



Girl Scout Community,

There have been many questions and concerns about Girl Scout High Awards and how they have been impacted in the wake of COVID-19. With clarity from Girl Scouts of the USA, we would like to share the following update:

We recognize the impact of the COVID-19 closures and 'stay at home orders' are having on Girl Scouts who want to earn the highest awards. We're committed to supporting girls with the time and space they need to adjust to these changes, so when they're ready, they can safely harness their enthusiasm and facilitate meaningful solutions with their communities!

To ensure all Girl Scouts who want to earn the Highest Awards this year have the opportunity, Girl Scouts is offering a three month deadline extension from September 30 to December 31, 2020 for Girl Scouts who are graduating from 5th grade (Juniors who seek to earn the Bronze Award), 8th grade (Cadettes who seek to earn the Silver Award) and 12th grade (Ambassadors who seek to earn the Gold Award) this year. These Girl Scouts will bridge to the next program level officially on October 1, 2020 and, without this extension, would be no longer eligible to earn the Bronze, Silver or Gold Award, respectively.

Girl Scouts should have a project identified, a plan in place and be ready to take action no later than September 30, 2020. Given that each council handles highest award project tracking, approvals and recognitions differently, Girl Scouts should follow local council guidelines and procedures.

These guidelines may be useful:

- 5<sup>th</sup> grade Juniors should have an approved proposal on file with their councils or be on Step 6 of their Bronze Award by September 30, 2020
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade Cadettes should have an approved proposal on file with their council or be on Step 7 of the Silver Award by September 30, 2020
- 12<sup>th</sup> grade Ambassadors should have an approved Gold Award proposal on file with their council by September 30, 2020

Graduating 12th grade Ambassadors should plan to have an adult membership in order to use the extension. We want every girl or adult to be a member if they are working on a Girl Scout activity. A Girl Scout membership not only provides activity insurance, but also ensures there is no disruption to the council/national structure and support Girl Scouts offers. These Gold Award Candidates may renew as an adult or choose Lifetime Membership. Thanks for helping us keep Girl Scouts safe and engaged during the extension!

### **What does this mean for our Council?**

We recommend that girls and teams who are working on projects do their best to adhere to the September 30, 2020 original deadline. There is lots of time to think about how you can modify your project – to still see success this summer!

### **BRONZE/SILVER AWARD**

This change will allow individual girls and troops some additional time to complete projects as we head into the new year.



HOWEVER: For our Council Young Women of Distinction, the deadline for the application will still be October 15, 2020. If you are still completing projects at this time – you will need to provide an estimation of completion, which we will take into consideration during our selection process.

## GOLD AWARD

While this extension does allow for some flexibility in the Gold Award deadline, we want to be clear that some of our Council deadlines HAVE NOT changed:

- **Gold Award Ceremony:** The deadline to “walk/participate” in the March 2021 Gold Award Ceremony has not changed – it remains on September 30, 2020 for all girls – EXCEPT the class of 2020. In light of the guidelines above, girls in the class of 2020, will have the following deadlines:
  - Have completed the interview AND gained approval – September 20, 2020
  - Have submitted a draft of the final report by November 30, 2020
  - Received approval from the final review committee by December 15, 2020.
- **Gold Award Scholarship:** The application for Gold Award Girl Scouts (graduating class of 2021) will still open on October 1, 2020 and will close on November 15, 2020. Girls who are eligible and are wrapping-up their Gold Award projects, may still apply – BUT must have submitted a final report by November 30, 2020 and receive approval by December 15, 2020.
- **Gold Award Council Young Women of Distinction:** The selection process for these ladies will still occur in October, as in previous years. If girls are still wrapping-up projects at this time, we will need an estimation of completion, which we will take into consideration during our selection process.

Thank you all for your continued energy and patience as champions of change in our communities! High Awards projects help girls to achieve the top level of our leadership outcomes and we do our best to create a process that is accessible and fair for all.

Yours in Scouting,

Vena Namukasa

Program Support Manager