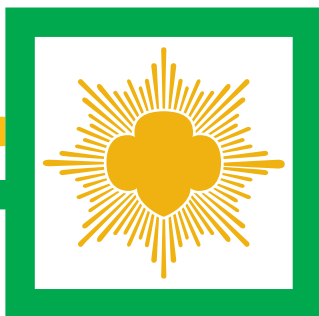



girl scouts
of eastern
massachusetts


girl scouts
of central and western
massachusetts



Gold Award Celebration

**Celebrating those who earned the highest achievement in
Girl Scouting, the prestigious Girl Scout Gold Award.**

Friday, June 8, 2018 • Massachusetts State House

The Girl Scout Gold Award

The Girl Scout Gold Award represents the highest award in Girl Scouting, recognizing girls who demonstrate extraordinary leadership through remarkable Take Action projects that have sustainable impact in their communities and beyond. A girl must spend a minimum of 80 hours working on her project, and must complete all seven steps.

1. Choose an issue
2. Investigate
3. Get help
4. Create a plan
5. Present your plan
6. Take action
7. Educate and inspire

Gold Award Facts & Figures

- Gold Award recipients spend between one and two years on their projects.
- The average age of Gold Award Girl Scouts is 17.
- In 100 years, more than one million girls nationally have earned the Gold Award or its equivalent.
- Gold Award recipients who join the armed services enter at one rank higher than other recruits.
- University research indicates that adding Gold Award to a college application is a critical element in the admissions decision process.

Gold Award Prerequisites

A girl must:

- Be in 9th, 10th, 11th or 12th grade
- Be a registered Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador
- Have completed two Senior or Ambassador Journeys or have earned the Girl Scout Silver Award and completed one Journey

Program of Events

Reception – Gold Award Exhibits

Gold Award Girl Scout Procession

Opening Flag Ceremony

Welcome

Carrie Weatherbee

Chief Membership Services Officer, GSEMA

Denise Burgess

Chief Executive Officer, GSEMA

Pattie Hallberg

Chief Executive Officer, GSCWM

Board Chair Remarks

Tricia Tilford

Board Chair and President, GSEMA

State House Remarks

Colleen M. Garry

State Representative

House Chair, Women's Legislative Caucus

Military Order of the World Wars

Patrick Henry Award Presentation

Girl Scout Gold Award Pin Presentation

Carrie Weatherbee

Closing Flag Ceremony

Photos on Grand Staircase

Gold Award Girl Scouts

Dessert Reception

Dear Gold Award Girl Scouts,

Congratulations on your extraordinary achievement in earning the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award a Girl Scout can earn!

Today we celebrate your accomplishment as the culmination of your Girl Scout Leadership Experience. You, along with your sister Girl Scouts from across the Commonwealth, have demonstrated dedication to empowering yourself and improving your community. And you are now part of the legacy of impressive Girl Scouts who have been making meaningful, sustainable change in their communities and around the world since our Movement's founding in 1912.

Whatever your Girl Scout journey has been, it has brought you here as a G.I.R.L. (a Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader)TM. You are a source of pride for the adults who have watched you grow and excel, and a role model for others in your community.

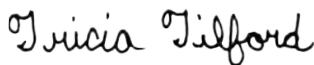
Many of you are graduating from high school, and we hope you will remain part of our sisterhood by becoming an adult member. Wherever you go next, your Girl Scout experience goes with you. And your Gold Award sets you apart as a confident leader and visionary change maker.

You are the embodiment of the Girl Scout mission: a young woman of courage, confidence, and character, who makes the world a better place. We look forward to seeing what you will do next and how you will fulfill the pledge you have taken so often, "to live by the Girl Scout Law."

Yours in Girl Scouting,



Denise N. Burgess
Chief Executive Officer
Eastern Massachusetts



Tricia Tilford
Board Chair and President
Eastern Massachusetts



Patricia Hallberg
Chief Executive Officer
Central and Western Massachusetts



Joan Bertrand
Board Chair
Central and Western Massachusetts



Meg Wenners, Abington

Fishing for a Cause



Fishing line left on the ground tends to end up in ponds or eaten by animals, and endangers many wildlife species.

Meg embraced the “leave no trace” philosophy, and built receptacles for discarding fishing line at Island Grove in Abington. The town of Abington will empty the receptacles as needed and ensure the line is recycled. Meg also raised awareness of fishing line litter through presentations at the local school, and through a flyer sent home with students. Signs on the receptacles also outline the negative effects of fishing line litter on wildlife, and the importance of disposing of it properly.



Adele Elizabeth Cousland, Amherst

Hearing Advocacy in Sports



Adele is an athlete and also hard of hearing, and discovered while playing sports in her hometown that many people are unaware of how to support hard of hearing athletes. She decided to advocate for access to equal opportunities for hard of hearing athletes in Massachusetts. With the help of a local teacher of the deaf, school administrators, representatives of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), and community members, Adele gave presentations throughout the community that spread awareness of sport-specific accommodations for hard of hearing athletes and advocated for awareness and change in the community. Adele also presented her research during the New England Student Leadership Conference hosted by the MIAA. *Adele is a 2018 National Young Women of Distinction nominee.*



Sarah MacGregor, Andover

Andover Dog Park Agility Course



Sarah was concerned about the decreasing face-to-face interaction in society. To contest this issue, Sarah decided to enhance the local dog park with the goal of increasing the engagement of the dog-loving community. Working in collaboration with Friends of the Andover Dog Park and the Conservation Commission, Sarah constructed an agility course that includes a ramp, weave poles, a large tire, a pause table, and standard jumps. She spread the word about the new agility course and the goal of increased community interactions through the dog park Facebook group.

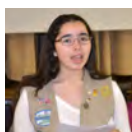


Olivia Summers, Andover

Chemo Care Kits

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Olivia was inspired to support pediatric cancer patients and children undergoing chemotherapy treatment. Olivia started by researching and learning the stories of many children with cancer diagnoses to ensure she was well informed and the information she shared was accurate. She then coordinated donation drives to collect items for care kits, such as lotion, lip balm, coloring books, markers, crayons, stuffed animals, fuzzy socks, bottled water, note pads, and more. Olivia worked with The Jimmy Fund to distribute over 50 kits to pediatric cancer patients. She created a website detailing how to assemble and distribute care kits, and a volunteer with the local high school youth group agreed to continue the care kit collections and distribution.



Karedis Robles, Ayer

Let's Make Music: An Afterschool Music Curriculum for Prekindergarten

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As a dedicated musician who enjoys working with children, Karedis developed a program to educate young students on the many types of music and instruments. Twice a week, prekindergarten students attended the music program; they gained exposure to music in everyday objects, learned counting rhythm, learned the sections of an orchestra, constructed their own musical instruments, played music on glasses of water, analyzed stories told through ballet, and practiced various cultural dances. The program was unanimously recommended to be a permanent part of the prekindergarten program, and two high school students will continue the curriculum.



Samantha P. Azevedo, Billerica

Backyard Birds Program and New Birdhouses for Kohlrausch Park

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Samantha wanted to expand education around bird habitat and species preservation. In collaboration with the recreation department and a carpentry class at a technical high school, Samantha was able to install 19 new bird houses at two local parks. She also created bird watching kits that include binoculars, books on northeastern birds, and instructions on how to build bird houses, which can be borrowed from the local library. She also created posters that identify native bird species for kiosks at the parks. She ran a program about birds for students at the library, which will run annually, in addition to a new program for adults.



Alyssa Attonito, Concord
Client Needs Analysis Study



Alyssa was inspired to enhance the work of Household Goods, a furniture bank organization in Acton that provides donated household items to those who previously experienced homelessness as they transition into homes. Alyssa conducted a survey and collected quantitative and qualitative data on client satisfaction and which items clients need and appreciate most. She entered the data into a database and created a report that contained observations, photos, charts, graphs, tables, analysis, and recommendations for an improved business plan. Alyssa created a standard process for client needs analysis that is housed on a website that she has shared with more than 80 furniture banks across North America.



Sarah Hutchinson, Concord
Volunteer Training Program for Grieving Teens to Help with Grieving Children



Sarah's dad passed away when she was five. Following his passing, she received bereavement support through two local groups for grieving children. Sarah knew that, nationwide, over 500 people lose a parent a day, and 1.5 million people live in single-parent households for the same reason. Yet most bereaved children do not receive the same support she was exposed to. In response, Sarah created a program to train teens in mentoring and guiding grieving children. She shared this first-of-its-kind program with the National Alliance for Grieving Children, the largest grief counseling network in the United States, and they plan to implement it across their full membership. *Sarah is a 2018 National Young Women of Distinction nominee, a GSEMA scholarship recipient, and former girl member of the GSEMA Board of Directors.*



Kyla Robinson, Dedham
Surviving Diabetes



Kyla has type 1 diabetes, and was inspired to share her story with others, especially those who can relate and benefit from a shared experience. With assistance from a local therapist, Kyla wrote her story and created a book that offers an emotional look into coping with this condition, which is often not included in professional and medical books about diabetes. A copy of the book will be provided to each elementary, middle, and high school in Kyla's community. Kyla also created a learning plan for school nurses to go over with teachers each year, to ensure they are educated on the effects and symptoms of type 1 diabetes.



Allison M. Garran, Eastham

Vacation Lunch Bunch



Allison knew many students receive free or reduced rate lunches, and wanted to help while school was not in session.

During school vacation week in April, Allison and her team of volunteers cooked warm meals for free lunches open to not only these students' families, but also senior citizens, people experiencing homelessness, and any other community members who wished to attend. Allison was able to use these meals as a way to engage members of the community in conversation and build relationships across generations. Students from the Eastham United Methodist Church and a local Girl Scout troop will continue the program.



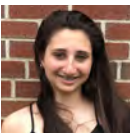
Veronica Bobskill, Feeding Hills

Bioblitz at Robinson State Park



When Robinson State Park was saved from logging due to the discovery of an endangered animal, Veronica was inspired

to take this preservation even further. During a 14-hour public event at the park, various scientists and specialists were called into action to locate as many different species as possible. Veronica set up hikes led by bird and tree experts, and facilitated informative environmental coloring activities for children. She set up stations throughout the park with pictures and information on macroinvertebrate to assist with identification. Veronica compiled and published the list of species that inhabit Robinson State Park, and has ensured that the lush forest will be protected for years to come.



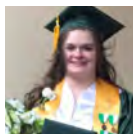
Stephanie L. Skura, Framingham

Helping Hands



Stephanie wanted to ease the anxiety many children feel when going to a doctor's office for a physical exam. She

created a "teddy bear clinic" program that walked preschool students through a series of stations with a stuffed animal. The stuffed animal was the subject of these mock doctor's office visits, and was also used to demonstrate safety and hygiene best practices, like wearing a helmet while riding a bike and the importance of brushing your teeth. Stephanie facilitated the program at three local preschools, and through pre- and post-questioning, she discovered that the students had reduced levels of fear and apprehension about visiting a doctor. She distributed her lesson plans to the schools, in addition to six other preschools in the area.



Shaughnessy Docekal, Grafton

You're Turning 18: What's That Mean?



In order to prepare teenagers for their independent life, Shaughnessy created a two-day seminar program that taught participants about loans, credit, and identify theft. She invited guest speakers to the seminar, who were able to share more information and provide guidance and resources. Shaughnessy created a website with informational packets for families, Girl Scout troops, and individuals. She also created framework booklets for schools and groups to continue to implement the seminars.



Rachel Matloff, Grafton

Care Packages for Foster Children



Rachel worked with the community service club at the local high school to collect clothing, personal hygiene products, books, and small toys for children entering the foster care system on an emergency basis through the Department of Children and Families (DCF). She and club volunteers also made small blankets for the children. The club members will continue to work with the DCF to provide more supplies annually. Rachel conducted and filmed an interview with a social worker with DCF who provided information on the critical needs of these children. A video recording of this interview is available online and at the local school.



Brenda Ruiz, Grafton

Improving Academic Study Habits for Latino Youth



Brenda learned that many minority youth face educational challenges due to cultural and lifestyle differences from many of their peers and educators. She was inspired to provide enhanced STEM education and resources to minority students. In response, Brenda created a curriculum of STEM lessons and hosted tutoring and teaching sessions for Latino youth at a local church. During the lessons, students participated in interactive activities and received supplemental resources. Brenda secured a donation of laptops for the lessons, and provided a binder of STEM resources to the Worcester Public Library.



Serena Gerhard, Halifax

Promoting Friendships through Environmental Studies

Serena wanted to connect students of all abilities and increase environmental conservation at the local high school.

She started by implementing a hydroponic garden in the special education classroom. She instructed the students on how the garden works and how to tend to it. The students paired up and took on the garden responsibilities each morning, and were able to form friendships through these tasks. Serena also informed the special education teachers and students about the importance of using reusable water bottles and containers, and how plastic containers have a negative effect on the environment.



Kaylan Harkins, Halifax

Children's Church

Kaylan developed a youth curriculum that teaches about Catholic Mass at a more comfortable level for children.

The program includes a craft, songs, and prayers for each week that correlate with the readings. Kaylan also created a felt board for Velcro matching games. Older students are able to volunteer during this program to complete their Mass participation hours necessary to be confirmed in the Catholic faith. The leader of the religious education program at the local church will continue to oversee the program.



Caroline Zielinski, Hanover

Nature's Classroom

Caroline knew that young learners benefit from being outdoors, and was aware that local elementary school

students were only heading outside during the school day to a fenced-in playground. In response, Caroline and her volunteers built an outdoor learning space that includes a gathering circle of tree stump seats, a garden area, and a cleared trail. She also put together a corresponding outdoor curriculum for the local school system and seasonally appropriate literature, laminated to endure the elements, and stored in portable containers. Community members are also welcome to use the space when school is not in session.



Jacqueline Baker, Hingham

Senior Stories



Jacqueline wanted to connect the high school students and senior citizens in her town. To do this, she coordinated a meet-up with high school students and senior citizens at the senior center, where the students conducted one-on-one interviews with the senior citizens to learn about their lives and experiences. The students learned about vast experiences these men and women had, in addition to funny stories and life lessons. These interviews, which span from 5 minutes to an hour, were recorded on the StoryCorps application and compiled into an archive, which is available globally and will be updated as more interviews occur. The director of the senior center will oversee the program.

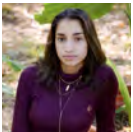


Delaney Donnelly, Hingham

Creating Connections through Communication



Delaney was inspired to dedicate her Gold Award project to her brother, friends, and others who have special needs or disabilities. Many students with special needs learn in separate classrooms or schools, and are therefore excluded from many social situations with their peers. In response, Delaney created a program that connects students from Hingham High School and the South Shore Educational Collaborative (SSEC). Students from the high school traveled to SSEC every month and together the students created art, performed science experiments, baked treats, and more. This program created a safe space for students of various abilities to learn, socialize, and build friendships. The program will continue during the next school year.



Perryne E. Vega, Holyoke

Together We



Diversity has always been important to Perryne, having had close relationships with people of various ethnicities throughout her life. Perryne embraced creativity to address discrimination and segregation in her hometown of Holyoke, where sub-communities tend to segregate themselves and their ideas. Perryne connected with a number of local organizations. She tasks volunteers from each group with creating a representative and colorful banner. After collecting all of these banners, she combined them to create a diverse and unified piece of art. The piece visually represents the power and beauty of unity among all races, socioeconomic statuses, gender, and more.



Olivia Amato-Hansen, Hubbardston

Local Artists in Focus



After learning that financial cuts to the local public school district's budget would decrease art classes, Olivia got creative. She started by researching local New England artists, and then developed an art curriculum that incorporated the work of these artists. She advertised her classes throughout the community, and hosted these art classes after school for local students. Olivia made sure to incorporate a variety of mediums to ensure that students were able to learn and embrace different types of art.



Hannah Castner, Lancaster

Creating Welcoming Spaces



Hannah is involved with the student ministry at her church, and learned that not all of the students were equally connected to the community. She was inspired to collaborate with the youth pastor to make the student ministry more inclusive. After researching and planning, she created a student welcome team and trained students on how to be welcoming. She also redecorated the student ministry meeting room. The welcome team will continue under the leadership of the youth pastor and other student volunteers.



Kaitlin Marie Levangie, Lexington

Senior Technology Education



Kaitlin wanted to provide a class for senior citizens to get free technology advice and training. In cooperation with the Senior Services Coordinator at the Lexington Community center and the local high school volunteer coordinator, Kaitlin created an eight-month technology program for senior citizens. There were two classes a month: one focused on a certain technology topic, like navigating the internet, file management, email, social media, video chatting, and avoiding scams, and the other was a question and answer session. Student volunteers will continue to provide the classes and have a lesson plan template that Kaitlin developed as a guide.



Sue Purohit, Lexington

Branching into STEM



Sue wanted to show students of all ages that STEM is more than just math and science, and combat the stigma that students need to be gifted in STEM subjects to pursue an education in a STEM field. She developed a STEM curriculum for students in elementary to high school. Workshops included generating electrical currents and testing conductivity of different household materials, building a small motorized robot, constructing structures out of paper and tape and testing weight capacity, and creating an LED light up card. The local school's all-girl robotics team will continue the workshops in the future using Sue's lesson plan.



Genevieve Wharton, Lexington

Building Confidence, Creativity, and Collaboration through Drama



Drawing from her own experiences developing self-confidence and collaboration skills through a drama program, Genevieve wanted to provide this same experience for young students. She developed an after school drama program for kindergarten students that ran twice a week for eight weeks, and recruited a team of volunteers to assist. Each week had a different theme including under the sea, superheroes, pirate treasure hunt, and dinosaur romp. Each week also included a group theater game and themed activities, crafts, story readings, and costumes. The program volunteers will continue to run the program in the future, aided by a binder of Genevieve's lesson plans.



Cristina Monarrez, Littleton

Finding Your Lost Pet #findingfurryfriend



Cristina wanted to raise community awareness for resources available for finding a lost pet or locating owners who have lost a pet. She started by conducting research and surveys with help from Boxford Regional Animal Control, a local wildlife rehabilitator, and various animal hospitals. She processed her findings and created seven steps for finding a lost pet, and four steps for finding the owner of a found pet. She created flyers and a multimedia presentation, which she presented to community members at the local library. She also created the hashtag #findingfurryfriend for people to use on social media to communicate about a lost or found pet. The local 4H Crate Escape club will continue to share these materials with the public.



Olivia Rosenblum, Littleton

Books Around the Clock



Olivia wanted to increase students' access to books and their enjoyment of reading. She designed, built, and decorated a little free library at a local elementary school. She stocked the little free library with books donated by the town library. She made sure to include books of all reading levels, so children would not feel discouraged about not being able to read the books available. Olivia also made presentations to classrooms about the library and read books together with these students. Members of the local high school's National Honor Society will ensure the library is stocked with books at various reading levels.



Ariana Rose Victoria Farr, Lunenburg

The Garden of Hope



Ariana has felt overwhelming support from her local church community, and was inspired to give back. She assembled a team of volunteers, and led them in transforming an unkempt wooded area on the church property into a garden where church members can go to be surrounded by beauty and peace. Volunteers will see to the upkeep of the garden, ensuring that the garden will remain in use for many years and become a cherished spot for the community.



Lilly Tapper, Marblehead

Outdoor Classroom



Lilly wanted to increase the amount of time that students spend outdoors in fresh air. She started by collaborating with the local Parent Student Organization to source six picnic tables, table covers, and a whiteboard on wheels, which is stored inside of the school and is brought outside during lessons. She then founded the Outdoor Classroom Club at Marblehead High School. Members of the club ensure the sustainability of the outdoor classroom; they have stained the tables and created posters and flyers that provide information about the benefits of the outdoor classroom and different ways to use the space.



Emily Kiehl, Marion
Veterans' Game Room

Emily noticed a lack of programming for residents of a permanent supportive housing community for veterans.

In response, she created programs that support social, culinary, and technological skills development. Emily converted a storage room into a game room, which includes a pool table, a ping pong table, a foosball table, an electronic dart board, board games, jigsaw puzzles, crossword puzzles, magazines, radio, CDs, furniture, and artwork. She also taught technology classes and cooking lessons based on family-style cookbooks. She provided copies of the cookbooks to the residents and created and distributed resource sheets that give step-by-step instructions for completing technological tasks. A member of the local high school's National Honor Society will continue to teach the classes.



Christina Bibinski, Marlborough
Computer and Social Media Lessons for Senior Citizens

Christina wanted to help senior citizens more easily connect and share stories with family and friends online. She created

a program of lessons that taught senior citizens at New Horizons, an assisted living facility in Marlborough, how to operate computer technology and use social media. She met with each resident to assess their level of experience and comfortability, and to further explain certain aspects of the lessons as needed. She also created an email account for each resident. Christina shared her lesson plans with a peer who will continue to facilitate the program.



Eliana Greenstein Himle, Marlborough
A STEMtacular Project

Eliana knew STEM exposure is increasing for students, but

wanted to introduce these topics to students at a younger age. She designed and executed a STEM-themed week for children ages 5-7 years old. This program included seven activities on different STEM themes and skills, one of which was an interactive scavenger hunt. Eliana also created a book that contains 20 more activities. The Discovery Club at the Boys and Girls Club will continue to host this program in the future.



Keely Dion, Medway

Leadership in Girls through Positive Psychology



Keely was concerned that many adolescent girls do not have a controlled environment in which to explore various aspects of personal development, something she felt fortunate to have received in Girl Scouts. In response, she created a before-school program for eighth grade girls before transitioning to high school. In the weekly meetings, they discussed various personal development topics such as leadership, friendship, goal-setting, and self-expression. They also created art together and participated in activities to embrace each week's theme and develop skills in these areas. A few of Keely's volunteers will continue the program in the next school year.



Mikayla Hopkins, Milford

Bringing Sewing into the 21st Century



To further advance the trade of sewing into the next generation, Mikayla created a sewing club at her high school. Her goal was to provide resources and instruction to students who were interested in learning how to sew. After teaching them basic sewing skills, she led the sewers through weekly projects in order to develop their skills. The students not only learned sewing skills but created items that were donated to a local women's shelter. The club members will continue to meet and create items to donate to the shelter.



Abigail Blay, Newton

Sidewalk University



Abigail addressed the many misunderstandings, generalizations, and stigmas surrounding people who experience homelessness. To expand the narrative, she conducted and filmed interviews, and created a video of 15 stories of community members that answered many questions and provided unique perspectives on the topic of homelessness. The video was posted to YouTube and shared on social media, and it was played on the local television station. In addition, she created a pamphlet with these stories to distribute throughout the community. Abigail also facilitated a clothing drive and was able to donate 20 bags of clothes.



Ying Ying Rossi, Newton

Just Sleep On It



Ying Ying and her brother were both adopted, and she drew from their experiences to help ease the transition, specifically regarding sleep habits, for children who are adopted or fostered. Ying Ying organized sessions for volunteers and children who were adopted to make comforting objects. They made more than 100 blankets, which were distributed to various agencies in Massachusetts. During these sessions, she facilitated discussions with children who were adopted to share their experiences, and separately with their parents, to discuss data, recent research, and advice. She also created pamphlets with information about helping children who are adopted or fostered develop healthy sleeping habits, which she distributed to the Department of Children and Families and a local adoption agency.



Margaret Guggenberger, North Andover

Exercising Story Time



Margaret combined two subjects that she wished to address: literacy and physical activity in the outdoors. She built and installed wooden stands along a nature trail in North Andover. Each stand held a few laminated pages from a children's storybook, and an accompanying activity for families. The stands also include comprehension questions and literacy tips, as well as a QR code to the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium, so families can connect with more resources. Every two months, the books are replaced with new ones to provide families with new stories and activities. The local library will maintain the stands and change the stories as necessary.



Annie Panos, North Andover

Summer Lacrosse for Kids with Special Needs



In Annie's community, there are only a few sports available to students with special needs. Inspired by her own passion for lacrosse, Annie worked with the local school's lacrosse team to bring the sport to these students. Annie promoted the new lacrosse program by posting flyers throughout the community, and using email and social media. The school's team donated equipment, and Annie secured field space through the National Athletic Association. After training the volunteers, Annie facilitated the lacrosse program; while learning and playing lacrosse, the students were able to develop teamwork and communication skills, get active in a new way, and make friends. The club lacrosse team will continue to run this program in the future.



Ashley Taylor DeSousa, North Reading
Psychosocial Health of the Elderly



Ashley wanted to ensure positive psychosocial health of members of a local assisted living facility. Ashley coordinated many activities that encouraged social interaction. She started with memory collages; the residents brought personal photos, books, articles, and more to the session, and created collages of these events, serving to reinforce their memories and share them with each other. She also organized a pool tournament and an afternoon of lawn games, held an exercise class, and created a cookbook of recipes that the residents shared and can make together. Ashley provided the facility with other activities, games, and cookbooks to continue offering to the residents.



Emily Humphreys, North Reading
Voices of North Reading



In an effort to combat media that is often untrustworthy, Emily wanted to unite the people of North Reading by sharing stories from diverse members of the community. She recruited seven participants of various ages, gender identities, and socioeconomic statuses to answer the question, “What events have most influenced you to become who you are today?” She worked with the local cable access media channel to record these stories and edit the files into a 10-15 minute piece. After receiving approval from each participant, she typed a transcript of the audio, generated discussion questions to accompany each story, and turned the final audio into a podcast available to the public. The clip is also available on YouTube and CDs at the local library.



Emily Ann Nearing, North Reading
People May Age, but Caring for Others Never Fades!



Emily knew there was a lack of events that encouraged interaction between the residents at a local senior living community. In response, she planned and coordinated monthly dinners and entertainment events for the residents. She facilitated meal donations from some of the residents’ favorite restaurants, and she recruited volunteers with talents such as singing, playing instruments, and dancing to lead social events. Through these gatherings the residents were able to socialize and connect with each other, but also with volunteers of all ages. The community’s administration will continue to host these events, and implement them at their other locations using Emily’s project plans.

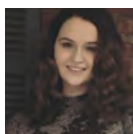


Allison Berardi, Northborough

STEM for the Future



As an aspiring engineer, Allison is concerned with how many students—especially girls—gradually lose interest in their math and science classes as they grow older. She was inspired to share her passion for the STEM disciplines with younger students and show them the exciting nature of these subjects. At the local middle school's career day, Allison presented various STEM careers and shared about professionals from these fields. She created a website containing this information, and shared it with the middle school students to aide in their decisions for high school class registration. *Allison is a 2018 National Young Women of Distinction nominee.*



Kimberly Sikorski, Palmer

The Joy of Music



Kimberly had witnessed a decrease in music and art programs within the local public school system, and also noticed that the children's choir at a local church had dwindled to a dedicated few. Kim was motivated to enhance the choir program. In order to increase the children's interest in music and participation in the choir, Kim organized and redesigned the choir books, activities, and robes. She worked with church administration to establish a standard choir book for each child, and supplied new choir robes and stoles to accompany each book.



Marissa Marques, Phillipston

Take a Chance on the Dance



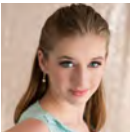
Marissa has a younger brother who has Down syndrome and does not like attending school dances due to the loud music, flashing lights, and dress code. In an effort to accommodate her brother and others with sensory sensitivities, Marissa create a sensory-friendly dance to include all 7th and 8th grade students at the local middle school. She collaborated with school administration representatives and led a team of volunteers to promote the dance and ensure the safety and success of the dance.



Morgan Emery, Rochdale
Leicester Senior Center Garden



The Leicester Senior Center has been the meeting place for Morgan's Girl Scout troop for many years. Over the years, she has become friends with the director and many senior citizens who have shared with her their dreams and vision for a garden. Morgan decided to create this dream garden. She started by transforming a 45-foot mound of weeds and dirt in the middle of the parking lot into a flower garden. She added walkways that ensure access for those using wheelchairs and walkers. She also installed hummingbird and butterfly water dishes, and built several table-top vegetable planters for the senior citizens to easily plant, tend to, and harvest vegetables. Her garden will be maintained by the Girl Scout troops that use the senior center for meetings.



Amanda Grace Dye, Sherborn
Art in a Bag



Amanda wanted to offer children who are experiencing homelessness an abundance of opportunities to create art. Many shelters and food pantries offer clothing, toiletries, and food, but most do not offer art supplies. Amanda ran a donation drive to collect funds and donations of art supplies. She placed donation bins around the local school and communicated the drive throughout the community. Amanda was able to donate over 250 bags of art supplies and materials. She also led art classes for children at a local food pantry and shelter. Amanda's team of volunteers will continue to run the art programs.



Jessica Lynch, Sherborn
Narcolepsy Awareness



In order to raise awareness of narcolepsy in her community, Jessica developed and implemented a curriculum for the local school's wellness classes about this chronic sleep disorder. She recruited a team of volunteers and trained them in administering the curriculum. They conducted pre- and post-surveys to assess their understanding before and after the curriculum, and taught students about the different types of narcolepsy, the symptoms, and treatment options. She also created a pamphlet of information for the guidance and health offices. The curriculum will be taught to ninth grade classes at the local high school every year.



Madeline Roy, Sterling

A Quick Reference Guide to Self-Defense



Years of martial arts training have built Madeline's confidence in defending herself against threats, and she strongly believes that sexual assault defense and prevention skills are vital for everyone. Madeline developed a series of self-defense classes, which she taught to community members. She also created a pamphlet and poster that list multiple self-defense techniques that most people can teach themselves, which she distributed around local towns and schools. Madeline will continue to distribute the posters and pamphlets to wider audiences.



Brigid Halloran, Sutton

Locker Book Drop



Brigid wanted to unite her town and also encourage community members to embrace literacy. To accomplish this goal, she converted unused lockers in her town's municipal center into book drop boxes. She painted all of the old lockers to look like a long row of bookshelves, and built shelves for the interior of the lockers to hold the books that she collected throughout the community. People in town can pick up books to read, return them, and add more books to the lockers at their convenience.



Maggie Chiffer, Topsfield

Dance Out Dementia: Train Your Brain with the Beat of Your Feet



Dementia's impact is far reaching, and Maggie was inspired to reduce the risks of dementia in community members by channeling her passion for dance. She taught dance classes to members of the Council on Aging, led educational workshops about brain health and dementia risk reduction to community members, and created a dementia literacy curriculum for the local high school's health program. Dance classes will continue to be offered through the Council on Aging, and Maggie is working with state officials to incorporate her curriculum into all Massachusetts high schools.



Jenny Conant, Topsfield
Around the World in 4/4 Time



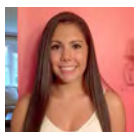
To help expand the musical horizons of elementary school students, Jenny created a four-week long multicultural music curriculum. Each week she met with a group of third grade students to teach the sounds, movements, dances, instruments, and cultural events and traditions of countries including China, Tanzania, France, and Spain. At each session, the students decorated and filled out passports to reflect on what they learned. The global competency program at Masconomet Regional High School will continue the program.



Melissa Driver, Topsfield
Helping Hands



Melissa wanted to help enhance New Generation, a shelter in New Hampshire for women and children experiencing homelessness. She led a team of workers in repainting five rooms. She also reconstructed the garden, weeded the four overgrown beds, and planted seeds for fruits and vegetables, including lettuce, beans, cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, raspberries, and strawberries. Melissa also coordinated a collection of diapers, wipes, and baby food to stock the shelter, and created flyers and pamphlets that detail the different resources available to women through the shelter, which are posted at local doctor's offices and other locations within the community.



Olivia Inman, Topsfield
Pollinator Garden in Davis Hayfield, Boxford MA



Inspired by her knowledge of the importance of pollinators to the environment, Olivia planted a pollinator garden in Davis Hayfield in Boxford. Olivia secured donations of 36 pollinator-friendly plants from her community of supporters. The garden includes a sign with QR codes that lead to a plant guide for further education, and an instructional pamphlet she created. The informational pamphlet describes the importance of pollinators, and provides instructions for creating a pollinator garden. Olivia spread the word about pollinators and their significance in a presentation to the Steward Station after-school program at Topsfield Elementary School.



Lindsay Porter, Topsfield
Topsfield Natural Disaster Initiative



Lindsay wanted to raise awareness about natural disasters on a local and national level. She taught sixth grade students about natural disasters, their causes, and what to do before, during, and after a disaster strikes. The lessons included photos, videos, experiments, and a visit from a Topsfield Health Department Official to explain how the town prepares for natural disasters. Lindsay also connected with a classroom of first grade students in Houston, Texas, who were affected by Hurricane Harvey. She ran a school supply drive, and sent the donations to the class. Lindsay provided her curriculum to school's science department and the local department of health to continue the education.



Kajsa Wingerup, Topsfield
Rose & Honey: The Intersection of Beauty, Science, and Self



Kajsa created a series of classes for teenagers that promote self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-care. She started with classes on the importance of taking care of yourself from the inside-out, and the outside-in. Then, she taught classes on natural, organic, and budget-friendly skincare products, and also focused on the science of beauty and how the environment plays a role in beauty products. Kajsa taught participants how to make products at home, and how to recognize ingredients in the products they purchase. She also discussed the far-reaching influence of the cosmetics industry, and how to use products as a tool to reinforce self-confidence. Kajsa's main objective was to help participants feel comfortable in their own skin. Kajsa's lessons are posted on a website and YouTube channel.



Madison Parker, Tyngsborough
Reviving Flint Pond



Pollution from a local landfill had killed many organisms in Flint Pond, causing it to be susceptible to invasive species. To address this problem, Madison built an environmental awareness kiosk at the edge of the pond, containing information on the status of the pond, how community members can help clean the pond, and volunteer opportunities. She also created brochures and made a presentation to middle school students explaining the poor conditions of the pond. A member of the Flint Pond Conservation Committee will maintain the kiosk and continue the cleanup efforts.



Katie Hurwitz, Walpole *Genres of the Generations*



Katie wanted to help others find their storytelling voice, identify the writing genre that best suits their story, express themselves through writing, and then confidently share their writing with others. Katie created a six-week writing program, with each week devoted to a genre of writing: poetry, screenplays, fiction/fantasy, nonfiction/essay/persuasive, memoir/narrative, and mystery/thriller. Each lesson included a presentation by a professional writer, a writing workshop for local students, and an open microphone night for all to share their writing. Katie and her volunteer team filmed videos of English teachers presenting different writing genres, which are now available on YouTube. They also created a literary journal of writing from community members. Katie and her team will host this workshop series annually.



Susanna Mirick, Wellesley *Sensational Scientists*



Inspired by her own love of science, Susanna created a six-week science program for fourth and fifth grade students. Each lesson focused on a STEM topic such as environmental science, electricity, and chemistry. Susanna recruited a team of volunteers, who helped students with hands-on experiments each week. The lessons also included discussions about careers in these fields. Susanna facilitated the program in the fall and the spring, and the local library will continue to teach Susanna's lesson plan with high school volunteers.



Vanshika Chowdhary, Westborough *Tangled Up*



Vanshika developed a program to help elementary school students relieve stress using Zentangle art, which is structured patterns of dots, lines, curves, and orbs. With permission from the developers of the Zentangle practice, she used some of their materials in her workshops, and helped the students to make their own designs. Vanshika also developed a Zentangle coloring book using her own designs, which are in the school and town libraries. She also created a website with a blog that has posts containing information on meditation and art therapy.



Michaela Clancy, Westborough

Being Active with Mental Health



Michaela was motivated to educate others about the importance of mental health. She created a curriculum of trainings for mental health crisis situations, both suicidal and non-suicidal. Michaela implemented the curriculum with multiple Girl Scout troops and at the local public library. She also created pamphlets, bulletins, tri-fold boards, and flyers for the local public library and school that provide the number for a suicide helpline. She also made a website of mental health information that can be accessed through the Town of Westborough website. This curriculum is now a part of the Westborough High School gym curriculum, and is available for Girl Scout troops to access, along with a patch.



Megan Donaty, Westborough

Learning Spanish by Flipping a Page



Megan knew that many middle school students have anxiety about studying a world language. To ease the students into learning Spanish, she wrote a bilingual English/Spanish picture book of simple phrases, colors, greetings, and more. She created videos which she posted to YouTube to help students learn key Spanish words and phrases. She visited three local classrooms to read the book aloud, and copies of the books are available in four school districts across two states, as well as in local libraries. She also built a Free Little Lending Library and stocked it with copies of her book, additional books written in Spanish and English, and books about traveling.



Sakshi Gera, Westborough

The Hi-Yah Effect



Sakshi is a fourth-degree junior black belt and strongly believes that self-defense skills are important for everyone, regardless of age or gender. Sakshi conducted free self-defense classes at the Westborough Public Library in collaboration with the Teen Zone Advisor. She also developed a website and blog to share information about self-defense, karate, and the classes she offered. Sakshi also created pamphlets with this information, and worked with Westborough TV to develop and air a karate tutorial.



Victoria Helle, Westborough

A Guide to Make My Community More Environmentally Friendly

To raise awareness about environmental conservation among her peers, Victoria recruited volunteers to develop an environmental trivia contest, which was conducted during the morning announcements at the school. Victoria and her team also raised money for the purchase of two water bottle filling machines for the school to reduce single-use water bottles. She developed a website that provides information on protecting the environment, with a special focus on the importance of cleaning up after pets outside. She also coordinated a community meeting to discuss environmental protection. She arranged for the owner of a recycling association to present recent innovations in recycling treatment facilities and ways for all to contribute to environmental protection.



Audrey Lord, Westborough

Empower Her

Audrey has enjoyed many opportunities to learn from professionals in STEM fields. In an effort to provide these same opportunities for other girls, Audrey taught herself how to code and created the website Empower Her: Showing Strength through Stories. This website increases visibility of women in STEM fields, and includes interviews with STEM mentors, profiles of women in history, advice from current leaders, and additional activities and links to resources. The webpage provides a detailed lesson plan for celebrating female STEM leaders throughout history, which has been implemented in her town's sixth grade curriculum.



Aliza Majid, Westborough

A Muslim Girl in America

Growing up as a Muslim, Aliza experienced firsthand the common misconceptions about her faith. She decided to take action to educate her community on the realities and facts of her religion. She set up an information booth at Westborough's annual Fourth of July Block Party and distributed brochures and conducted informative activities for young children. Aliza developed a youth support group for female Muslim teenagers, provided social media resources, and created a blog titled Teenage Ummah, for girls to share ideas and experiences and discuss their faith. Upon realizing that people are open to learning about Islam, Aliza presented her information to the Westborough Rotary Club and the Westborough Diversity Committee.



Jillian Smith, Westborough

Act Out—Don't Stress Out!

Jillian started a drama therapy program for teenage students to deal with stress in a healthy way. Drama therapy uses

different theatrical techniques such as storytelling, scene work, improvisation, games, and scripts to achieve therapeutic goals. This program offers students coping strategies through opportunities to tell their stories, set goals, solve problems, and express feelings in ways that are comfortable to them. Jillian also created a blog to support others in creating similar programs at other schools.



Kristen Steudel, Westborough

Literacy Helpers

Kristen's school district conducts evening English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for adults at Westborough

High School. Kristen developed a childcare program to alleviate the concern of childcare for those students with children. She recruited volunteers from the high school to assist. They conducted reading sessions, and led a variety of fun activities and art projects. The Friends of the Library in Westborough donated new books to her program both to read during the program and for the children to take home as their own. A student volunteer will continue the program using Kristen's lesson plans.



Kyla Schultz, Westford

Just One Bite: Lyme and Tick-Borne Illness Awareness and Prevention

As Kyla saw an increasing number of friends and community members affected by Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses, she wanted to raise awareness. She started by conducting a survey and creating a lesson plan for middle school students. She recruited high school students to post tick awareness and prevention signs at trailheads around town, which are especially frequented by trail hikers and dog owners—those with a greater exposure to ticks. She also created a public service announcement for the town's cable television station. Kyla's lesson plan is now a permanent part of the middle school's health curriculum.



Courtney Burrow, Weston

It's a Choice—A Movie about Parenting



To break the stigma surrounding the decision to become a stay-at-home parent, Courtney created a documentary about parenting, including interviews she conducted with six parents with diverse career backgrounds. At the premiere of the documentary, Courtney facilitated a parenting panel discussion. She presented the documentary to sophomore career seminar classes at her school, and the video will be shown in these classes in the future. She made a website, which includes a blog that is updated with articles about stay-at-home parenting.



Olivia Fennell, Weston

WHS Shark Tank: Better Together



Olivia has a long-term interest in education, and wanted to make group work easier to manage and more productive. She facilitated two, two-week long sessions for high school students. She taught tools and techniques to improve group work dynamics with classes focused on communication, problem analysis, creative thinking, and compelling presentation skills. Then, students worked in groups to answer the question, “How would you improve Weston High School?” The groups put their refined skills to action as they presented their ideas to a panel of school administrators and influencers. Olivia has provided her curriculum to teachers who will offer the program to more students.



Sophie Fennell, Weston

Choose Your Path, Chart Your Course



Being a very goal-oriented person, Sophie wanted to help others learn how to use personal goal-setting to learn new skills and feel a sense of pride. Sophie created a course for girls in eighth grade on goal-setting. The lessons taught participants how to make a plan of actionable steps, network, and track their progress. Sophie emphasized the importance of prioritizing personal interests, not just responsibilities that could look good on a resume or college application. The local temple is incorporating Sophie's lessons into their current eighth grade curriculum.



Alina Hachigian, Weston

Connecting Communities

Alina wanted to enhance the relationships between senior citizens and the youth in her community, and also wanted

to provide the local Council on Aging with a network of reliable volunteers. She started by implementing a new email system for the Council on Aging, and then educating the senior citizens on how to use it. Next, she helped to create a form for the Council on Aging to input volunteer opportunities. A contact at the high school will approve and provide these opportunities to the students. Alina also taught contacts of other organizations how to use the form to expand volunteer opportunities.



Georgia Harper, Weston

E-Buddies

In an effort to increase the interactions between senior citizens and teenage students in her community, Georgia

created a pen-pal program for these two demographics. Georgia coordinated with administrators at the senior center and local school to ensure the successful transfer of letters. She also met with the senior citizens and students to check-in on their experiences in the program and to discuss new insights gained from this relationship. Georgia provided representatives from the Council on Aging and the local senior living community with binders of materials to continue the pen-pal program.

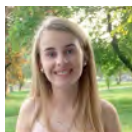


Julie Jesurum, Weston

Self-Defense Awareness Education (Defenseless)

At the local high school, students learn the signs of an abusive relationship and the risk of emotional and physical

harm, but they don't learn how to de-escalate scenarios or protect themselves. After conducting research through surveys and interviews, Julie created a two-week program that teaches unique self-defense lessons with a group called Project Impact. Over five days, 25 young women received extensive training on emotional de-escalation techniques, physical defense moves, and how to be an upstander—someone who recognizes when something is wrong and acts to make it right. Julie also taught a self-defense lesson plan to local Junior classes. Health and physical education teachers will continue the program in their classes.



Amanda Mosher, Weston

Bringing Butterflies Back



After listening to an NPR podcast on the decline of monarch butterflies returning to the northeast on their migration route, Amanda was inspired to help cultivate milkweed, the primary food source for monarch caterpillars. Amanda and her volunteers worked with Land's Sake Farm in Weston to create two milkweed gardens in different parts of town. Amanda also created an educational curriculum about monarch butterflies and milkweed, which the farm will use in their programs for elementary school students. To widen the impact, Amanda connected with Girl Scout troops in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Jersey, and sent each troop 150 milkweed seedlings, information about the growing issues facing monarch butterflies, and garden signs to educate community members.

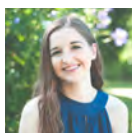


Katherine A. Page, Weymouth

School Safety



As the former safety captain of the Weymouth High School robotics team, Katherine has a passion for safety. The Career and Technical Education (CTE) department at the school offers students a variety of courses from cosmetology to automotive repair. Safety is important while taking all of the courses, but the safety manuals hadn't been updated since 2014. Katherine knew a lot had changed in four years, specifically procedures and equipment, so she rewrote each manual appropriately. She also collaborated with course instructors and taught them how to update the manuals, and the school nurses and the safety sub-team of the school's robotics team will also assist in updating.



Rachel Spivey, Winchendon

A Night with the Arts



Rachel has been concerned that a lack of funding for the creative arts within the local school district has led to a loss of art instruction at her school. In response, Rachel created and hosted an art exhibit at the local school. The exhibit brought attention to the importance of art in students' lives, gave the student artists a chance to display their work, and raised community awareness regarding the importance of art education. Rachel created an event planner that was given to the art program at Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical High School so that they can continue hosting this annual event.



Lillian Pickelhaupt, Winchester

Donation Gold



Targeting the waste issue in her community, Lillian created a website that helps people match specific goods they have to donate to local organizations accepting these donations. The website also gives further details about which towns these organizations service and if they have specific drop-off and pick-up methods. Then, Lillian organized a drive for used linens and towels for a local animal shelter at a farmer's market, and, due to the success and requests from donors, hosted it again the next week. She also worked with the local high school's Connect and Commit Club to create a formal calendar of donation drives throughout the year, which volunteers will continually update.



Special Thanks

GSEMA thanks United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley for support of the Gold Award program.

A special thank you to the Women's Legislative Caucus and its executive director, Lauren Scribi, for sponsoring Girl Scouts at the Massachusetts State House.

Gold Award Committees

Thank you for your significant commitment of time and talent, and your dedication to the Girl Scout mission. You are making a difference in the lives of girls who, in turn, are making the world a better place.

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GIRL SCOUTS**



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*“The work of today
is the history of tomorrow,
and we are its makers.”*

- Juliette Gordon Low

Girl Scout Founder

Our Mission

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:

To serve God and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be

honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong, and
responsible for what I say and do,

and to

respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place, and
be a sister to every Girl Scout.





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