

Adult Awards & Recognitions Quick Guide



Hello! At Girl Scouts of Western New York we know that we could not build girls of courage, confidence and character without the talents and hard work of our volunteers. Volunteers are truly the driving force behind delivering the Girl Scout Experience to girls throughout the nine-county area of our jurisdiction. Our volunteers help girls discover and understand themselves and to use that knowledge and skillset to explore the world around them. Our wonderful volunteers also help girls connect, care about, inspire, and work with others locally and globally. And finally, volunteers help those girls take action to make the world a better place. What could be more important than building the caring, committed leaders of tomorrow?

Unfortunately, even though they are priceless and we appreciate them greatly, the time, effort and especially the behind-the-scenes work of many volunteers often goes without notice.

It is our goal that GSWNY volunteers receive recognition and feel our appreciation for their service. Please read these guidelines carefully and with a mind to identifying any and all volunteers who may qualify for these awards. In showing that you are a “sister to every other Girl Scout,” please take the time and energy to learn about and complete the recognition process for someone you know who has made a difference. It is the right thing to do! You can reach a member of the Adult Recognition committee via email at volunteer@gswny.org or by calling 1-888-837-6410.

With gratitude,
Alison Wilcox
GSWNY CEO



Recognition: It's huge! We as humans need to be recognized, and it's nice to be recognized for good things. When people recognize us, it feels like they care we are here and they value our contributions. People volunteer for all sorts of reasons, but most volunteers want to do a good job and to make a positive difference. When volunteers know their time and energy are appreciated and that we all value them, they commit themselves to Girl Scouts. They want to know their service is helping the greater good, making the world a better place. That means our recognition is one of the most powerful ways we can retain the invaluable women and men who volunteer for the Girl Scouts of Western New York.

Three keys to successfully recognizing volunteers:

- ✓ *Do it well*
- ✓ *Do it often*
- ✓ *Make it meaningful*

CREATING A YEAR-ROUND CULTURE OF APPRECIATION

A culture of appreciation is one where anyone working toward the Girl Scout Mission feels respected and valued for their service, time commitment, and contribution. We create that type of culture by identifying means of recognition, tools and resources we can use for recognition, and collaborating between staff and volunteers to recognize all of our good work. Thanking a volunteer at the end of a project or the Girl Scout year also offers the opportunity to encourage participation in the same role or other opportunities coming up. However, please remember to show appreciation in appropriate ways throughout a person's Girl Scouts participation, and not only at the end.

An ideal [volunteer recognition system](#) includes a mixture of **formal** and **informal** methods to acknowledge all accomplishments, regardless of position or length of service. These methods also meet a wide variety of personal preferences. Keep in mind that successful recognition in any organization includes inclusiveness, accessibility, and consistency. Consider how your Service Unit's recognition efforts effect retention and volunteer re-engagement.

FORMAL AWARDS NOMINATION PROCESS

1. Visit the [Adult Recognition tab](#) of www.gswny.org to obtain the appropriate link to our Survey Monkey online nomination forms. If doing a paper nomination, please obtain the appropriate form for each award by using the search function in the [GSWNY Forms Library](#) of gswny.org
2. Complete the entire online form. If needed for the award, confirm all peer endorsers' approval beforehand (pg. 5)
3. Service Unit Teams will review nominations for Green Angel, Tenure and Years of Service, and Volunteer of Excellence Award. These awards are presented within the Service Unit.
4. The GSWNY Adult Recognition Committee will review nominations for the Appreciation Pin, Commitment to Excellence, Honor Pin, President's Award, Thanks Badge, and Thanks Badge II.
5. **Please note the deadline is February 1st for award nominations** requiring Council approval. By February 1, please complete all online submissions or send paper documents to:

Girl Scouts of Western New York
Attn: GSWNY Adult Recognition Committee
3332 Walden Avenue, Suite 106
Depew, New York 14043

Or email documents to: volunteer@gswny.org

FORMAL RECOGNITIONS GIVEN AT THE SERVICE UNIT LEVEL

Recognition	Who to consider	Criteria	Nomination & Acknowledgement
Green Angel 	Co-leaders, committee members, troop parents	Given as a thank you in recognition of a short or long-term service to a troop or Service Unit	<p>Green Angel Awards may be presented by a Troop Leader or the Service Unit Adult Recognition Committee. No paperwork or nomination form is necessary!</p> <p>Pins and patches may be purchased any GSWNY shop; the certificate can be downloaded and printed from the GSWNY forms library. First a person may earn the certificate, then the patch, then the pin.</p>
Girl Scout Tenure Pin 	All adult members	<p>Currently registered GS Adult</p> <p>Eligible for after five years of Girl Scout membership (girl and adult years combined and may include years from other councils)</p>	<p>The Tenure Pin recognizes the combined total of girl and adult years that a person has been a member of Girl Scouts. Pins are given in 5-year increments. Tenure Pins for 5 and 10 years are available for purchase in any GSWNY shop or online. Council will purchase pins with 15 or more years of commitment. Request a Tenure Pin for 15+ years through the Survey Monkey form [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/arpins] or via paper form.</p> <p>Council acknowledges Awardees with more than 20 years of tenure in print and with numeral guard at the Annual Recognition Event. All others years of commitment should be recognized within the Service Unit.</p>
Years of Service Pin 	All volunteers actively giving service	<p>Currently registered GS volunteer actively engaged in service to GSWNY</p> <p>Eligible for after five years of adult service as a volunteer (may be from different councils)</p>	<p>The Years of Service Pin recognizes how long a person has been a registered volunteer. Pins are given in 5-year increments. Years of Service Pins for 5 years are available for purchase in any GSWNY shop or online. Council will purchase pins with 10 or more years or service. Request a Years of Service Pin for 10+ years through the Survey Monkey form or via paper form.</p> <p>Council acknowledges Awardees with more than 20 years of service in print and with the Years of Service pin at the Annual Recognition Event. All others years of service should be recognized within the Service Unit.</p>
Volunteer of Excellence Award 	A volunteer who works directly with girls, and/or volunteers indirectly working with adults	Any volunteer who has performed above and beyond expectations for the position held	<p>Complete and submit The Volunteer of Excellence Nomination form to your Service Unit Adult Recognition Coordinator. One peer reference is needed.</p> <p>Council acknowledges all awardees in print at Annual Recognition Event. Remember to submit a complete list of awardees in your Service Unit to Council prior to May 1.</p> <p>Please acknowledge the recipient at Service Unit leaders' meeting, awards ceremony, or other Service Unit function.</p>

INDIVIDUAL FORMAL RECOGNITIONS GIVEN AT THE COUNCIL UNIT LEVEL

The following recognitions are awarded by GSWNY. All nominations must be submitted to the GSWNY Volunteer Recognition Committee by **February 1**. All nominees for each award must be currently registered or Lifetime Girl Scout members. They must all show achievement and distinction in their current role(s). Please note, these awards are not meant to be given sequentially, but rather be given on an individual basis to recognize the individual's scope of service. **All nominations can be submitted via our [Adult Recognitions Nominations Survey Monkey Form](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/arnomination)** [<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/arnomination>]. For each award you will need to list 2-3 peer endorsers. Please be prepared with all important contact information for the nominee and the peer endorsers prior to beginning the Survey Monkey as there is no way to save your work halfway through. Paper forms per award can also be found in GSWNY's [Forms Library](#) and be submitted by mail or email.

Recognition	Who to consider	Nomination & Acknowledgement
<p>Appreciation Pin</p> 	<p>Volunteers actively giving outstanding service to at least one geographic area, service unit, or program delivery audience</p>	<p>Frist, review the Appreciation Pin nomination form found in the Forms Library. Then submit the nomination via Survey Monkey, email, or mail.</p> <p>One peer reference is needed.</p> <p>Council acknowledges Awardees in print and at Annual Recognition Event with pin. Acknowledge the recipient at SU meeting, awards ceremony, or SU function.</p>
<p>Honor Pin</p> 	<p>Volunteers actively giving outstanding service in more than two geographic areas or service units</p>	<p>Frist, review the Honor Pin nomination form found in the Forms Library. Then submit the nomination via Survey Monkey, email, or mail.</p> <p>One peer reference is needed.</p> <p>Council acknowledges Awardees in print and at Annual Recognition Event with pin. Acknowledge the recipient at SU meeting, awards ceremony, or SU function.</p>
<p>Thanks Badge</p> 	<p>Volunteers actively giving service impacting the entire council or the Girl Scout Movement as a whole</p>	<p>Frist, review the Thanks Badge nomination form found in the Forms Library. Then submit the nomination via Survey Monkey, email, or mail.</p> <p>Two peer references are needed.</p> <p>Council acknowledges Awardees in print and at Annual Recognition Event with pin. Acknowledge the recipient at SU meeting, awards ceremony, or SU function.</p>
<p>Thanks Badge II</p> 	<p>Prior Thanks Badge recipients only</p> <p>Volunteers actively giving service impacting the council or the entire Girl Scout Movement</p>	<p>Frist, review the Thanks Badge II nomination form found in the Forms Library. Then submit the nomination via Survey Monkey, email, or mail.</p> <p>Two peer references are needed.</p> <p>Council acknowledges Awardees in print and at Annual Recognition Event with pin. Acknowledge the recipient at SU meeting, awards ceremony, or SU function.</p> <p><i>This is the highest award given to a GSWNY volunteer!</i></p>

GROUP FORMAL RECOGNITIONS GIVEN AT THE COUNCIL UNIT LEVEL

Recognition	Who to consider	Criteria	Nomination & Acknowledgement
<p>President's Award</p> 	An outstanding Service Unit team or program delivery team	<p>All team members must be registered Girl Scout adults</p> <p>Demonstrates achievement per GSWNY criteria as listed on the nomination form</p>	<p>Follow the instructions to complete and submit the President's Award Nomination form to Adult Recognition Committee.</p> <p>Council acknowledges Awardees in print and at Annual Recognition Event with certificates. A plaque listing each year's qualifying service units is on display at the GSWNY Headquarters in Buffalo.</p> <p>Acknowledge the team at SU meeting, awards ceremony, or SU function.</p>
<p>GSWNY Commitment to Excellence Award</p> 	An outside organization or business which has shown exceptional commitment to Girl Scouting through service at the council level	The nominee must have made significant contributions at the council level to the advancement of Girl Scouting through support of Council programs and service delivery goals	<p>An individual familiar with the candidate's performance must complete the GSWNY Commitment to Excellent Award Nomination form and forward to the GSWNY Adult Recognition Committee. Two statements of endorsements are needed.</p> <p>The form will document the service, its scope and impact in relation to the award. A plaque is presented to each qualifying organization at the GSWNY Adult Recognition Event.</p>

ABOUT PEER ENDORSEMENTS

The following awards require a **peer reference** of endorsement: Appreciation Pin, Honor Pin, Thanks Badge, and Thanks Badge II. Endorsements for these awards are needed to provide further details to ensure the nominee has gone above and beyond, and is deserving of the award. A peer endorser may be a troop co-leader or volunteer, troop parent, or Service Unit team member who can adequately speak to nominee's scope of service. The nominator cannot serve as the peer endorser. Please confirm the references' information (phone, email, role, etc.) prior to listing them on the nomination form. A volunteer member of the GSWNY Adult Recognitions Committee will follow up with each reference by phone and/or email. It is recommended that endorsers give specific, quantitative details such as the number of girls served, hours given, number of leaders trained, etc. This makes the nominee's impact of service clear.

Questions asked may include:

- How do you know the nominee, and for how long?
- How does the nominee exemplify the Girl Scout Law?
- Provide a summary of the nominee's accomplishments.
- How has the nominee worked to achieve goals in membership or programming?

INFORMAL RECOGNITION FOR VOLUNTEERS

Informal recognition is the day-to-day appreciation—the intangible benefits of the heartfelt ways of saying “Thank you.” These sincere expressions of appreciation are based on specific contributions and must be given in a timely manner. Informal recognition is powerful because it makes people feel valued by a personal touch. Simple efforts like verbal thanks, a thank you card, a piece of candy, or a compliment on Facebook can be great way to thank volunteers.

Here are some ideas:

- Send a thank you note
- Give a gift. Small, homemade gifts can be very meaningful!
- Handmade awards like a paper plate or candy awards
- Hold a leader dinner, picnic, potluck, or family social
- Recommend them on LinkedIn or be a professional reference
- Do a fun team building activity at a Leader meeting
- Help develop their leadership skills
- Showing interest in the person’s life beyond Girl Scouts, “What are you passionate about beyond Girl Scouts?”
- Look her or him in the eye and say, “Thank you so much, (name) for (be specific). Your service is invaluable.”
- Sending a letter of appreciation to the person’s work supervisor/company, or family
- Share positive feedback
- Offer your time as a service
- Promote them to new roles
- Provide mentoring opportunities

WHO WILL YOU RECOGNIZE NEXT? DO THEY...

- ✓ *Exceed expectations*
- ✓ *Give service above and beyond*
- ✓ *Make contributions on a Troop, Service Unit, or Council level*

Do you know someone like this? Consider taking the time to say “thank you” in a fun or unique way. Let’s get started!

- A roll of Lifesavers. “Thanks for being a lifesaver”
- Mints or gum. “You’re worth a mint”
- Chocolate kisses “I really love working with you”
- Tootsie Rolls “You play a vital role in our Service Unit”
- Make pins out of puzzle pieces. “You fit us so well”
- Decorate a coat hanger. “Thanks for hanging in there!”
- Give a compass. “Thanks for leading the way!”
- Give out rulers. “You definitely measured up to the job!”
- Spray paint old keys gold. “Thank you for being a key member of our team!”
- Give a magnifying glass. “Thanks for your vision”
- Give a pack of flower or vegetable seeds. “Thanks for planting the seeds of our success”
- Give a mug or coffee gift card. “Our cup runneth over with thanks to you for all you time and efforts!”

PLANNING A SERVICE UNIT RECOGNITION EVENT

Recognition can and should be given whenever there is someone to honor. It can take place at an event planned solely for that purpose, or it can be part of a meeting such as a monthly service unit leaders' meeting. If recognition presentations will take place as part of a SU meeting, remember to ask for sufficient time on the agenda.

Suggested planning tool for Service Unit Recognition Committees:

1. Brainstorm tasks and delegate responsibilities
2. Set a date and secure a place (if not done already by the Service Unit)
3. Identify individuals and groups to be honored at the event
 - Recipients of formal GSUSA and/or GSWNY awards
 - Recipients of Service Unit awards
 - Tenure Pin
 - Years of Service Pin
 - Girl Awards
 - Individual or groups to be recognized informally
4. Choose a theme to set a festive tone. Make the occasion special with flowers, balloons banners, favors, etc.
5. Purchase awards and mementos. Call the GSWNY shop ahead of time if you are placing a large pin order
6. Make a plan for refreshments – either with SU funds or each ask each troop to contribute
7. Plan your opening and closing – it could be an appropriate reading, song, or skit that reinforces the theme
8. Invite family, friends, and troop members of honorees
9. Prepare a printed program
10. Select a person to write (and practice!) the script for presentation of awards
 - A description of each award is helpful
 - Have the honoree come forward as the script is being presented
 - Read script and keep name secret until the end (an element of surprise!)
11. Designate someone to take photographs
12. Encourage a FUN atmosphere of CELEBRATION!
13. Remember to share your photos with us by emailing communications@gswny.org!