

Volunteer Awards Guide

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The Importance of Volunteer Awards

Girl Scouts of Central Texas is fortunate to have so many dedicated adult volunteers who share their time, skills, and talents to make a meaningful, lasting difference in the lives of Girl Scouts. Service unit, council, and national awards are an important way to let your fellow volunteers know that their time and energy are appreciated and valued.

Nominate a Volunteer

Know a special someone who has gone above and beyond for Girl Scouts? Nominate them for an award.



How to Nominate a Volunteer

Step 1: Review the [decision tree](#) and [service unit, council,](#) or [national](#) awards criteria to find the right award for your nominee.

Step 2: Verify with service unit leadership to determine if your nominee has received previous awards. The Service Unit Outstanding Leader Award and the Service Unit Outstanding Volunteer Award can only be received once. [Contact us](#) if you need help connecting with your service unit.

Step 3: Make sure your nominee meets all the requirements for the award.

Step 4: Recruit others who can complete any additional letter(s) of recommendation.

Step 5: Submit the [Council and National Awards Nomination Form](#) by **March 15**. For service unit awards, contact your service unit leadership to find out how to nominate a volunteer.

How to Write a Strong Nomination

We want to know how fabulous your award candidates are so we can recognize them. Use the chart below to help turn a general statement into a strong nomination statement for the Service Unit Recognitions Committee or GSCTX Volunteer Awards Committee to review.

Nominator Tips

Make sure to include:

- How the candidate met the award criteria
- Specific accomplishments
- The impact the candidate has had within Girl Scouts
- How the candidate exceeded expectations for their role
- Growth – candidate’s new accomplishments and service since they received their last award (if applicable)

General Statement	Thoughtfully Consider	Strong Nomination Statement
“José has been a leader for a long time.”	How many years? Through which levels?	“For 11 years, José has led a large troop from Daisies, persevering through the difficult middle school years, to their current Senior troop.”
“LaToya is a great leader.”	What kind of leadership qualities does LaToya exhibit? What makes LaToya stand out?	“LaToya continually brings leadership opportunities to the youth members in the troop. LaToya encourages a youth-led approach by allowing them to vote on and implement their activities.”
“Susan always goes above and beyond.”	Be specific! Tell a story about the great benefits those around them receive due to her efforts.	“Susan’s troop voted to start the aMuse Journey. Susan never considered herself a ‘creative soul’ when it came to artistic endeavors, so she recruited troop caregivers, artists, and actors as resources for youth members to draw from. As a result, the troop had a great time learning from community experts and discovering caregiver talent in their own troop! They now have several opportunities for Take Action projects.”
“Marisol has been the best day camp administrator we have ever had!”	Be specific! Tell a story about the great benefits those around her receive due to her efforts.	“For the past ten years, Marisol has headed up a day camp that supports 200-300 youth members yearly. She recruited adult help when there didn’t seem to be any. At one point, day camp was in danger of being cancelled until Marisol stepped in and started an email and phone campaign to recruit the needed volunteers to hold the camp.”

Letters of Recommendation: Tips and Best Practices

When you nominate a volunteer for an award, you are recommending that their efforts, accomplishments, and excellence be acknowledged by the entire council. Some awards require letter(s) of recommendation, which are important for determining if the criteria for an award have been met. A letter of recommendation should be well thought out and explain how the volunteer's service meets or exceeds the criteria for the award.

Helpful Tips for Writing a Letter(s) of Recommendation

- Include how you know the candidate and for how long.
- Explain what volunteer position(s) the candidate holds.
- Show heart and passion when telling how the candidate impacts the lives of youth members by the service they give.
- Ask and answer questions such as – How many? What? How? Who? Why? Discuss the candidate's accomplishments and specifically explain how they have contributed.
- Highlight specific examples of the candidate's performance which explain how the service was beyond what others in the same position have done.
- Use simple numbers, data, or statistics whenever appropriate to support the statements being made.
- Explain how a candidate's actions impact youth members through direct or indirect service.
- Give specifics about how the volunteer service has impacted one or multiple service units, an area, the council, or the entire Girl Scout movement (as appropriate for the award).

Letter of Recommendation Requirements

- May not be from the same person who is writing the nomination.
- Should be different than the nomination form to give a different perspective.

Remember that you are nominating or recommending a volunteer for a service unit, council, or national award. Tell us how awesome they are!

Letter of Recommendation Example

The opening should include the date, introduce the nominee, briefly explain how you know the nominee and for how long, and the reason for the nomination.

January 20, 2024

Dear Girl Scouts of Central Texas Volunteer Awards Committee,

I would like to strongly recommend Araceli Hernández for the Girl Scouts of Central Texas Daisy Award. I have seen Araceli excel in her role as my child's troop leader for the past seven years and make Troop 15's Girl Scout Leadership Experience next to none. My Girl Scout and I agree that there could be no troop leader more deserving of this award!

The body of the letter should describe the specific service, who benefited from the service, and provide results of the service that went beyond the position description.

Araceli puts her heart and soul into our Girl Scout troop. There is no end to the hours of work that she puts into making our Girl Scouts have a truly meaningful experience. Araceli has empowered 20 youth members over the last seven years from Daisies to Cadettes. She facilitates youth-led, cooperative, and experiential learning opportunities, including over 100 engaging troop meetings, 20 field trips, 10 campouts, countless community service projects, six Take Action projects, two Bronze Award projects, and one Silver Award project. Additionally, Troop 15 earned the GSCTX Super Troop Award for the last six years due to Araceli's strong leadership and organizational skills.

Troop 15 youth members are engaged and enthusiastic because Araceli encourages them to take leadership positions in the troop and make it their own. Because of this, the troop has had 100% retention for the last two years. Araceli has also welcomed five new youth members from three different schools and eight new adult members over the past five years.

The closing of the letter should briefly summarize previous points and clearly state which award is being recommended. Conclude the letter by including your full name and service unit name as well as phone number or email.

My child has had an exceptional Girl Scout experience, and Girl Scouting is by far their favorite activity largely due to our amazing troop leader. I hope GSCTX will recognize Araceli Hernández for her outstanding leadership and commitment to Girl Scouts with the GSCTX Daisy Award.

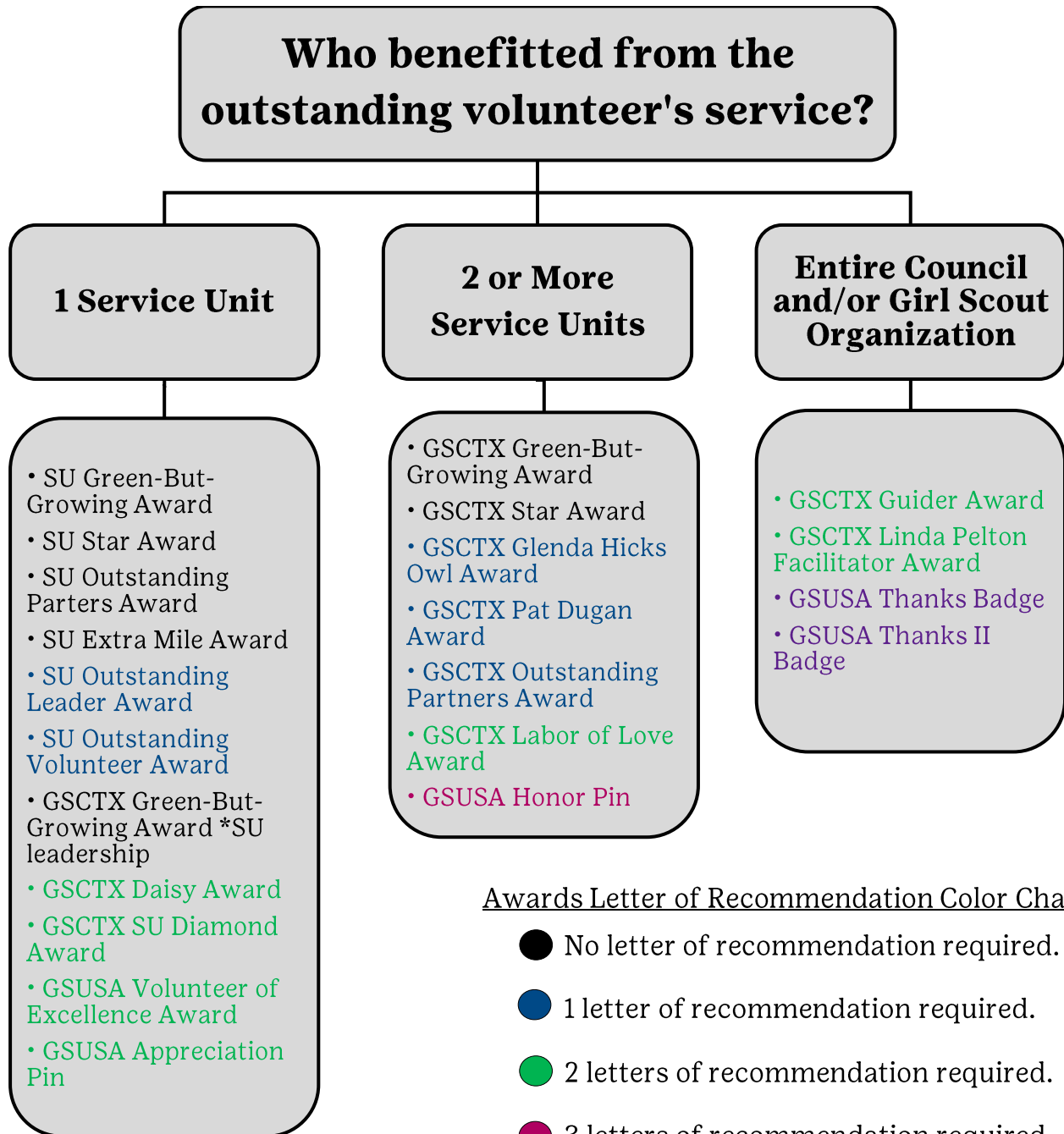
Sincerely,
Patricia Jones
Blue Sky Service Unit
602-452-7000 or pjones123@aol.com

Awards Decision Tree

Before consulting the decision tree, ensure that your candidate is eligible for a service unit (SU), council (GSCTX), or national (GSUSA) award:

- a volunteer who went above and beyond the expectations of the position held
- service contributes to **council's goals**
- a registered adult member of GSUSA
- has a current eligible criminal background check on file at GSCTX
- is in good standing with GSCTX

If you are unsure, **contact us**.



Numeral Guards and Volunteer Service Awards



Membership Numeral Guards represent the total number of years of registered membership, both as a youth and adult member.



Volunteer Service Awards recognize adults for years of active volunteer service to Girl Scouting, not including youth years.

Membership Numeral Guards and Volunteer Service Awards are available in five-year increments beginning with five years. Total years include the current membership year and do not need to be consecutive.

Volunteer Service Awards recognizing five years of service and Numeral Guards may be purchased from the [Girl Scouts of Central Texas retail shop](#). They are provided by some service units at their annual service unit recognition event.



Girl Scouts of Central Texas recognizes volunteers with ten or more years of service. Submit the [10+ Years Volunteer Service Award Form](#) by May 1 to nominate yourself or another eligible volunteer.

Council Goals

Below are Girl Scouts of Central Texas' top five council goals for membership year 2024.

1. Grow the Community of Girl Scouts in Central Texas, Increasing Access for All

- Serve 17,200 youth members annually by 2024.
- Remove barriers to participation regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, neurodiversity, and socioeconomic status.
- Prioritize K-3 recruitment.
- Attract, retain, and sustain volunteers and partners that support the demand for Girl Scouts and are inclusive and welcoming of all Girl Scouts.
- Serve Girl Scouts with delivery models that are based on communities' needs and priorities.

2. Deliver Impactful, Outcome-Driven Programs

- Offer engaging volunteer- and staff-facilitated programs that support achievement of Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) outcomes, while meeting the needs of our communities.
- Refine evaluation of program outcomes and effectiveness.

3. Communicate and Demonstrate Value

- Focus resources on target market segments to increase the number of people who know who we are and what we do.
- Influence and support K-3 recruitment strategies.
- Influence and support volunteer and partner recruitment and onboarding strategies.

4. Increase Our Fundraising Capacity to Support Serving More Girl Scouts

- Increase annual contributed support to \$1.8M by 2024.
- Create diverse funding opportunities and increase revenue, with a focus on growing individual donor pipeline.
- Ensure GSCTX has adequate resources to advance its mission and support growth.

5. Govern and Manage with Excellence

- Build and maintain an organizational culture of engagement, accountability, and collaboration that champions diversity and fosters belonging.
- Be well governed by a diverse and engaged board that achieves 100% giving.
- Ensure continued excellence in council operations by making data-informed business decisions.

Service Unit Awards

Outstanding volunteers who have gone above and beyond that benefit their service unit are recognized with service unit awards. These awards are approved and presented at the service unit level.

Contact us if you need help identifying your service unit volunteer recognitions coordinator or equivalent so you can nominate an outstanding volunteer for a service unit award.



Service Unit Green But Growing Award

Recognizes a volunteer in their first year of holding a particular role who went above and beyond the expectations of the position held, which benefitted their service unit.

Examples:

- A new leader who took on extra service unit work and/or provided exceptional troop/group leadership in delivery of the Girl Scout Program.
 - New product program coordinator who did an excellent job in their first year.
-



Service Unit Star Award

Recognizes a volunteer for performing a specific task that is a benefit to their service unit.

Examples:

- An experienced leader who retained an unusual number of youth members or who helped their troop lead the service unit campout.
 - An event coordinator who led an exceptional service unit event.
 - A troop cookie coordinator who managed a high volume of sales.
-



Service Unit Outstanding Partners Award

Recognizes at least two volunteers that worked as a team to provide service to the service unit that went above and beyond the expectations for the position(s) held and benefitted their service unit.

Examples:

- Two leaders who led a troop together and are both exceptional role models for their members.
 - Two leaders or co-leaders who worked as a team to plan a service unit event.
-



Service Unit Mile Award

Recognizes a volunteer who consistently provided outstanding service and went the extra mile, which benefitted their service unit.

Examples:

- A service unit cookie or fall product manager who increased sales and efficiency.
- An event coordinator who went above and beyond to help facilitate multiple service unit events.



Service Unit Outstanding Leader Award

Recognizes outstanding troop/group leadership qualities in the delivery of the Girl Scout Program to youth and benefitted the youth in their service unit.

This award is given only once to a troop/group leader in recognition of their outstanding efforts.

Required: One letter of recommendation

The letter of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- A leader who provided exceptional support to the youth members in earning the Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award.
- A leader who goes over and above to ensure that all the youth members in the troop feel accepted and valued by the troop and provides exceptional troop/group leadership in delivery of the Girl Scout Program.



Service Unit Outstanding Volunteer Award

Recognizes a volunteer for outstanding service, other than troop/group leader, that was beyond the expectations for the position and benefitted their service unit.

This award is given only once to a volunteer in recognition of their outstanding efforts.

Required: One letter of recommendation

The letter of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- An outstanding service unit director, registrar, treasurer, service unit lead, event director, or Product Program manager.
- A service unit volunteer recognitions coordinator who planned the service unit recognition event, led informal recognition efforts in the service unit, and chaired the Service Unit Recognitions Committee.

Council Awards



GSCTX Green But Growing Award

Recognizes a volunteer in their first year of holding a particular role who went above and beyond the expectations of the position held.

- Benefitted their service unit and at least one additional service unit of GSCTX.
- The exception would be SU leadership doing an exceptional job in their first year of leading a service unit. Service unit leadership includes service unit director, service unit registrar, service unit treasurer, and service unit leads.

Examples:

- Council event or program volunteer doing an outstanding job in their first year of service by hosting events for multiple service units to attend.
 - Council facilitator conducting an exceptional number of trainings in their first year for multiple service units.
 - Exceptional service unit leadership who exceeded membership goals, increased service unit meeting attendance and/or training participation, etc.
-



GSCTX Star Award

Recognizes a volunteer for performing a specific task that is a benefit to the council.

Benefits their service unit and at least one additional GSCTX service unit.

Examples:

- Volunteer who served on a council sponsored committee.
 - Volunteer who assisted employed staff in completing assigned tasks.
 - A volunteer who ran a multi-service unit event such as a campout.
-



GSCTX Daisy Award

Recognizes a troop/group leader who continues to provide exceptional troop/group leadership in delivery of the Girl Scout Program.

- **Candidate must have previously received the Service Unit Outstanding Leader Award.**
- Focus of service displays outstanding communication skills, delivery of the Girl Scout program, and assists with recruitment of new youth.

Required: Two letters of recommendation

The letters of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- A leader who has consistently retained 75% of troop members.
- A leader who consistently supports the youth in their troop, exhibits outstanding communications skills, offers high quality programming, and recruited six new youth to the troop.
- A leader who models leadership in the community and offers opportunities for the troop to host service unit events.



GSCTX Glenda Hicks Owl Award

Recognizes a council volunteer facilitator who led council certification classes for service beyond the expectations for the position.

Benefits their service unit and at least one additional service unit of GSCTX.

Required: One letter of recommendation

The letter of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- Volunteer facilitator who consistently conducts an exceptional number of training classes for certification.
 - Volunteer facilitator who assists in curriculum development for council-wide training.
-



GSCTX Guider Award

Recognizes a council volunteer facilitator for continued service beyond the expectations for the position.

- **Candidate must have previously received the GSCTX Glenda Hicks Owl Award.**
- Benefits the entire council.

Required: Two letters of recommendation

The letters of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- Council volunteer committee chair or council committee member who served on the Council Training Committee in an exemplary role.
 - Council facilitator who consistently trains other facilitators.
-



GSCTX Linda Pelton Facilitator Award

Recognizes a council volunteer facilitator who has consistently exceeded expectations.

- **Candidate must have previously received the GSCTX Guider Award**
- Benefits the entire council.

Required: Two letters of recommendation

The letters of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- Council facilitator who went beyond expectations for the positions and demonstrated a commitment to adult education in Girl Scouting.
- Council facilitator who consistently trains other facilitators and is involved in the administration of the training program.



GSCTX Pat Dugan Award

Recognizes a Product Program volunteer (Fall Product Program or Cookie Program) who went above and beyond the expected duties and given service of exceptional benefit.

- Focus of service works with other service units to increase growth in youth participating in Product Program.
- Benefits their service unit and at least one additional service unit of GSCTX.

Required: One letter of recommendation

The letter of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- Council Product Program volunteer who went beyond expectations of position and assisted with increasing youth participation in the GSCTX Product Program.
- Council Product Program volunteer who conducted an exceptional number of trainings for youth and/or adult volunteers.



GSCTX Outstanding Partners Award

Recognizes at least two volunteers that worked as a team to provide service to council.

Benefits their service unit and at least one additional service unit of GSCTX.

Required: One letter of recommendation

The letter of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- Two or more volunteers who worked as a team during planning and/or carrying out of council sponsored events and exceeds expectations.
- Partners who put in multiple hours and work on a Girl Scout house, camp, or service center, including on-going maintenance.
- Two volunteers who hosted a service unit event that was attended by two or more service units.



GSCTX Labor of Love Award

Recognizes a volunteer for service performed requiring physical labor, technical skills, or manual skills.

Benefitted their service unit and at least one additional service unit of GSCTX.

Required: Two letters of recommendation

The letters of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- Volunteer who performed work on a camp facility or other GSCTX property.
- Candidate who used their technical skills to plan and/or implement a science or engineering program or project.



GSCTX Service Unit Diamond Award

Recognizes a long-standing volunteer who continues to support and contribute to the service unit in various roles for numerous years that warrants council recognition.

Benefitted their service unit.

Required: Two letters of recommendation

The letters of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- An exceptional service unit director, registrar, treasurer, service unit lead, event director, or Product Program manager who has served for several years.
- Volunteer who has continued to chair and coordinate the service unit annual campout.

National Awards

National awards recognize volunteers who have typically served for numerous years, previously received service unit and council awards, and whose service contributes to council's goals.



GSUSA Volunteer of Excellence

This award recognizes a volunteer who has contributed outstanding service while partnering directly with youth in any pathway to implement the Girl Scout Leadership Experience through use of the National Program Portfolio or who has contributed outstanding service in support of the council's mission delivery to youth and adult members.

Required: Two letters of recommendation

The letters of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- A Silver or Gold Award mentor who successfully mentored and supported numerous youth members within their community.
- A service unit event coordinator who organized and executes four events that are attended by large number of youth members with a percentage of the youth in attendance being new to Girl Scouts.
- A troop leader noticed that the diversity of the youth members did not match the diversity of the community. Volunteer worked with council staff to identify potential underserved areas in the community and then partnered with their service unit team and council staff to create and implement a recruitment strategy.
- A volunteer who has been a leader for multiple troops and served many youth members over the years.



GSUSA Appreciation Pin

This award recognizes an individual's exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience that benefits the service unit.

Required: Two letters of recommendation

The letters of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- Service unit volunteer whose leadership for numerous years has increased volunteer participation, retention, and satisfaction in their service unit.
- Service unit Product Program manager who increased sales and youth participation over multiple years.
- Service unit event director's outstanding programming resulted in an increase in participation of youth and volunteers over time.
- Service unit volunteer held registration events which increased membership and retention above council goals.
- A service unit cookie manager who maintained a cookie cupboard at their residence throughout the entirety of the Cookie Program and managed a high-volume Cookie Program for multiple years.



GSUSA Honor Pin

Recognizes an individual's exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

- **Candidate must have previously received the Appreciation Pin.**
- Benefits their service unit and at least one additional GSCTX service unit.

Required: Three letters of recommendation

The letters of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- A volunteer who for multiple years successfully implemented a series of events that served members from at least two service units. They recruited a planning committee to expand the variety of activities, resulting in an increase in youth enrollment and increased volunteer participation.
 - Service unit volunteer who mentored volunteers from their service unit and volunteers from at least one other service unit.
-



GSUSA Thanks Badge

Recognizes an individual whose ongoing commitment, leadership, and service have had an exceptional, measurable impact on meeting the mission-delivery goals and priorities of the entire council or the entire Girl Scout Movement.

- **Candidate must have previously received the Honor Pin.**
- Benefits GSCTX or the entire Girl Scout Movement.

Required: Four letters of recommendation

The letters of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- Volunteer who served on several council committees in an exceptional capacity and whose on-going commitment and work results in exceptional, measurable impact on meeting the mission-delivery goals of the entire council, or the entire Girl Scout Movement.
- A council board member who did exceptional work on fund development that benefitted the entire Council and results in greater financial stability for the council.
- A volunteer who organized and provided leadership to a successful annual giving campaign for multiple years that surpasses council financial goals.



GSUSA Thanks Badge II

Recognizes an individual who has continuously provided exemplary service in a leadership role which resulted in a measurable impact benefiting the entire council or the entire Girl Scout Movement.

- **Candidate must have previously received the Thanks Badge.**
- Benefits GSCTX or the entire Girl Scout Movement.

Required: Four letters of recommendation

The letters of recommendation cannot be from the same person who is nominating.

Examples:

- A volunteer who, after many successful council wide events, went on to plan and direct a statewide or regional learning event.
- A volunteer who successfully influenced retention and quality programs, within the Girl Scouts of Central Texas, and shared that delivery system with other councils throughout GSUSA.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can nominate an adult volunteer for an award?

Anyone can, including Girl Scout adult and youth members, caregivers, and council staff. Self-nominations are only accepted for the [10+ years Volunteer Service Award](#).

Can a volunteer receive the same award more than once?

Yes, except for two awards that can only be earned once: the Service Unit Outstanding Leader Award and the Service Unit Outstanding Volunteer Award. For all other awards, a volunteer can be nominated for and receive the same award. However, the award must be for a new volunteer service for which they have not previously received an award.

How are council and national awards approved?

Council and national award nominations are reviewed and approved by the [GSCTX Volunteer Awards Committee](#), which is comprised of GSCTX volunteers and staff.

When and where are volunteer awards presented?

Service units determine their own timeline for their recognition ceremonies, but they are generally held in spring or early summer.

Council and national awards, including the Volunteer Service Award for ten or more years, are presented during the annual GSCTX Volunteer Recognition Ceremony at the Volunteer Enrichment Conference in July.

How are service unit awards requested?

The service unit volunteer recognitions coordinator or other designee orders the service unit awards using the [Service Unit Awards Order Form](#) at least four weeks prior to their recognition ceremony.

Where do awards go on the adult vest?



The Volunteer Service Award is worn below the personalized ID pin on the right side. If you have received more than one Volunteer Service Award over the years, only the most current one is worn.

Service unit, council, and national awards may be proudly showcased on the right side of the adult vest above the Volunteer Service Award.

The Membership Numeral Guard is attached to the Official Girl Scout Membership Pin on the left side of the vest.