



# Volunteer Recognition Awards Guide



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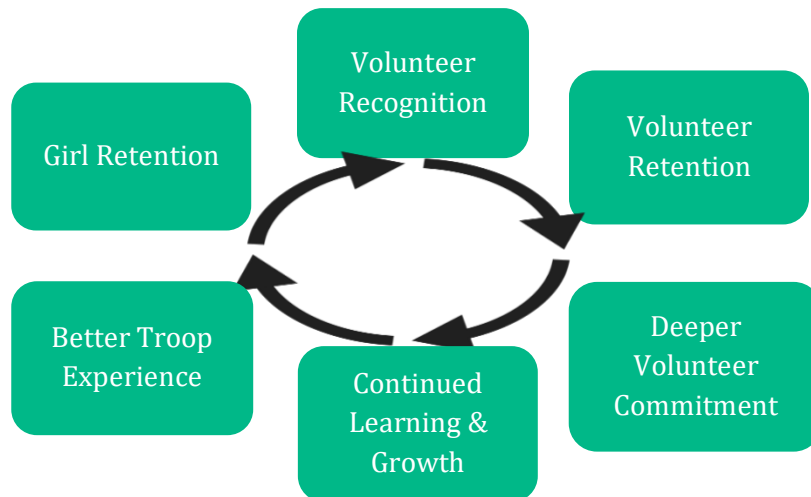
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# Why Recognition is Important

Good volunteers are at the heart of everything we do, and we want to ensure they know how important they are! Recognition is an important part of **volunteer retention**—one of our primary goals as an organization. Whether it comes from another volunteer, a girl in the troop, or a GSCO staff member, when volunteers feel appreciated and important, they become more connected to their troop, service unit, or region and are more likely to continue their involvement as a volunteer in the Girl Scout program.

Retention year after year fosters a deeper knowledge of Girl Scouts within volunteers, leading to a richer, more meaningful experience for the girls! Happier girls=a higher sense of fulfillment for volunteers.

The Girl Scout volunteer recognition awards are designed to acknowledge the merit of volunteers who have gone above and beyond the expectations of the volunteer role(s) they hold, and who have deeply impacted Girl Scouts in ways that support and further council goals or the Girl Scout mission.



To all our volunteers who give selflessly of their time, talent, and treasures, thank you for making the world a better place!

# Mission and Goals

## Our Mission

To build girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place.

Girl Scouts of Colorado prepares girls and adults to create unique leadership paths, ignite change, and share a worldwide sisterhood through traditions and new experiences.

## Our Goals

- **Volunteer Retention**
  - Provide excellent customer service and volunteer support.
  - Provide outstanding training and learning opportunities, and ensure new volunteers can obtain the necessary training they need to be successful.
  - Provide recognition of volunteer service.
- **Membership Growth**
  - Connect girls and adults who want to join with the opportunities available to them.
  - Implement necessary grants and outreach to recruit and retain a membership demographic that reflects the current Colorado census.
  - Engage alums as volunteers in support of providing the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.
- **Program Support**
  - Support and recognize girls earning Girl Scout Highest Awards, including Bronze, Silver, and Gold awards.
  - Provide support to volunteers and girls to increase their understanding and implementation of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience and elements of the National Program Portfolio (Girl's Guide, Journeys).
  - Provide the opportunity for all interested girls to participate in product programs and attend camp.
- **Leadership and Governance**
  - Engage and support council volunteer committees (MCC, Volunteer Recognition, etc.)
- **Fund Development**
  - Foster a culture of giving within GSCO volunteer networks

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Who can receive recognition awards?**

Any active, registered adult member of Girl Scouts.

## **When can nominations be submitted?**

You may submit nominations any time between April 1 and May 31. Nominations are reviewed once a year.

## **Who can nominate Girl Scout volunteers for recognition awards?**

Anyone can be a nominator—another volunteer, community member, a Girl Scout, family member, staff member, or even the individual themselves.

## **Who can endorse a nomination?**

An endorser is anyone not related or married to the nominated volunteer and who supports and can verify the nomination with a personal statement of their own. Also, girls who have directly benefitted from the nominated volunteer's contributions (i.e., troop members) can endorse volunteer nominations. Endorsements need to be received by June 15.

## **Which award is appropriate for my nominee?**

Refer to the [Award Criteria chart](#) and read each one carefully. The awards are designed to recognize service at different levels of impact. For example, the *Volunteer of Excellence* award is for a volunteer who has impacted girls at a troop level; whereas the *Appreciation Pin* is more appropriate for a volunteer who has impacted an entire service unit or region. In all cases, the volunteer should demonstrate going above and beyond while serving in that role.

If you have questions, please contact your volunteer support specialist (VSS) to discuss your nomination.

## **Are all nominations approved if submitted by the deadline?**

All nominations are carefully reviewed but may not always be approved. Reasons might include not receiving the required number of endorsements, an incomplete or vague nomination, or if the volunteer received the same award previously for the same role.

# Nomination Process

The nomination process takes place from April 1 to May 31. To be considered, all endorsements need to be received by June 15.

## NOMINATIONS AT-A-GLANCE

1. Decide who you would like to nominate.
  2. Review requirements for each available award and choose the appropriate one.
  3. Identify who will endorse your nomination.
  4. Submit your nomination by May 31.
  5. Follow-up with your endorser(s) to ensure they submit their endorsement by June 15. Your VSS can tell you which endorsements have already been received.
- Once you know who you would like to nominate, you'll need to determine which award best fits their accomplishments.
  - Review the [Awards Criteria](#) for each award to determine if your nominee's service will qualify.
  - Identify who will endorse your nomination. Each award has a required number of endorsements.
  - While anyone can *nominate* a volunteer for an award, endorsers cannot be related to or married to the nominee. It is highly recommended you ask more than the required minimum number of people to endorse the nomination, to ensure enough endorsements are received.

## It is the nominator's responsibility to ensure all needed endorsements have been submitted by June 15.

Complete a [Volunteer Recognition Award Nomination form](#) by May 31 and communicate with all endorsers to allow time for them to respond by the deadline. For information on how to write strong nominations and endorsements, check out tips for [Writing Strong Nominations and Endorsements](#).

You can nominate a volunteer for different awards over their years of service. Check with your VSS to see which awards your nominee may have already received. A volunteer is not eligible to receive the same award for the same service in different years. For this reason, it's important for nominators and endorsers to be detailed in their statements regarding accomplishments.

Once the nomination form and all endorsements have been submitted, the Volunteer Recognition Awards Committee will review them during the month of June. The awards will be announced with a statewide celebration video in early August. Awards are typically given out in various ways (service unit meetings, investiture/rededication, volunteer appreciation events, etc.) in August-October.

# Awards Eligibility

Recognition Awards are for active, registered adults who:

- Go above and beyond and exceed expectations for their position description.
- Make significant contributions toward Girl Scouts of Colorado goals or the Girl Scout Mission.
- Have successfully served a term of at least six months in their role and have met key requirements for the position.
- Model excellence for girls and adults and actively recognize, understand, and practice the values of inclusive behavior.
- Demonstrate inclusive behavior.
- Are in good standing with council.

## ***What does it mean to exceed expectations?***

*We know that all our volunteers are awesome! Volunteers are expected to fulfil the requirements of their role, maintain girl safety and be role models. So, what does it mean to exceed these expectations?*

*A volunteer that exceeds expectations, does all this and more! They are the first one to step up in times of need, they go above and beyond what other volunteers in a similar position might do. They persevere through difficult circumstances; they stick around through the fun times and the hard times and pass on their knowledge and experience to others.*



## ***What is inclusive behavior?***

*Simply put, inclusive behavior means involving everyone regardless of their background, abilities, race, religion, gender, relationship orientation, socio-economic status, or physical or social challenges. It also means working to get past the fear of the unknown by embracing and celebrating differences and choosing to have conversations, even if they are uncomfortable.*

*Inclusion is not only being invited to the party but also being asked to participate! This means in a troop setting as well as in troop leadership teams, service units, and other volunteer groups in Girl Scouts.*

*Inclusion embraces the Girl Scout laws of being considerate and caring, and of respecting others.*

## **Volunteer in Good-Standing**

- Registered for the current membership year or has a lifetime membership.
- Is active in at least one volunteer role.
- Has an up-to-date criminal background check.
- Has not been placed on any volunteer restrictions by Girl Scouts of Colorado staff.

# Awards Criteria

## 1 GSCO Rising Star Pin

**Number of required nominators: 1**

**Number of required endorsements: 1**

### **Description:**

The Rising Star pin recognizes volunteers in their first or second year as an adult volunteer in their role who have provided a strong program for girls at a troop level. The service performed was above and beyond expectations for a new volunteer.

### **Who to consider:**

First- or second-year Troop Leadership Team Members, Troop Cookie Managers.

### **Criteria for troop-level nominees:**

- Has completed required volunteer training
- Brings outstanding programming opportunities to the girls
- Adopts a girl-led approach
- Incorporates badges and/or Journeys in troop meetings or activities
- Has taken troop on outings/field trips
- Attends service unit meetings and if unable to attend sends a representative from the troop
- Takes troop to Girl Scout events
- Supports the girls in participating in one or more product program(s)



### **Example nominations:**

*"Joyce stepped up in a big way in her first year as a new troop leader. She started a troop of Brownies that grew to 20 girls in the first year and successfully recruited four other adults to help her. Joyce effectively introduced the girl-led concept to the girls and helped them build a fun troop calendar with each girl's input. Parents keep saying how much fun their daughter is having with each outdoor field trip: the park, the fire house, and the zoo.*

*In addition, Joyce took on the TCM role for the troop and made sure it was easy for families to support their girls. Her weekly communications and reminders were excellent. The troop met its sales goals, had no money problems, and turned in all paperwork on time. She even made sure the girls had a chance to earn their cookie entrepreneur pins. We saw Joyce at every service unit meeting!"*



# Awards Criteria

## 2 GSCO President's Award

**Number of required nominators: 1**

Number of required endorsements: 2

### Description:

The GSCO President's Award recognizes teams or committees of volunteers that directly or indirectly serve girls, council goals, and/or the Girl Scout Mission. The President's Award especially recognizes a team's exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE), but also recognizes other efforts that result in a significant, measurable impact toward reaching the council's overall goals.

### Who to consider:

Statewide volunteer committees, Service Unit teams, day camp teams, regional training teams or other committees.

### Criteria:

- The team has significantly contributed to meeting one or more of the council's mission delivery goals.
- The team reflects the diversity of the target audience or area it serves, in girl and adult membership, in all pathways and programs offered.



Example nomination: *"The regional day camp team has continued to bring an outstanding day camp experience to girls in the region for the past five years. They have increasingly and effectively engaged Program Aides and adult volunteers to help bring the best girl-led experience to day campers. In fact, the camp has become a coveted pathway for older girls to take on significant leadership roles and there are often more Program Aides who apply than there is space for. The camp also welcomes tagalongs, which enables more adult volunteers to engage throughout the week. The camp sells out each year in a matter of days due to its popularity, and girls and volunteers alike provide consistent ongoing feedback about how well the camp is run and what an amazing experience it was for all involved.*

*The camp director successfully worked with council staff to ensure all safety and operational requirements were in place. Delegation was clearly used, and everyone knew where they were supposed to be and what to do. There is hardly a more exciting experience for new troops to be involved with in our region and new troops have reported that the day camp helped their girls create a unique bond as a new troop, which they used to build upon throughout the year."*

# Awards Criteria

## 3 Volunteer of Excellence Pin

**Number of required nominators: 1**

Number of required endorsements: 2

### Description:

The Volunteer of Excellence award typically recognizes any troop-level volunteer but also acknowledges any registered Girl Scout adult member making an individual difference in delivering the GSLE to girls or helping GSCO in fulfilling its mission.

### Who to consider:

Troop leadership team members, troop support volunteers, troop fall product managers, troop cookie managers, troop trainers or mentors.

### Criteria:

The nominee has clearly performed beyond expectations for their role and goes above and beyond to deliver the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) directly to girls OR has supported one or more council goals.



*Example nomination: "Nancy has been a troop leader for four years. She has led her troop through the Daisy petals and Brownie badges, including STEM badges and Journeys, which the girls chose to pursue. Her girls excel in product program areas and by encouraging a mindset of giving back, the girls donate a portion of their proceeds every year to a charitable organization of their choice. These have included The Wolf Sanctuary, Make-a-Wish, and St. Jude's Children's Hospital."*

*Nancy has instilled a sense of pride in the girls regarding wearing their uniforms and her girls are always in uniform, even at all the troop meetings. Nancy has also informed the girls about leadership paths available to them, including earning the Leadership in Action award and the Bronze Award. The troop's retention rate for its 12 girls was 100% last year!*

# Awards Criteria

## 4 Appreciation Pin

**Number of required nominators: 1**

Number of required endorsements: 2

### Description:

The Appreciation Pin recognizes an individual who volunteers at a level higher than just the troop level, including the service unit, region, or council in **one functional area** like Program Support, Product Programming, Recruitment, Volunteer Management, Fund Development, Outreach, Community Partnerships, Leadership and Governance, Global Girl Scouting.

### Who to consider:

Troop Leadership Team members who serve Girl Scouts beyond their own troop; Service Unit team members; service unit or regional trainers or event coordinators; any registered Girl Scout adult member performing in an area of service beyond troop-level.

### Criteria:

Nominee has shown exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) beyond a troop level, which has had a measurable impact, allowing the council to reach or surpass its mission-delivery goals.



Appreciation Pin

*Example nomination: Sarah has been a leader/co-leader for seven years. She has taken on the responsibility of service unit manager, and she is responsible for planning and implementing a SU campout—the first one the SU has ever had! Sarah recruited more than 15 adult volunteers and five Program Aides to assist with the campout. She even went out of her way to contact a few local businesses to make donations to support the campout. More than 50 people (girls and adults attend the campout) attended and it was considered a great success!*

# Awards Criteria

## 5 Honor Pin

**Number of required nominators: 1**

Number of required endorsements: 3

### Description:

The Honor Pin recognizes an individual who volunteers at a level higher than the troop level, including the service unit, region or council, and has expanded their service to include **two or more functional areas** like program support, product programming, recruitment, volunteer management, fund development, outreach, community partnerships, leadership and governance, global Girl Scouting.

### Who to consider:

Troop leadership team members who serve Girl Scouts beyond their own troop; service unit team members; service unit or regional facilitators/trainers; any registered Girl Scout adult member performing in more than one functional area of service beyond troop-level.

### Criteria:

Nominee provides key support at a service unit, regional or council level in more than two roles or functional areas.



Honor Pin

*Example nomination: Since receiving her Appreciation Pin, Kallie has continued her role as troop leader and SU manager. She also progressed in her leadership roles by being a Cookie Delivery Day coordinator for a cookie drop location as well as Cookie Cupboard Manager. Just last month, she was selected as a National Council Delegate!*

# Awards Criteria

## 6 Thanks Badge

**Number of required nominators: 1**

Number of required endorsements: 4

### Description:

The Thanks Badge honors 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 organization.

### Who to consider:

Any registered Girl Scout adult member holding a significant volunteer role.

### Criteria:

Nominee has given service for an extended period of time so significantly above and beyond the call of duty that no other award would be appropriate.



Thanks Badge

*Example nomination Quincy is currently serving as the chair of MCC. She is also a representative to the Board of Directors for GSCO. She worked with council staff to create a new STEM enrichment class and helped roll it out statewide ensuring each region had access to the training class. Training new leaders has become her new passion!*

# Awards Criteria



## Thanks Badge II

**Number of required nominators: 1**

Number of required endorsements: 4

### Description:

The Thanks Badge II award is designated as a level two Thanks Badge. It recognizes exemplary service that resulted in outcomes benefitting the entire council or entire Girl Scout organization.

### Who to consider:

Only a volunteer who has already received the level one Thanks Badge.

### Criteria:

Only available to a volunteer who has already received the level one Thanks Badge. Nominee has provided service for an extended period of time so significantly above and beyond the call of duty that no other award would be appropriate.



Thanks Badge II

*Example nomination: Madeleine continues work toward the national and council mission and goals. She has become a Gold Award mentor and is working closely with several girls. She helped staff expand Highest Award training classes and helped launch the new class statewide at training events so more girls would have access to Highest Awards opportunities.*

# Awards Criteria



## Juliette Gordon Low World Friendship Medal

This GSUSA award to recognize global-minded volunteers requires a [special application](#). GSUSA reviews and approves this award.

Application: Complete [the application](#) and save as a file. Endorsers complete the endorsement form and email file to the nominator. Print all nomination and endorsement pages and mail together to: Vice President of Global Girl Scouting, Girl Scouts of the USA, 420 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10025.

Number of required endorsements: 2

### Description:

This award recognizes outstanding service in support of Global Girl Scouting.

Who to consider: Any registered member who focuses on promoting global Girl Scouting.

### Criteria:

1. Impact on girls: Nominee's efforts include girl involvement resulting in increased opportunities for girl-led global opportunities and Take Action projects resulting in significant global impact.
2. Commitment: Nominee has demonstrated dedication and commitment over a significant amount of time by continuously promoting and expanding the global dimension of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting. The nominee has promoted the Juliette Low World Friendship

### Criteria continued:

fund or other global Girl Scouting funding opportunities.

3. Global awareness: Nominee has created and promoted resources and opportunities that increase the understanding of the global dimension of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting to the council and the larger community.

4. Leadership: The nominee is recognized by girl and adult members, and the larger community, as a leader who leverages the global impact of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting.

*Example nomination Jayna is a long-time volunteer serving the council for more than 20 years. She currently chairs the Global Girl Scouting Committee for our council and has visited all five World Centers multiple times for WAGGGS events and training courses. She is an active volunteer at two World Centers: Pax Lodge and Our Cabana. Jayna is actively engaged in promoting the Juliette Low World Friendship fund within our council and contributes to the Girl Scout movement at the council, national, and international levels.*

*Through her work with the Global Girl Scouting Committee, Jayna has helped create World Center resources for all regions of our council so that girls across the state can utilize them in learning about the five World Centers, as well as created an international travel training program for troop leaders. She frequently attends councilwide events to promote learning about other cultures and the broader WAGGGS world.*

In writing a nomination or endorsement, please take the time to share the outstanding achievements and characteristics of the volunteer. **Be detailed and give brief examples.**



Considering some basic questions will help you write a stronger nomination:

- What have they done to earn the award?
- How are they (or why is their effort) outstanding?
- What made it unique or outstanding?
- How did it benefit the girls, troop, service unit, or council?

Girl Scouts of Colorado has designed guidelines to help as you write your nomination or endorsement. Each nomination should support the guidelines by showing results-oriented, measurable, and real impact stories in support of your nominee.

### ***Examples of Adding Strong Details***

The examples below show how to make a statement made in a nomination stronger with more details.

The goal is to give the review committee a strong sense of what has been accomplished by the volunteer:

Original Statement	Questions to Consider	Stronger Statement
<i>"She has been an effective leader for a long time."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many years?</li> <li>• Through which program levels? (D, B, J, C, A, S)</li> <li>• What made them effective? (i.e., communication style, how she interacts with girls, organizational skills, follow-through, etc.?)</li> </ul>	<i>"Karen has been an effective leader for a long time. For 11 years, she has led a large troop that started as Daisies, persevered through the difficult middle school years, to their current level of Seniors. She has been an effective leader because she is always positive, remains flexible and open to hearing the girls' ideas, and consistently keeps everyone informed and up-to-date."</i>
Original Statement	Questions to Consider	Stronger Statement
<i>"They have a strong girl-led troop."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what ways were the girls encouraged to take the lead at each level?</li> </ul>	<i>"Lauren has a strong girl-led troop. They continually bring leadership opportunities to the girls and every step of the way"</i>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What ideas did the girls have that they encouraged or supported?</li> <li>• What are things they could have done as the leader that they let the girls do instead?</li> <li>• What has the impact been on the girls by being encouraged to take the lead?</li> </ul>	<p><i>they have encouraged the girls to take the lead. They encourage a girl-led approach by allowing girls to vote on and implement their activities. As Daisies, they were helping to select the badges they wanted to earn; as Brownies, they helped plan field trips; as Juniors, they chose and completed their Bronze Award; in middle school they began helping younger Girl Scouts earn badges by hosting several Badge-in-a-Day events; and as high schoolers, they were encouraged to think big and plan an international trip."</i></p>
Original Statement	Questions to Consider	Stronger Statement
<i>"She always goes above and beyond."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell a story about the great benefits those around them receive due to their efforts.</li> <li>• What kind of example do they set by doing more than what is expected?</li> <li>• How do the girls or the troop benefit from their approach?</li> </ul>	<p><i>"Avery always goes above and beyond. She is always the first to arrive at troop activities to help set up and the last to leave after helping to clean up. Most impressively, she does not wait to be asked to volunteer to help. She is known for approaching leaders at the beginning of each troop activity to ask what she can do to help. Avery also volunteers as the troop treasurer, a job no one else really wanted to do. She has helped out so many times they can't be counted and is always the first to raise her hand to lend a helping hand. We could not be as successful as we are without her help!"</i></p>
Original Statement	Questions to Consider	Stronger Statement
<i>"He is great at connecting people together."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share an example of how they have helped the girls connect with each other.</li> <li>• Do they have a special way of connecting with parents?</li> </ul>	<p><i>"He is great connecting people together. For example, James' troop voted to pursue the aMuse Journey. Because he has never considered himself creatively</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what ways have people who would otherwise not be connected are because of this volunteer?</li> <li>• What benefits have been gained because of this volunteer's people skills?</li> </ul>	<p><i>inclined, he recruited troop parents, community artists, and actors as resources for the girls to learn from. As a result, the girls had a great time meeting community experts and discovering parent talent in their own troop! They have also had several opportunities for Take Action projects because of these connections, too!"</i></p>
Original Statement	Questions to Consider	Stronger Statement
<p><i>"She is a grandma who helps whenever needed."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be specific! Share a story about the support given to the girls, and how the girls benefitted.</li> <li>• How many ways have they helped?</li> <li>• Is there a time when they helped the troop at the last minute or in a way that made it possible for the girls to do something they otherwise would not have been able to?</li> </ul>	<p><i>"She is a grandma who helps out whenever needed. She can always be counted on to fill in if one of the leaders cannot make the meeting and she is also a reliable driver and overnight chaperone in our troop. One time, she came to the rescue during a troop camp-out when the troops discovered a nest of baby snakes in camp! She kept both the girls and leaders calm as she assisted in striking camp, all the while educating the girls about snakes and safety. The girls felt safe, and in control, thanks to good guidance!"</i></p>

# Glossary of Terms

**GSUSA:** Girl Scouts of United States of America

**GSLE:** Girl Scout Leadership Experience - This model engages girls in discovering themselves and the world around them, connecting with others, and taking action to make the world a better place. This model begins with a definition of leadership that girls understand and believe in: a leader is defined not only by the qualities and skills one has, but also by how those qualities and skills are used to make a difference in the world. This model incorporates the four skill areas that form the foundation of Girl Scouts: STEM, Outdoors, Entrepreneurship, and Life Skills. The model helps girls thrive in five key ways by ensuring she:

- o Develops a strong sense of self
- o Displays positive values
- o Seeks challenges and learns from setbacks
- o Forms and maintains healthy relationships o Learns to identify and solve problems in her community
- o To bring the GSLE to life, the focus is on the 3 key methods: being Girl-Led (activities are led by girls), using Cooperative Learning (the girls learn together), and facilitating Learning by Doing (girls get hands-on experience). Through the GSLE 3 Key methods, girls explore making a positive impact by learning to:
  - *Discover:* Girls understand themselves and their values and use their knowledge and skills to explore the world
  - *Connect:* Girls care about, inspire, and collaborate with others locally and globally
  - *Take Action:* Girls act to make the world a better place

**Areas of Service:** These may be functional (e.g., Product Program, Program Support, Volunteer Management, Recruitment, Fund Development, Membership Development, Community Cultivation, Leadership and Governance, Council Support Service) or geographical (e.g., two cities or service units, areas, regions).

**National Program Portfolio:** The available program and awards for girls at each program level. This includes all aspects of the GSLE - The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting, all badges and Journey awards and the 4 Pillars, STEM, Outdoors, Entrepreneurship, and Life Skills, offered by GSUSA.