

Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois honors exceptional Girl Scout volunteers

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GLEN CARBON- Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois (GSSI) held its 7th Annual Meeting on April 9 at the Holiday Inn in Mt. Vernon, Illinois. During the meeting, approximately 350 Girl Scout members (adults and girls) from throughout southern Illinois elected Board of Director members and received a “State of the Council” report from Linda Manley, GSSI Board of Director Chair, and Villie M. Appoo, GSSI Chief Executive Officer.

In addition, Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois recognized top Girl Scout volunteers which are the heart of Girl Scouting. GSSI's 4,500 Girl Scout volunteers play an instrumental role in providing leadership programming and opportunities for more than 13,000 girls in southern Illinois. The theme for this year's GSSI 7th Annual Meeting was Golden Jubilee which celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the Girl Scout Gold Award.

Keynote speaker for GSSI's annual meeting was 1st Lt. Alyssa Heimerman, who is the Operations and Training Flight Commander at Travis AFB, CA, where she serves as an Aircraft Maintenance Officer. Lieutenant Heimerman is originally from Belleville and was a Girl Scout for many years. She culminated her Girl Scout career by earning the Girl Scout Gold Award in 2009. The lieutenant says earning her Girl Scout Gold Award was a really phenomenal experience as a young leader.

"Girl Scouts gave me so many positive things...confidence to succeed, open-mindedness and the importance of Communications in leadership," Lieutenant Heimerman added.

"Girl Scouting in southern Illinois would not be what it is today without the dedication, passion and leadership of all of our volunteers," said Appoo. "We are honored to present these awards to our exceptional volunteers as they are the driving force behind carrying out GSSI's mission of building leaders for America. I Can't Wait To continue working with these amazing volunteers to ensure all girls in southern Illinois can benefit from a premier Girl Scout Leadership Experience," Appoo added.

Following are awards presented at GSSI's 7th Annual Meeting:

GSSI Heart of Gold

The Heart of Gold Award recognizes the long-term impact a volunteer has had on girls and adults in his/her community through involvement in Girl Scouting. The service of this volunteer has been an integral part of the maintaining and recruiting new girls and /or adults in one or more areas of the council. The GSSI Heart of Gold award was presented to:

Mary Lou McDermott, Service Unit #108, Edwardsville

Thanks Badge II

The Thanks Badge II is the top award that an adult member can earn. This award recognizes an adult member who has already received the Thanks Badge and who has continued to contribute in extraordinary ways that benefit the total council or the entire Girl Scout movement. The Thanks Badge II was presented to:

Stan Clark, Service Unit #202, Trenton

Rosemary Gruber, Service Unit #207, Belleville

Mary Anne Hopper, Service Unit #211, Waterloo

Thanks Badge

The Thanks Badge recognizes an adult member whose performance is truly outstanding and benefits the total council or the entire Girl Scout movement. The Thanks Badge was presented to:

Nancy Smallie, a Service Unit #102, Granite City

Honor Pin

The Honor Pin recognizes an individual's exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE), which has had measurable impact on two or more geographic areas of service, allowing the council to reach and surpass its mission-delivery goals.

Valeria Clark, Service Unit #544, Crawford/Jasper

Elizabeth Frisbee, Service Unit #108, Edwardsville

Beverly Vanover, Service Unit #60, Randolph South

Appreciation Pin

The Appreciation Pin recognizes an individual's exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE). This service, which has had measurable impact on at least one geographic area of service, helps the council reach and surpass its mission-delivery goals for that area.

Christine Bennett

SU 202 - ClinClair

Jason Dothager

SU 107 - South Macoupin

Sarah Drury-Dothager

SU 107 - South Macoupin

Joanna Espique

SU 202 – ClinClair

Stacey Gerdes

SU 15 – Clinton

Jamie Gross

SU 108 – Edwardsville/Glen Carbon

Emily Myers

SU 544 – Crawford/Jasper

Marsha Nichols

SU 9 – Centralia

Tina Rabe

SU 60 – Randolph South

Rita Rhodabarger

SU 511 – Effingham

Darcy Rowland

SU 101 – Alton/Godfrey/Wood River/Roxana

Amy Taylor

SU 90 – West Williamson

Vicki Thompson

SU 57 – Randolph North

President's Award

The President's Award recognizes the efforts of a service-delivery team or committee whose exemplary service in support of delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience surpassed team goals and resulted in significant, measureable impact toward reaching the council's overall goals.

Service Unit Team from SU 7 - Bond

Service Unit Team from SU 15 - Clinton

Service Unit Team from SU 30 - Jefferson

Service Unit Team from SU 51 - North Franklin

Service Unit Team from SU 54 - Perry

Service Unit Team from SU 57 - Randolph North

Service Unit Team from SU 60 - Randolph South

Service Unit Team from SU 107 - South Macoupin

Service Unit Team from SU 110 - Highland

Service Unit Team from SU 201 - O'Fallon/Shiloh

Service Unit Team from SU 202 - ClinClair

Service Unit Team from SU 211 - Waterloo

Service Unit Team from SU 544 - Crawford/Jasper

Volunteer of Excellence Award

The Volunteer of Excellence Award recognizes those volunteers who have contributed outstanding service while partnering directly with girls in any pathway to implement the Girl Scout Leadership Experience through use of the National Program Portfolio or who have contributed outstanding service in support of the council's mission delivery to girl and adult members.

Betsy Back, SU 72 - Union/Pulaski/Alexander (UPAC)

Deena Ballard, SU 511 - Effingham

Deb Beckmann, SU 15 - Clinton

Mandy Bizaillion, SU 30 - Jefferson

Elizabeth Bruchhauser, GSSI Intern

Holli Campbell, SU 202 - ClinClair

Jane Cornelius, SU 7 - Bond

Vanessa Downey, SU 81 - Washington

Natalie Durbin, SU 207 - Belleville/Swansea

Lucinda Fulton, SU 107- South Macoupin

Beth Gregson, SU 211 - Waterloo

Melissa Griffith-Olmstead, SU 544 - Crawford/Jasper

Audra Haarman, SU 511 - Effingham

Jaime Herman, SU 202 - ClinClair

Hannah Hodge, SU 511 - Effingham

Rebecca Huller, SU 201 - O'Fallon/Shiloh

Carol Kaempfe, SU 60 - Randolph South

Angie Koester, SU 511 - Effingham

Tracey Lamczyk, SU 81 - Washington

Jennifer Larrison, SU 45 - Massac

Shelly Lemons, SU 202 - ClinClair

Kristine Luth, SU 15 - Clinton

Kathleen May, SU 211 - Waterloo

Samantha McCann, SU 72 - Union/Pulaski/Alexander (UPAC)

Jennifer Melton, SU 101 - Alton/Godfrey/Wood River/Roxana

Kevin Ponciroli, SU 201 - O'Fallon/Shiloh

Tammy Spour, SU 544 - Crawford/Jasper

Krissy Rietz, SU 511 - Effingham

Angela Sewell, Program Volunteer

Sarah Smith, SU 57 - Randolph North

Cassandra Townsend, SU 109 - Troy/St. Jacob

Lisa Wagner, SU 544 - Crawford/Jasper

Dawn Walker, SU 57 - Randolph North

Lynn Westphaelinger-Torres, SU 201 - O'Fallon/Shiloh

Wendi Wilson, SU 51 - North Franklin

Melanie Wright, SU 78 - Wabash/Edwards

Marea Yagow, SU 511 - Effingham

Jennifer Zinschlag, SU 108 - Edwardsville/Glen Carbon

Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois is a high-capacity Girl Scout council serving approximately 13,000 girls and 4,500 adult volunteers in 40 ½ counties in southern Illinois.

The mission of Girl Scouting states: Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place. Girl Scouts is the world's pre-eminent organization dedicated solely to girls - all girls - where, in an accepting and nurturing environment, girls build character and skills for success in the real world. In partnership with committed adults, girls develop qualities that will serve them all their lives - like strong values, social conscience, and conviction about their own potential and self-worth.

Today's Girl Scouts not only enjoy camping and crafts, but they also explore math and science and learn about diversity, good citizenship, leadership and teamwork. Girl Scouting is the place where girls experience the fun, friendship and power of girls together.

Girl Scouting has inspired more than 50 million girls and women since its founding in 1912.

Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois is a not-for-profit organization supported by various United Ways throughout the region. Girl Scouts is a Proud Partner of United Way.

For more information, please call Jay Strobel at 618.692.0692 or Tricia Higgins at 618.242.5079.