded the President's Volunteer Service Award to recognize the important role of volunteers in America's strength and national identity. This award honors individuals whose service positively impacts communities in every corner of the nation and inspires those around them to take action, too.

<https://presidentalserviceawards.gov/about>

Since "taking action" and Girl Scouts go hand in hand, many adult and youth members in your service unit may already be devoting enough hours to volunteerism to earn this award - they just don't know it yet.

The great news is that your service unit can become a certifying organization for the PVSA!

The Service Unit's Commitment:

- ✓ Verify the volunteer hours required.
- ✓ Verify volunteers are US Citizens or lawful Permanent Residents.
- ✓ Pay the nominal cost of the awards.
- ✓ Receive and distribute the awards.
- ✓ Maintain a database of recipients.
- ✓ Establish procedures to ensure compliance with program requirements.

Eligible Hours

Any hours spent in service to others that is not compensated in any way, including (not limited to):

LiA

Program Aide

VIT

CIT

Elf hours

Higher Award hours

Community service

Service Unit events (non-money-earning)

Steps to Become a Certifying Organization...

- One or more volunteers takes the online training and commits to processing the PVSA awards and updating their training and certification annually.
- A trained volunteer submits the online application.
- You will receive notification within 15 business days.

Get started at <https://presidentalserviceawards.gov/>



Girl Scout Awards

As a Girl Scout, you have a multitude of opportunities to develop your leadership skills and achieve awards! You can earn awards at all levels, starting with our youngest leaders—Girl Scout Daisies in kindergarten, all the way through high school seniors—Girl Scout Ambassadors. Check out this overview of awards Girl Scouts can earn:

Highest Awards

Girl Scout Gold Award

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest award a Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador can earn. You earn this award by leading a team of volunteers and investing a minimum of 80 hours to create a sustainable change to a community issue. Completion of two Senior or Ambassador Journeys OR earning the Silver Award and one Senior or Ambassador Journey is required. Learn how to submit a project proposal during **Gold Award training**. [Find out more about this award.](#)

Girl Scout Silver Award

This award is the highest award a Girl Scout Cadette can earn. You earn this award by leading a team to create long-lasting change to a community issue in a small group (up to four girls) or as an individual. Completion of a Cadette Journey and Silver Award training is required. [Learn how to begin.](#)

Girl Scout Bronze Award

This award is the highest award a Girl Scout Junior can earn. You work to create change in your community by creating and implementing a Take Action project either as a troop, small group, or individually. **Completion of a Junior Journey and training is required.** [Learn more.](#)

Awards for All Girl Scout Grade Levels

To learn more about these awards, [visit our website](#).

Bridging Award

Girls Scouts earn this award by completing two steps: *Pass it on*—to share what you've learned with younger girls, and *Look Ahead*—to learn from older girls about what great things will be happening in your next level of Girl Scouts. [Learn more.](#)

Journey Summit Award

This award is earned by completing three Journeys for your Girl Scout level. *Choose from It's Your World—Change it!, It's Your Planet — Love it!, It's Your Story—Tell It!, Think Like an Engineer, Think Like A Programmer, Think Like a Citizen Scientist, and Outdoor.*

Safety Award

Each Girl Scout Level has its own set of requirements to teach you how to stay safe at home, school, and in your community.

My Promise, My Faith

Girl Scouts of all levels can earn one award each year as you explore the connection between Girl Scouts and your faith and learn about additional religious recognitions.

Presidential Volunteer Service Award

This external award is a national opportunity to honor outstanding volunteers and recognize the impact you make. It is awarded by age groups in three tiers: Bronze, Silver, and Gold. To be eligible, volunteers must be United States citizens or lawful permanent residents, at least four years old, and have completed eligible service within a 12-month period (January 16-January 15) each year. Contact your Service Unit for information on how to apply for this award.

Meritorious Service Awards

Bronze Cross

This lifesaving award is given to a Girl Scout who has shown extraordinary heroism or risked her life to save another's. Contact Girl Scouts of Northern California to request guidelines and an application.

Medal of Honor

This lifesaving award is given to a Girl Scout who has saved someone's life in an emergency. Contact Girl Scouts of Northern California to request guidelines and an application.

Special Opportunity Awards

Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pin

Support your Girl Scout as they develop business skills, make memories, and earn pins each cookie season. [Learn more](#) about the age-specific guidelines.

World Thinking Day Award

Girl Scouts take part in activities to honor and celebrate our global sisterhood around the world. [Check out](#) the age-level activities to earn this award.

Global Action Award

[Learn more](#) about how girls live around the world and do an activity to help girls who need it to earn this award.

Mentoring Awards

Junior Aide

Girl Scout Juniors can earn this mentoring award by making and completing a plan to work with Daisies or Brownies on one of their Journeys.

Leader in Action (LiA)

Cadettes earn the LiA award by assisting Brownies to complete a Journey.

Cadette Program Aide

There are three steps to earn this mentoring award—earn one LiA award, complete the Council-approved Program Aide training, and work directly with younger girls over six activity sessions.

Volunteer-in-Training (VIT)

Seniors and Ambassadors who would like to mentor a Daisy, Brownie, Junior, or Cadette group outside of camp can earn this award when you work with an adult mentor, complete Girl Scouts of Northern California training, and create and implement a program for girls based on a Journey or badge.

Counselor-in-Training (CIT)

Seasoned Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors have exciting opportunities to mentor younger girls in a camp setting and build skills toward becoming a [camp counselor](#).

National Leadership Awards

Silver Torch Award

This award recognizes Cadettes who act as leaders in their community. There are two steps to earn this award—complete a Journey and serve for one full term in a leadership position in your community. Examples could be serving as yearbook editor, on student government, president of a club, or sports captain.

Gold and Silver Torch

This award recognizes Seniors who act as leaders in their community. There are two steps to earn this award—complete a Journey and serve for one full term in a leadership position in your community. Examples could be serving as yearbook editor, on student government, president of a club, or sports captain.

Gold Torch Award

This award recognizes Ambassador Girl Scouts who act as leaders in their community. There are two steps to earn this award: completing a Journey and serving for one full term in a leadership position in your community. Examples could be serving as yearbook editor, on student government, president of a club, or sports captain.

Community Service Bar

To earn this award, you will choose a community organization to work with, receive instructions, and complete at least 20 hours of service towards this initiative.

Service to Girl Scouting Bar

Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors often volunteer to help at service unit or council events with younger girls or volunteer to help with other special Girl Scout projects. Once you complete at least 20 hours of service towards your project, you will earn this award.



Effective Service Unit Meetings

Robert's Rules for Team Meetings

When conducting service unit business, teams should use a modified version of Robert's Rules. In some cases, the rules may need to be amended to suit the needs of the service unit; such amendments should be discussed with and approved by your council staff member.

Establishing a Quorum

A quorum of voting members needs to be present before votes can be passed. The size of your quorum will depend on the specifics of your service unit team and should be established annually, during your planning meeting. If a situation should arise during the year which necessitates a change to your quorum size, this should be discussed with your council staff member.

Conducting Business

- Send out agendas one week in advance of the meeting. Invite questions and feedback, and gather necessary information, then amend the agenda as needed.
- Ensure that team members are given the opportunity to report to the team on the status of ongoing and upcoming action items.
- Record attendance and establish at the beginning of the meeting whether or not a voting quorum is present. If not, no votes can take place. If needed, voting can occur via email in order to ensure that all team members have the opportunity to weigh in.
- Review, amend, and approve minutes of previous meetings.
- Revisit your Plan for Success at each meeting and make changes as necessary.
- Record new business, action items (with responsible parties), tabled discussions, motion proposers and seconders, and the outcome of votes in the meeting minutes.
- Publish the meeting minutes to the service unit members within one week of the meeting for their review.

Voting Procedures

1. Establish that a quorum is present, whether in person or via email.
2. One team member proposes a motion.
3. Another team member seconds the motion. If there is no seconder, the motion fails.
4. Discussion is opened. All team members have the opportunity to present their opinions. Remain professional and courteous, and respectful of others' time.
5. Once the discussion is concluded, the motion is either voted on or tabled for further discussion. A motion to table must be proposed and seconded.
6. Vote by show of hands/voice, or adopt the motion without a vote if there is no opposition.

Service Unit Meetings

Regular and engaging meetings can help to build the Girl Scout community in your service unit as well as provide timely support to troop volunteers throughout the year. Whatever the purpose (team or volunteer support), meetings should always create a welcoming atmosphere, engage the audience, and ensure that the time spent together is productive. Planning effective meetings is an important team responsibility.

Best Practices



For team meetings, send out an agenda well ahead of time and invite attendees to provide feedback on agenda items, generate questions, and gather information as appropriate.

Consider who the content contributors are for each meeting depending on the theme, and ask other team members to assist in other ways - e.g. logistics, meeting set-up, minutes, check-in.

Incorporate a range of voices to report out or lead an activity.

Ensure meetings are interactive and engaging.

Keep meetings on time and on topic.

Team Meetings

- Review of minutes from prior meeting
- Committee updates
- Treasurer's report
- Council updates
- Plan for Success - updates and changes
- Volunteer meetings - themes, activities, roles
- Upcoming events - review/approve budgets, identify support needs
- Membership goals
- Successes and challenges
- Problem solving

Volunteer Meetings

- Initial activity - icebreaker
- Opening - e.g. flag ceremony
- Business - announcements, council news
- Activities - short & snappy, training, workshop
- Clean-up
- Closing - e.g. friendship circle

Post-Meeting

Send out meeting minutes, thank attendees, ensure follow-up takes place (e.g. support needs are met, questions are answered).

Effective Volunteer Support Meetings

Welcoming Atmosphere

- Assign a team member to welcome people as they enter.
- Use small groups where possible and appropriate.
- Be sure to include an ice breaker and/or introductions.
- Provide childcare if possible.
- Use name tags.
- Provide beverages and snacks if appropriate.
- Thank and acknowledge troop and team volunteers.

Engaging the Audience

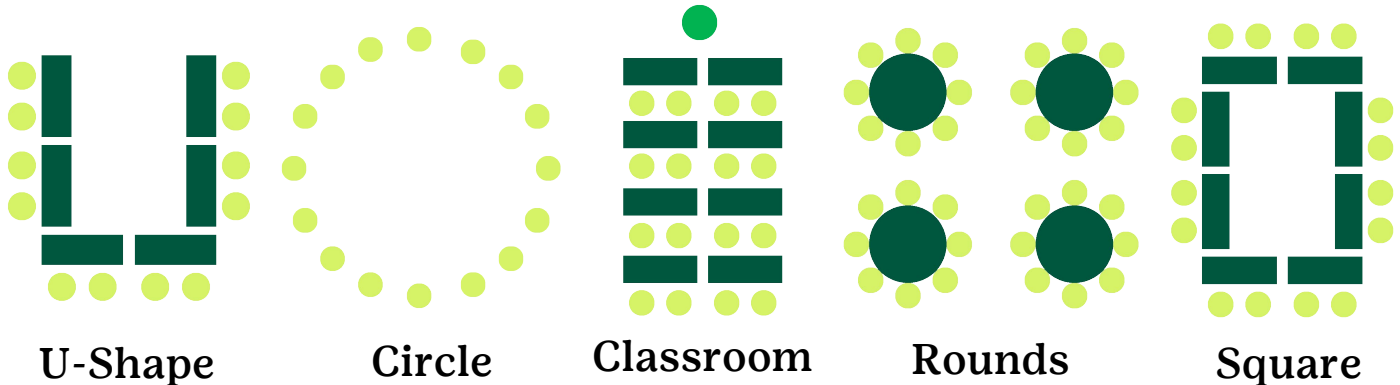
- Use timely themes to ensure meeting content is relevant.
- Make sure the meeting is interactive and not just an info dump!
- Identify and address learning needs.
- Consider table set-up and volunteer grouping.
- Use round-table topics to facilitate discussion.
- Give them "tools for their tool belt" - ideas they can use with their troops.
- Invite guest speakers.
- Keep news and updates brief.

Productive Meetings

- Send out reminders.
- Provide printed information in place of long-winded verbal updates.
- Provide contact information for follow-up questions.
- Publish important and time-sensitive information publicly for anyone who was unable to attend.
- Allow time for Q&A.
- Keep to designated times.
- Facilitate discussion with group breakouts by level.

Tips for Great Meetings

Table Layout Options



Select a table layout that works for your intended activity. Facilitated large group discussion is best in circle and u-shaped layouts, whereas rounds can be used for small group breakouts and classroom is best for guest speakers.

Preparing for Your Meeting

1. Identify your meeting's purpose and ensure your location and table availability and layout will suit your needs.
2. A catchy title and theme will help increase attendance!
3. Include short trainings and something volunteers can share with their troops.
4. Schedule and plan:
 - a. Notify your attendees.
 - b. Recruit team members to help.
 - c. Gather materials.
5. Create an agenda.
6. On the day:
 - a. Arrive early.
 - b. Be organized.
 - c. Manage the atmosphere - steer away from negativity and follow-up for more in depth answers rather than allowing the agenda and timeline to be hijacked.
 - d. Create a welcoming environment including name tags and icebreakers.
 - e. Recognize and thank those who attended.

Boosting Meeting Attendance

Plan

Be sure that meeting dates, locations, and content overviews are planned well in advance. Ideally, have a full annual meeting schedule ready to publish at the beginning of the year so that volunteers can also plan ahead.

Program

Your program needs to be relevant to the needs of your audience - what are their training or support gaps and how can the service unit fill them? Consider using surveys to get an idea of where your volunteers are at and where they want to be, and using Short & Snappies to provide curriculum to fill their needs. If new volunteers arrive at your meeting, you want them to leave feeling that it was worth their while and they gained new skills or information. Above all, remember that information that can be emailed should be emailed, so don't waste in-person meeting time on it!

Promote

Send out reminders one week in advance of the meeting and be sure to highlight the benefits of attendance - key learning outcomes, support available, social opportunities etc. Send another reminder two days prior to the meeting. Consider creating eye-catching flyers or graphics to post to your service unit's social media pages. During the meeting, take pictures of the activities and post them to social media afterwards so volunteers can see what they missed!

Personal

The more personal connections people build, the more likely they are to return. Identify regular attendees and/or team members who are approachable and friendly and assign them to "door duty" to greet people as they arrive. When new volunteers attend, pair them up with an experienced volunteer to sit with them, introduce them to others, and translate 'Girl Scout Speak' for them if needed. Before SU events, prepare and print small cards with details of upcoming meetings to hand out to attending adults.

Plan your meeting agenda to incorporate opportunities for networking such as round table discussions, ice breakers, and pair or group hands-on activities.

Praise

Reward volunteers' attendance with e.g. door prizes, childcare (provided by older Girl Scouts) and refreshments - maybe even a service unit award!

Start with a bang, and then keep it fun and fast-moving to engage your audience!

Sample Agenda - Team Meeting

girl scouts 
of northern california

Service Unit XXX Team Meeting Agenda

Date:

Time:

In attendance:

New Business

Upcoming events:

Committee Support
Needs:

Action Items and
Person Responsible:

Agenda

1. Call to order and attendance.
2. Review and approval of last meeting's minutes (5 minutes)
3. Committee reports (15 minutes)
 - a. Membership
 - b. Program
 - c. Adult Engagement
4. Treasurer's report (5 minutes)
5. Council updates and news (5 minutes)
6. Annual Planning: recap of progress and outstanding business (5 minutes)
7. Updates on action items from last meeting (10 minutes)
8. New business - committee support needs, upcoming events and volunteer support meetings, new action items (15 minutes)
9. Meeting close

Sample Agenda - Volunteer Meeting



Service Unit XXX Volunteer Meeting Agenda

Important Dates:

Contact Information:

Our next meeting:

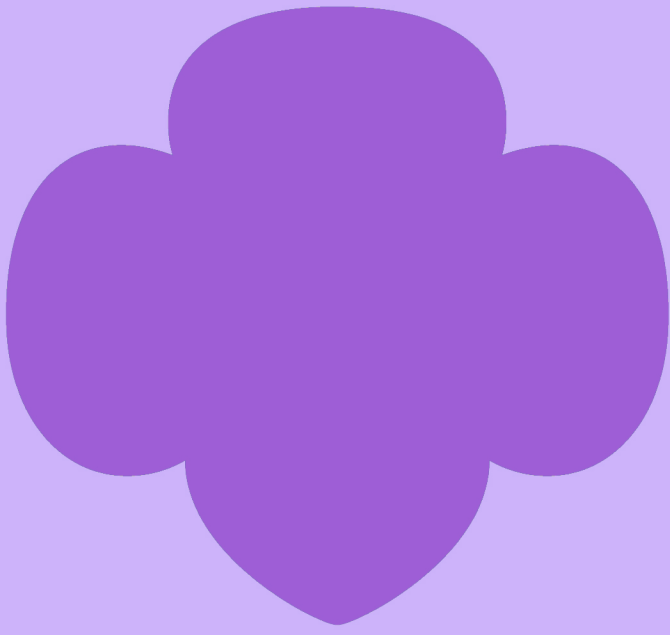
Date:

Time:

Theme:

Agenda

1. Icebreaker (5 minutes)
2. Flag Ceremony (5 minutes)
3. Welcome and introductions (5 minutes)
4. Business and news (10 minutes)
5. Main activity - THEME (30 minutes)
6. Program level breakout session - discussion topic (15 minutes)
7. Q&A (10 minutes)
8. Clean Up (5 minutes)
9. Closing ceremony (5 minutes)



GSNorCal Camps and Program Centers

Camp Properties Overview

Girl Scouts of Northern California has 6 currently reservable camp properties:



Reserving Camp Properties

For service units renting entire sites, complete the Service Unit Priority Property Reservation Request Form during the following reservation windows:






































For reservations between June 1st to November 30th, submit your request between 2/1 and 3/1. For reservations between December 1st and May 30th, submit your request between 7/1 and 8/1.

For individual units, reservations open:

From April 1st for reservations between June 1st and November 30th.

From September 1st for reservations between December 1st and May 30th.

Facilities

Property	Day Capacity	Night Capacity	Facilities Available
Arequipa	150	62	    Archery and ropes are available at Bothin, a short walk away
Bothin	300	250	       
Butano Creek	200	188	     
Hidden Falls	132	132	     
Sugar Pine	245	245	      
Twin Canyon	200	200	     



Kitchen or kitchenette in one or more units



Commercial kitchen



Indoor sleeping options



Tent camping



Fire pit



Archery range



Pool



Ropes Course

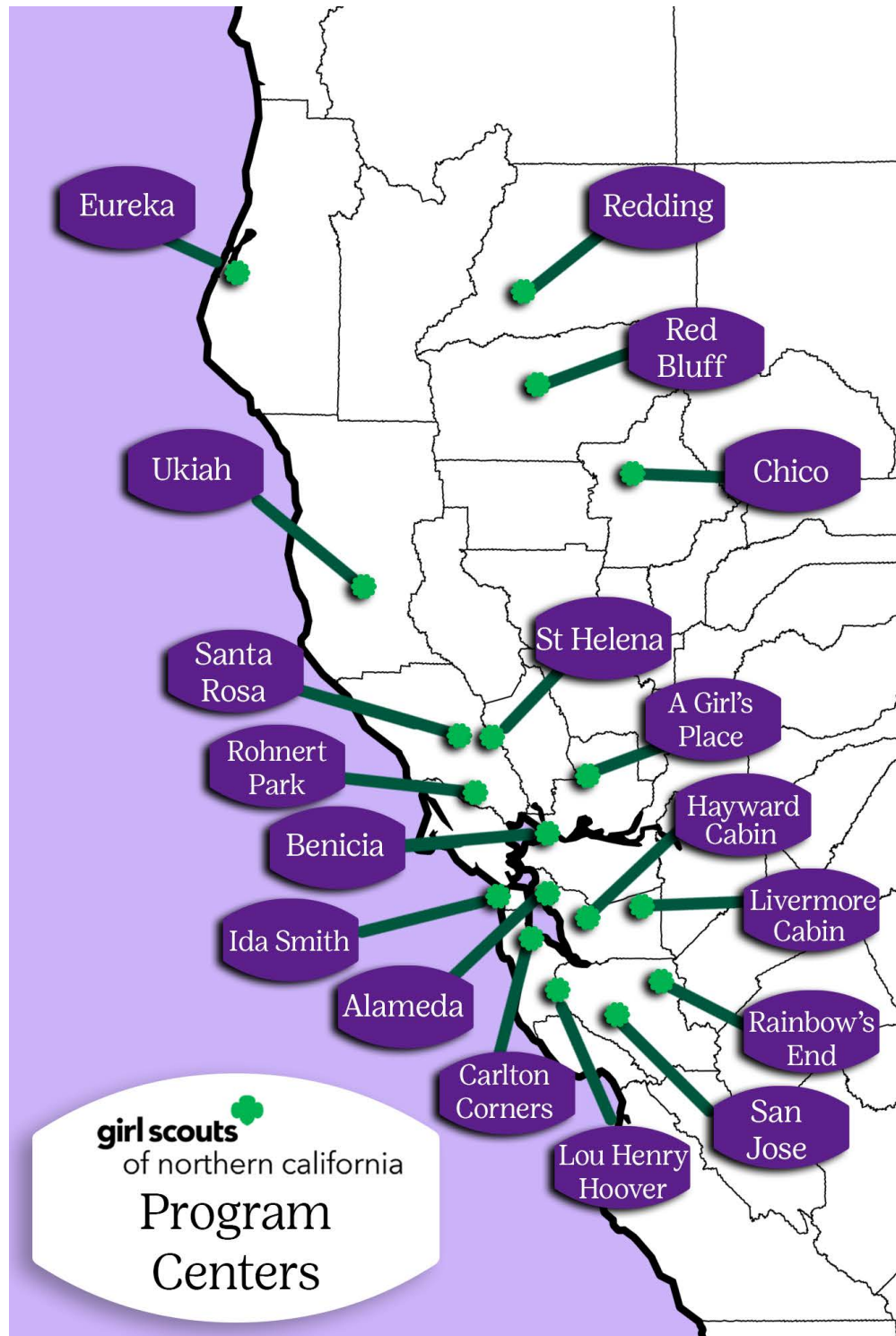


Natural water features

If you have any questions about the facilities available and how to reserve them, contact property@gsnorcal.org

Program Centers Overview

In addition to our camp properties, Girl Scouts of Northern California has program centers around our council footprint, many of which can be reserved for troop and service unit meetings and activities.



Reserving Program Centers

Most of our offices and program centers can be reserved for troop and service unit activities. Please contact property@gsnocal.org for reservation information.

Facilities

Property	Day Capacity	Night Capacity	Facilities Available
A Girl's Place	55	27	Located at Dunnell Nature Park. 2 x meeting rooms (1 with kitchen, 1 with kitchenette), outdoor patio, fire ring
Alameda Office	100	N/A	Meeting rooms, large open meeting space, kitchen
Benicia Scout House	40	40	2 x meeting rooms, outdoor deck, grass field, kitchen
Carlton Corners	24	16	1 meeting room, kitchen
Chico Office	125	30 indoors 20 campers	2 Meeting rooms, kitchen, large lawn, stage, covered patio, outdoor cooking
Eureka Office	30	30	3 meeting rooms, kitchen
Hayward Cabin	30	24	Located at Memorial Park. 1 meeting room, kitchen, large field, outdoor cooking at park
Ida Smith	100	20 indoors 30 campers	1 building, kitchen, outdoor camping shelters, fire pit, outdoor cooking
Livermore	32	20	Located at Doolan Park. 2 meeting rooms
Lou Henry Hoover	100	50	Located at Rinconada Cultural Park. 3 meeting rooms, kitchen, outdoor patio, outdoor cooking at park
Rainbow's End	100	40 indoors 60 campers	Located at Penitencia Creek Park. 1 building, kitchen, outdoor activity shelter, stage, fire pit, green fields onsite, outdoor cooking
Red Bluff	40	N/A	Located at Residential Block Park. 1 meeting room, kitchen
Redding Office	30	N/A	1 shared, reservable meeting room
Rohnert Park	20	20	Located at Alicia Park. 1 meeting room, kitchen
San Jose Office	100	N/A	Multi-purpose room with divider, conference rooms, kitchen
Santa Rosa Office	50	30 indoors 12 campers	1 large meeting room, outdoor patio, fire pit
St. Helena	20	20	Located at Lyman Park. 1 meeting room, kitchen
Ukiah Office	150	N/A	1 shared, reservable meeting room, reservable kitchen



Service Unit Recruitment Guide

Recruitment Strategies

Adult-Facing

School-Based Recruitment

Getting our message out to youth and their families within schools can be a very effective way to help a Girl Scout community to grow. Special attention should be given to building positive relationships with school administrators and parent/teacher organizations. Recruitment at or through the school can take many forms, depending on the school or district's policies.

Some opportunities may include:

- Principal Visit
- Classroom Visit
- Open House/Back to School night
- PTA/PTO Presentation
- Hosting information tables at school events

Parent Information Session

A parent information session (often called Parent Information Night or PIN) is typically just for adults, though you should have some easy self-guided activities available for youth as some may bring children along. This is an opportunity to share the philosophy of Girl Scouts with parents/caregivers and organize them into new troops.

Community-Based Recruitment

This recruitment strategy is designed to spread the word about Girl Scouts and increase Girl Scouts' presence and recognition within the community. The service unit should work with community organizations and Girl Scout staff to find opportunities for Girl Scouts to be present at community events throughout the year.

Options may include:

- Tabling at a community event
- Offering games or simple Girl Scout program at community events

Youth-Facing

Program-Based Recruitment

A program-based recruitment event is a scheduled event which engages potential new Girl Scouts by including them in programming. Though they are designed to be youth-facing, these events should also include a presentation to parents/caregivers to sell the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

Welcome Troop

A Welcome Troop is a troop that is led by Girl Scout volunteers for the first 6 meetings. During the provided program, the volunteers will identify and train adults to take over the troop leadership, resulting in a fully functional and independent Girl Scout troop at the end of the 6 sessions.

Whichever recruitment strategy you choose, always ensure that families are clear on their next steps, whether that is joining an existing troop, attending another meeting, or forming a new troop.

Recruitment FAQs

What's the Purpose of a Recruitment Event?

To inspire new members, parents, volunteers, caregivers, and girls to get involved with Girl Scouting.

What is My Role?

Local recruitment volunteers have a crucial role in increasing Girl Scouts' visibility in the community, promoting the benefits of Girl Scouting, and spreading the word about recruitment opportunities. You may be asked to:

- Use communication channels available to you to share flyers and information.
- Make arrangements for room rental.
- Coordinate other adult and girl volunteers.
- Attend the event to support, or run the event if you are comfortable doing so.
- Identify tabling opportunities at your school/in the local area.
- Talk to parents and help them form new troops.

What Makes a Successful Tabling Event?

Have a professional, well organized and eye-catching display that entices people to come and ask questions.

Be prepared to be pro-active, and bring your energy - don't wait for people to come to you! You can hand out postcards and engage people while they wait in line.

At events where children will be present, providing a small activity for them to do at your table is a great way to bring them to the table and give you time to talk with parents.

Who Do I Connect With for Support?

Your service unit's Membership Advisor, Recruitment Specialist, and/or your council staff member.

What is the Troop Catalog?

This is the catalog of troops with open spaces for new girls and adult volunteers. Ask your staff member for an up-to-date print out of troops with openings prior to your recruitment event. Prospective members can access the catalog at www.gsnorcal.org/join

What Recruitment Resources Are Available?

- Business cards for recruiters
- One-pagers
- Postcards
- Flyers
- Yard signs
- Giveaways - items vary but often include stickers, pencils, bracelets, bookmarks

How Do I Prepare for a Tabling Event?

- Check in with your SU recruitment specialist or staff member and let them know about your event.
- Bring recruitment resources to pass out to potential members. This could include informational postcards and/or flyers inviting them to an upcoming event.
- Bring display items: anything you have available! Could include:
 - Uniforms
 - Sample books, handbooks, year plans
 - Trifold display of photos and information
 - A smile!
- Don't forget sign-in sheets, or printed QR codes, and pens.



Parent Information Nights (PINs)

The Purpose of PINs

A PIN is an opportunity for parents to find out more about the Girl Scout program, ask any questions they have, and, ultimately, start or join a troop. Check with your SU recruitment volunteer and/or your staff member - they will be able to support a PIN at your school or community venue, but if you are comfortable doing so, you may lead a PIN yourself.

Checklist

- ☐ Select a date, location, and time - partner with your Recruitment Specialist or staff member for support if needed.
- ☐ Reserve an appropriate location with a restroom, e.g. school MPR, community room, place of worship, at least 1 month in advance. NB: if a contract is required, this must be signed by GSNorCal staff.
- ☐ Advertise the event through any channels available to you. Your staff member will be able to help with a flyer if needed.
- ☐ Arrange for volunteers (including older Girl Scouts) to run activities for girls if included in your plan.
- ☐ Arrive at least 30-45 minutes early to ensure you have room access, and tables/chairs are set up. Set up your materials, sign-in station, and girl activity if using.
- ☐ Check technology and wifi.
- ☐ Have parents sit according to their girl's grade level with sign-in sheets at each table so that adults can coordinate together and share contact info.
- ☐ Have level-based resources available at each table for parents to preview.
- ☐ Ensure that any youth-focused activities are situated away from the parent meeting area, to enable adults to have a conversation without too much noise disturbance.

With Girl Scouts she'll gain:



Talking Points

As potential members arrive, be sure to welcome them, direct them to sign in, and provide some program materials for them to look at as they wait.

Start with an introduction - who are you, what is your experience with Girl Scouts.

Upfront contract - how long will the meeting take, what will you cover, what is the anticipated outcome, what is the planned follow-up?

Remember - this is a conversation, not a lecture. Ask your audience what their prior experience is, what they are hoping for their girls to gain from Girl Scouts, what are they anxious about.

Provide some information about the Girl Scout program - include program pillars, troop fundamentals, what girls do in troops, how parents are involved, approximate cost (most troops cover most or all of their costs through product program). Refer back to the prior conversation and be sure to note the program areas which will be of particular interest to them (e.g. getting outdoors, making friends, building leadership skills).

Emphasize that we are a volunteer-run organization and that parent involvement is key to their child's and the troop's long-term success. Outline adult roles and how everyone will work together to ensure that no single individual has too much to do.

Include your own personal anecdotes which highlight key parts of the program including leadership outcomes, fun activities that your girl/s have participated in, events that are traditionally provided in your service unit, and also adult volunteer benefits such as friendships, experiences, and personal growth.

Pause for questions throughout, and engage the audience. What are they most interested in for their girl, what skills/interests do they have which they would like to share with the troop.

Outline what is needed in order to start a new troop in terms of adult roles, time commitments, process (i.e. applying for troop number, registration, background check, online training, connecting with staff member and/or SU volunteer).

Finish with next steps - link back to your upfront contract and desired outcomes. If new troops are needed and you have attendees who would be able to form a troop together, small group discussion is ideal - allow them the space to connect and discuss volunteer roles. If girls need placement, refer to the troop catalog for available troop spaces. Parents can access from their phones and register immediately. Ideally, have a printed copy of the catalog spaces with you.

The Girl Scout Impact

Benefits for Youth

54% of alumnae attribute their success in life to their time in Girl Scouts

95% of parents say their daughters have made more friends through Girl Scouts

86% of youth members say they gained new outdoor experiences through Girl Scouts

90% of parents say that their daughter is more confident because of Girl Scouts

Benefits for Adults

94% of volunteers have made new friends.

88% believe their life is better because they volunteer with Girl Scouts.

2/3 of volunteers believe their experience has helped them professionally.

95% of Girl Scout volunteers are happy knowing they are making girls' lives better.

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

Girl Scouting helps youth:

Discover Self (develop confidence by building skills and learning new things);

Connect with others (learn how to work as a team, resolve conflicts, and treat others with respect);

Take Action (develop projects, based on their own interests and values, that make their community a better place).

Girl Scouting is delivered in ways that engage youth:

Youth-Led (from the youngest ages, Girl Scouts have the chance to make decisions and shape their own experiences);

Learning By Doing (Girl Scouts get to do hands-on experiential activities); and

Cooperative Learning (Girl Scouts team up on projects so that everyone learns).

Common Questions

Membership dues: \$50/youth/yr and \$25/adult/yr plus cost of background check. Financial aid is available. During extended year period (April - July), new members will join for the remainder of the current year and will automatically be renewed for the next membership year. Cost for extended year membership is \$60/youth and \$35/adult.

Product Program: participation is not mandatory, but this is a financial literacy program which is the primary means of budgeting, goal setting, and self-funding troop experiences so we encourage troops and girls to participate.

Troop logistics: responses depend on your area and can include typical troop structures - numbers of girls, single or multi-level, frequency of meeting, availability of room rentals in your area.

Scouts BSA: refer to talking points provided. Emphasize that they are different programs with a different focus. Girl Scouts is youth-led which means the activities are more variable and different troops are able to have a different focus according to the members' needs, wishes, and interests.

Can adult males volunteer? Yes! We encourage all adults to get involved, and adult males are welcome to volunteer in any role. A male troop leader will need an unrelated female co-leader and there must always be at least one registered and screened female in attendance at all troop activities.

Recruiting more members: staff or local volunteers will support with flyers and existing interest lists if more members are needed to start a new troop. Connecting via their school communication outlets is ideal - e.g. Facebook groups, room parents, teachers, PTA newsletters, direct communication channels.

Time commitment: be honest, but emphasize that troops are able to decide for themselves how active they will be, and they can determine their own meeting and activity schedule according to their bandwidth. Support will be provided to co-ordinate a parent meeting with interested families where logistics and specific roles can be discussed and selected.

Financial commitment: Girl Scouts is designed to be low cost, and financial aid is available for memberships, uniforms, and council events and camp. Most troops fund their activities almost entirely through product program participation.

Remember: you are not expected to know everything! If you are asked questions that you are unable to answer, offer to have someone reach out to them, or guide them to attend an online Open House through council.



After the Recruitment

- ✓ Make sure attendees are clear on next steps before they leave: who will contact them and when, what their immediate action items are etc.
- ✓ Make a note on the sign-in sheet of any adults who expressed interest in troop leadership and/or partnering further to build a new troop.
- ✓ Clean up the meeting space and return tables and chairs to their original positions.
- ✓ Send a copy of the sign-in sheet to your SU recruitment volunteer or staff member within 24 of the event.

Next Steps for New Members

Registration

If members and volunteers complete the joining process, they will receive follow up emails for:

- Membership receipt confirmation
- Girl role confirmation
- Background check information if the adult registered and selected a role.
- A request for troop information if the member joined without selecting a troop.

If members or volunteers stop at any point in the process, they will receive automated emails.

If they join an existing troop, they should expect to receive an email from the troop leader within one week.

New Troops

If a new troop is formed, one adult will need to complete the troop number request form. This person will be the designated contact for the new troop, and will be given the role of Troop Leader or Co-Op Troop Admin. They will then receive follow up emails for:

- Completing their membership registration
- Completing their fingerprinting
- Once those are completed, they will receive an email with a link to the troop's catalog listing that they can share with other families.
- An invitation to a welcome session with a staff member, who will be available to support them as they get started.

Available Support

New troops are directly supported by council staff throughout the process. Once the troop is set up and registration and screening have been completed for the primary contact person (Leader or Admin), a staff member will reach out to introduce themselves and invite the new troop leadership to meet with them. The staff member will be available to guide them through the process and answer questions that they have.

Online Resources

All adults in volunteer roles will be able to access online training through gsLearn to prepare them for their role. Some training is mandatory: all adults must complete Mandated Reporter training through the state or other provider, upload their completion certificate, and take the GSNorCal policies and procedures modules. Troop Leaders/Admins must complete the New Leader Training Course, and adults in other roles will take training so they understand their role and responsibilities.

Many online resources are available to support new troops and caregivers, including the Volunteer Toolkit, which contains meeting plans for all official badges, and Volunteer Essentials, which is an online resource covering GSNorCal policies and procedures for every eventuality.

The Sandler Sales Model

Bonding and Rapport: Don't get in the way of where you want your potential members to go by being too enthusiastic or passive.

Up-Front Contract: Always set clear expectations and define a clear future after the event. Then, jump into a short (30 seconds or less) explanation of Girl Scouts, and give permission for attendees to ask questions.

Pain: There is a gap between where your attendees are, and where they want to be. It's your job to figure out what your attendees want. Ask questions and highlight outcomes that you feel strongly about and that reflect their concerns. Focus on the benefits for adults, too.

Budget: People purchase things from people they can trust. Be truthful and sincere when asked about money and time commitments. Uncover if participants are willing and able to invest what is necessary. Time is historically the most crucial aspect of this step.

Decision: You must uncover who the actual decision maker is. Don't be afraid to accept "no" as an answer, but have attendees understand the significance of being involved in their daughter's Girl Scout experience.

Fulfillment: If possible, walk adults through the registration process and/or the troop number request form. If not, make sure that you follow up with them the next day to offer assistance with registering.

Post-Sell: After the event, reflect on your approach, and talking points. Debrief with those who assisted.

Defining Pain

Pain is the gap between where someone is and where they want to be. Maybe their daughter is new to the area and doesn't have many friends, or is lacking confidence, or spends too much time using technology and doesn't get outdoors much...

How Can Girl Scouts Help?

Use personal anecdotes, the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, and program pillars to show how Girl Scouts can benefit their family.

Have a Conversation!

While there are some important aspects of Girl Scouts that you will want to ensure your audience hears, remember that you should be listening just as much as you are speaking, if not more. In order to identify their pain points (i.e. their needs and wishes) you will need to ask questions. Begin by asking about their Girl Scout experience, if they have any, and what they are looking for from Girl Scouts for their child. Answers to these questions will tell you what they are excited about and will let you know what to focus on when you are talking about the program. You can incorporate a slideshow presentation into your PIN but ensure you leave enough time for these conversations.

Restate and reinforce

Show that you were listening - remember what people's responses were to your open ended questions and come back to them. E.g. if a parent mentions that they have recently moved to the area and their child doesn't have many friends, you will want to get them excited about the prospect of making friends in Girl Scouts, using both general points ("Girl Scouts is such a great way to make friends!") and specific anecdotes ("A friend of mine was in Girl Scouts as a child and even now, 30 years later, she still keeps in touch with her troop and they arrange annual camping meet ups!"). If a parent is concerned that their child has too much screen time and doesn't spend enough time outdoors, remember to bring this up later when discussing the outdoors options ("There's a Girl Scout camp property local to this area which is a great place to take the troop for a first camping trip - they can really get away from their screens and connect with nature!")

Next steps

Make sure that you are very clear when it comes to what will happen next, and the expected timeline. If someone has volunteered as a troop leader or troop admin, explain what their follow-up will be ("I'll be working with Sarah for a few days to get that troop number issued and get the troop open for registration - Sarah, look for an email from me tomorrow with all the information you'll need to submit that request and get started on your training. You'll hear back from my colleague within a couple of days with a link to register, and then you'll do your background check. Everyone else, please consider which of the troop committee positions you may be able to support with and let Sarah know within the next few days. As soon as the troop is set up and open for registration, I'll send that link out to you all. If all goes smoothly that should take approximately one week.")



Service Unit Retention Guide

Retention FAQs

What is My Role?

As a Retention Specialist, you will work closely with your service unit committee and council staff to develop strategies which encourage troops and adult volunteers to renew their memberships.

- Use communication channels available to you to share messaging related to renewals, including the Early Bird Renewal campaign in the spring and on-time renewals in the fall.
- Partner with Program Level Mentors and the CSA Specialist to ensure that troops at each level are receiving appropriate support and training to enable them to take full advantage of the program.
- Connect with bridging troops to offer support.
- Facilitate connections with others in the service unit who may be able to offer guidance on level-specific or other issues.
- Where possible, partner with Event Managers to host an Early Bird renewal event, and/or a bridging event.
- Work with your team to ensure that learning opportunities at e.g. volunteer meetings are relevant and help to fill identified needs for troop volunteers.

Retention happens when volunteers and youth feel valued, supported, engaged, and that they are able to develop new interests and skills. You will play a key role in making sure that this is the ethos within your service unit, and that troops receive appropriate and timely support.

Why Does Retention Matter?

Each year, Girl Scouts learn more about themselves and the world around them as they continue their Girl Scout journey. The older they get, the more leadership experience they can gain - from earning their LiA award for guiding younger Girl Scouts through a journey, to planning a trip to another state or even around the world!

When we retain our older youth, not only can they help to lead the way for younger Girl Scouts and act as ambassadors to show the younger members what the Girl Scout program has to offer, but it also helps to ensure that there are more trusted and experienced adult volunteers to mentor new leaders and support the service unit.

Who Do I Connect With for Support?

Your service unit's Membership Advisor, and/or your council staff member.

How Can I Impact Retention?

As a member of the service unit team, you are in a unique position to be able to help guide Troop Leaders and have an impact on youth experiences. As a first step, recruit more adults to help support newer troop leaders. Do you know a troop that had some amazing experiences last year? Ask that leader to be a Program Level Mentor and pass on their experience and knowledge! Maybe an older troop would like to take the lead on a service unit Bridging event, or you may know a CSA troop leader who would be great in the role of CSA Advisor.

What are Early Bird and On-Time Renewals?

Each year, April 1st to June 30th is dedicated to Early Bird renewals. Renewing early helps both GSNorCal AND service units and troops to plan ahead for a bigger and better year. Knowing how many members to plan for enables both volunteers and council staff alike to create more concrete budgetary and program plans. Early Bird renewals are typically incentivized at the troop and individual level - your help advertising and promoting these rewards is crucial to our efforts!

Girl Scouts who renew before the membership year ends on September 30th are considered to be "on-time". Members and volunteers who have not renewed by this time should not participate in any Girl Scout activities or hold any volunteer positions until they renew their membership. Troops that have not renewed many (or any) members and volunteers by this time should be contacted so that support can be offered. If the troop still does not renew, they may be disbanded and lose access to their bank accounts and troop funds.



Supporting Troops With Retention

The Long-Term Benefits of Girl Scouting

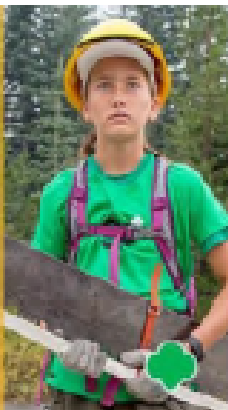
Girl Scout alumni display positive outcomes to a greater degree than their non-Girl Scout peers. These outcomes pertain to sense-of-self, community service, civic engagement, education, and income. These differences are seen regardless of generation, social class, race, and engagement in other extra-curricular activities. The data is clear: remaining in Girl Scouts leads to many lifelong benefits!

What Help Might Troop Leaders Need?

- Troop adult support
- Managing and reporting finances
- Understanding or providing program
- Applying the GSLE
- Youth-led progression
 - Outdoors
 - Leadership
 - Entrepreneurship
- Council regulations/paperwork
- Transitioning to an older youth troop
- Conflict management
- Feelings of isolation
- Finding local community service opportunities
- Getting outdoors
- Stepping out of their comfort zone
- Troop leadership
 - Communication
 - Succession
 - Delegation
 - Balancing time

90%

of parents say that because of Girl Scouts, their daughter is *more confident*.



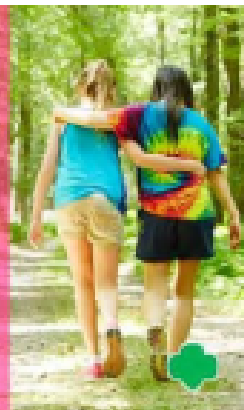
95%

of volunteers say they make girls' lives better at Girl Scouts and this makes them *happy*.



95%

of caregivers say their girls have made *more friends* through Girl Scouts.



Providing Support

Once you have identified any problems that troops/leaders are facing, how can you help them to find the support they need?

[Other adults in the troop are not helping](#) - discuss with the leader what their needs are and suggest ways in which they can approach their troop adults and assign tasks.

[Managing and reporting finances](#) - direct them to the gsLearn course "Managing Troop Finances" and the additional resources for financial reporting in the Help Center. Connect them with the SU Treasurer for additional support.

[Help understanding and/or delivering program](#) - your service unit's Program Level Mentors and/or CSA Specialist should be able to help guide them in navigating the program opportunities available at their level. Encourage them to attend service unit meetings to connect with other leaders at their level to brainstorm ideas and potentially work together to provide program.

[Applying the GSLE/progression](#) - there are a lot of resources in the Help Center to help leaders understand youth-led progression in different program areas and how to plan their Girl Scout year, so this would be a great starting point.

[Council regulations/paperwork](#) - connect the leader with your service unit's Troop Outdoor Mentor for help with paperwork. The Trip & Outdoor Learning Matrix is a handy chart which breaks down the training and paperwork needed for different types of trips, and can be found in the Help Center.

[Transitioning to an older youth troop](#) - connect them with your service unit's CSA Advisor and/or directly with CSA troop leaders who can help answer their questions about how Girl Scouts changes as our youth transition from elementary to middle and high schools.

[Conflict management](#) - connect them with a volunteer in your service unit who will be able to help them navigate the conflict. Escalate to council staff for intervention as needed.

[Finding local community service opportunities](#) - work with your team to ensure that this is put on the agenda for a future service unit meeting, and encourage other troop leaders to share examples of projects their troop has done through your social media channels.

[Feelings of isolation](#) - encourage them to attend service unit meetings and adult socials, as well as service unit events. Program Level Mentors may also be able to arrange for leaders at their level to connect and network.

[Getting outdoors](#) - training and practice will improve confidence! Your service unit's Troop Outdoor Mentor may be able to help ensure that training is available. Encourage the leader to identify an adult in their troop who could lead this piece of the program.

[Stepping out of their comfort zone](#) - Just as Girl Scouts offers a safe space for our youth members to take risks and try new things, so it does for our adult volunteers! Mentoring can be of great benefit in these instances, and service unit meeting time can be dedicated to short training opportunities to give volunteers more confidence.

Retention Strategies

Volunteer-Facing

Identifying Support Needs

There are many ways in which troop volunteers may be in need of support. If they "don't know what they don't know" they may not be able to clearly express their needs.

Look for the warning signs:

- Are the troop leaders and other volunteers in the troop completing training in gsLearn?
 - Training helps to prepare adults for the next steps with their troop and if they aren't taking the training they need, they can be left feeling overwhelmed.
- Did a troop see a sudden drop-off in members at an unexpected time (e.g. after 1st grade)?
 - This can be an indicator that a troop is struggling - maybe because the leader needs training or more adult support.
- Are new troops sending adult volunteers to service unit meetings?
 - Track attendance and try to form connections with troops that rarely, if ever, engage. Encourage them to attend meetings so that the community can support them.
- Do you have troops which are consistently slow to renew, and may not have all of their members renewed even by cookie time?
- Do newer, younger troops have plenty of adult volunteers?
 - Leaders can become burned out easily if they have insufficient support, particularly in the early years.

Youth-Facing

Early Bird Events

A program-based event that serves as an incentive to troops and individuals to renew during the "Early Bird" period from April-June.

What Kind of Event?

If your service unit is able to facilitate an early bird renewal event, consider something that is easy to plan, such as:

- Movie Matinee: if there's an upcoming movie that would appeal to the Girl Scouts, contact your local movie theater to see if you can host a private viewing!
- Pool Party: reserve the space and provide snacks - the entertainment takes care of itself!
- Bowling/Skating: much like a pool party or movie, once the space is reserved there's typically little else to organize other than registrations.
- Songfest: get back into the swing of Girl Scouts with some traditional songs, and have an older Girl Scout act as MC.
- S'mores & More: make it a Girl Scout traditions evening, with a campfire, songs, skits, and s'mores!

Promotion

Consider offering a service unit subsidy such as reduced cost registrations and/or a special something extra for your early birds!

Registrations

For an event to act as an effective incentive for early bird renewals, be sure to begin promoting it well before the end of the early bird renewal time frame. Be prepared to check your registrations to ensure that everyone registering has, in fact, renewed their membership in time!

Timeline

Year-Round

Does each service unit volunteer support meeting include at least one of the following?

- A learning opportunity that meets an identified need.
- Program level breakouts.
- An opportunity to network and make connections.

Prepare for the 5th-6th grade drop off by:

- Encourage CSA leaders to mentor a 4th or 5th grade troop.
- Celebrate and promote the successes of older Girl Scouts.
- Provide hands-on workshops or training opportunities for 5th grade troop leaders and youth.
- Connect 5th grade troops together to facilitate merging and/or placements for continuing youth.

August-September

Back to school = back to troop! Work with your council staff member to identify troops in need of outreach.

Potential actions include:

- emails and phone calls to troops that have not yet renewed 70% of their youth membership, being sure to include a list of troop members who have not yet renewed.
- Promote the service unit's event calendar and meeting themes.
- Call or text identified troop leaders to find out if the service unit can support them in any way.
- Reach out to parents of Juliette Girl Scouts to make sure they are connected to the service unit.

October-December

Partner with your service unit's Communications Specialist to ensure troop leaders have joined your communication platforms. Arrange support for identified troops. Connect incoming Cadette troops to the CSA Advisor and newly bridged troops and Juliettes to their Program Level Mentors

December-February

Partner with the Cookie Advisor and leaders as needed to help get everyone renewed in time for cookie sales!

March

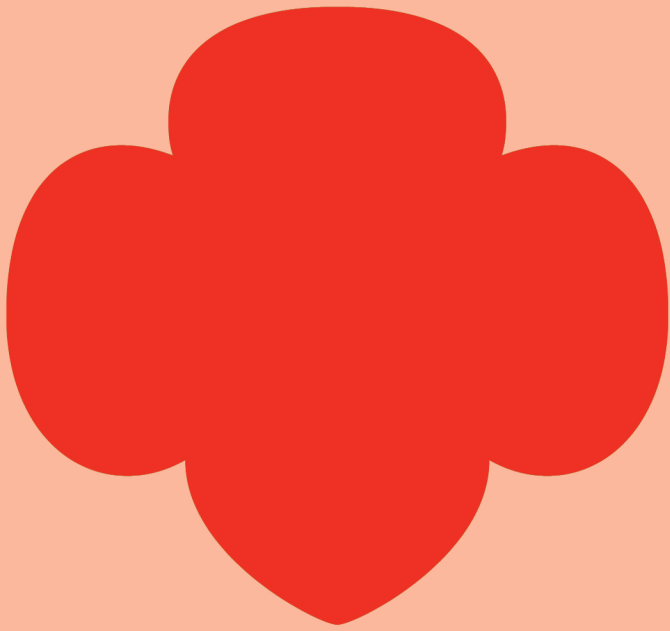
Begin working with the team to plan an early bird renewal event. Reach out to 5th grade troop leaders to discuss their plans and connect them to existing Cadette troops as needed for mentorship.

April

Promote your early bird renewal event. Partner with your staff member to ensure a comprehensive promotion plan for early renewals to include council and service unit messaging and outreach.

July-August

Partner with your council staff to reach out to troops that indicated an unsure status on their annual finance report to identify what support is needed to ensure as many troops as possible continue into the new membership year.



Guide to Service Unit Finances

Managing Service Unit Finances

The Service Unit Treasurer is responsible for managing and reporting on service unit funds, and taking a lead role in ensuring troop volunteers are trained to manage troop finances and fulfill their fiduciary responsibilities.

Service Unit Bank Accounts

All service units must have a bank account. Service unit bank accounts require a minimum of two signers who are registered, background checked, trained volunteers and who are not related to or in the same household as one another. They should normally be listed in the roles of Service Unit Treasurer and Service Unit Advisor.

The processes for opening a service unit bank account or changing signers on the account are identical to those for troop accounts; simply use the service unit name and number in place of the troop number on the form.

Opening Your Account and Changing Signers

1. Ensure that all signers have a current membership, and have completed both Live Scan fingerprinting and necessary training.
2. Complete the Bank Account Request and Signer Change Form.
3. Once cleared to do so, make an appointment with a bank representative and inform info@gsnorcal.org.
4. If opening a new account, all signers must attend the appointment. For a change of signers, the key executive and new signer must attend.

Begin the change of signers process 2-3 months in advance of any key executive change. In the event of a loss of access to the account (e.g. if a key executive moves away prior to the change of signers process taking place), inform council staff as soon as possible so that appropriate action can be taken. The account will be closed and Girl Scouts of Northern California will hold service unit funds while a new account is opened.

Financial Management

Maintaining Accurate Records

All service unit financial transactions should be accompanied by supporting documentation, for example: receipts, deposit slips, reimbursement request forms. All documentation should be organized physically in a binder. You may also choose to store documents electronically by scanning and uploading to a shared service unit Google drive. Physical copies should be kept for a minimum of seven years. A detailed record can be maintained using the Service Unit Financial Report (SUFR) worksheet to record dates, source, purposes, amounts, and categories of income and expenditure.

DO:

- Create a budget
- Keep detailed records
- Limit use of cash
- Review bank statements regularly
- Be transparent
- Track transactions using the SUFR worksheet

DON'T:

- Mix Girl Scout and personal money
- Reimburse yourself from the service unit account
- Forget the supporting documentation!

Appropriate Service Unit Expenses

The following is a list of common service unit expenses which are considered appropriate. This list is not exhaustive: if in doubt, consult with your council staff liaison.

- Office Supplies
- Copying and print expenses
- Equipment rental
- Meeting space
- Postage
- Food for volunteer meetings, recognitions, trainings etc.
- Guest speaker fees
- Service unit team member training
- Tokens of appreciation
- Recognition expenses for volunteers and Girl Scouts
- Costs for events intended to recruit and/or retain members
- Service unit take action and service projects
- Financial aid for Girl Scouts for service unit events and travel opportunities
- Reimbursements for service unit event expenses (see section on service unit events for more information)

Creating a Budget

All funds within Girl Scouts must be used for legitimate purposes. These include: supporting leadership development and adult volunteer training, providing support to troops and youth in need, providing service to the community, facilitating Girl Scout program delivery, recruiting and retaining members, and recognizing the achievements of adult and youth members.

When creating an annual budget, consider the needs of each committee as well as historical context for typical expenditure and income. For expenses that typically recur annually, it is helpful to have a team vote on a budget line item rather than having to vote on each item every time.

For example, a budget line item for recruitment enables the Membership Committee to allocate expenses accordingly each year so that they can respond to opportunities in a more timely fashion as and when they occur. An ongoing line item for volunteer appreciation allows the Recognitions Coordinator to plan for the year in advance.

Sources of Income

Carry forward your current balance and list all anticipated sources of income, using previous years' numbers as a guide. The service unit may, for example, have consistently received bonuses for entrepreneurship program participation and/or membership retention. Service unit events often produce a small amount of profit and for events that are annual traditions, the income is usually predictable.

Predicted Expenses

Include all known line items and regular expenses. These may include meeting space rental, recruitment budget, printing, rewards and recognitions, a meeting snacks budget etc.

Be sure to share and fine tune the budget at your team's Plan for Success meeting. Each committee should be aware of any line items that are relevant to their area and of the reimbursement procedure for your service unit. If your predicted income is exceeded by your predicted expenditure, the team should discuss ways to increase income flow or decrease expenditure.

Sample Budget

SU__ Budget

Membership Year October 1st ____ to September 30th ____

Prepared by _____

Date Approved by Team _____

	Proposed Budget	Actual	Difference
Carry Over			
SU Bonuses			
Interest Income			
Event Registration			
Other_____			
Other_____			
EXPENSES			
Print and Copy			
Office Supplies			
Postage			
Volunteer Development			
Recruitment			
Food			
Recognitions			
Events			
Financial Aid			
Meeting Space			
Other_____			
Other_____			
GRAND TOTAL (income minus expenses)			

Financial Decision Making

The Service Unit Treasurer is a member of a team and financial decisions are made and voted on by the team as a whole. No single team member has veto power when it comes to financial decisions.

The annual budget should be prepared ahead of the team's Plan for Success meeting and approved by the team as whole. Any expenditure not already accounted for in the budget should be voted on following normal voting procedures on an as-needed basis.

Voting on Financial Expenditure and Budget Approval

1. Ensure that a quorum (a majority of team members) is present/included and able to discuss and vote. Discussion and voting can take place during an in-person or online meeting, or via email.
2. One team member proposes a motion for expenditure, including the amount and purpose in the proposition.
3. Another team member chooses to second the motion.
4. The team discusses the motion.
5. Once discussion has concluded, the motion can be:
 - a. voted on
 - b. tabled (the motion to table must be proposed and seconded) for further discussion at a future meeting, e.g. if more research is needed.
6. The motion can be passed by a show of hands, voice count, or adopted by consensus without a vote if there is no opposition.
7. The minutes should record the proposer, the seconder, and the outcome of the vote.

Ensuring Transparency

All discussion and voting regarding service unit finances should be minuted and posted in a place that is accessible to all service unit volunteers.

The treasurer should submit a treasurer's report to the service unit team on a monthly basis, detailing the financial activity for that month. In the absence of scheduled meetings, the report can be sent to the team via email.

The Service Unit Finance Report (SUFR) is due by September 30th each year. If it is not submitted in a timely fashion, the bank account is at risk of closure.

Sharing Best Practices

The Service Unit Treasurer should be well versed in appropriate troop financial management best practices, including: troop bank accounts, financial reporting requirements, money-earning, dues, sponsorship, appropriate use of funds, and disband procedures.

Consider sharing your expertise and supporting troop volunteers in the following ways!

- Share regular reminders through your communication channels that you are available to answer questions.
- Reach out directly to new troop leaders to introduce yourself and offer support with bank account creation.
- Offer finance clinics at service unit events where attending adults can meet with you to discuss any issues or concerns.
- Send reminder messaging leading up to Troop Finance Report (TFR) deadlines.
- Utilize financial Short & Snappies to offer training during volunteer support meetings.
- Host an online TFR Q&A in May each year.
- Partner with your council staff member to identify and reach out to troops who have not submitted TFRs and offer support.
- Provide ideas and resources for troops to earn financial management and entrepreneurship badges.

Troop Finances - Important Forms

Bank Account Request and Signer Change Form

Disband Form

Volunteer Essentials - Troop Finances Money

Earning Application

Troop Finance Report

Donation Form