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Osborne Teen Earns Girl Scout's Highest Honor, the Gold Award

WICHITA, Kan. — Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland honors new Girl Scout Gold Award recipient, Ashton Baxa of Osborne, Kan., for creating a new literacy program in her community.

Earning the Gold Award is one of the most challenging, exciting and rewarding experiences a Girl Scout can have and one of the most prestigious recognitions she'll accomplish. The Girl Scout Gold Award stands as the highest achievement a Girl Scout can earn, comparable to the Eagle Scout rank in Boy Scouts. The award recognizes girls in grades 9 through 12 who demonstrate extraordinary leadership through Take Action projects that have a sustainable impact in their communities and beyond. Girl Scout Gold Award recipients who join the armed forces enter one rank higher than other recruits, and they qualify for exclusive scholarships.

"Earning the Girl Scout Gold Award is truly a remarkable achievement, and the young women who earn this award exemplify leadership in all of its forms," said Liz Workman, chief executive officer of Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland. "They saw a need in their communities and around the world, and took action. Their extraordinary dedication, perseverance and leadership is making the world a better place."

Baxa focused her efforts on the reading ability of youth in her community with "Buddies and Books". The project created a mentorship program with volunteers in her local community spending time with youth, listening to them read and helping them along the way. The goal was to establish an initiative to improve reading abilities, a life skill that will stay with them forever. "Buddies and Books" was developed with the intention of volunteers sustaining the program long after Baxa leaves for college through Facebook pages and a partnership with the Osborne Public Library.

On earning her Gold Award, Baxa said her leadership skills "became even stronger as I handled the children and learned how much they actually do look up to you. From this program, I learned that I love working with kids and I am going to school to study pharmacy, but I learned that I would like to take that career and work in a children's hospital."

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About Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland

Girl Scouts of Kansas Heartland serves more than 14,500 girls and adults in 80 Kansas counties through its operational headquarters in Wichita, Kan., and regional offices in Salina, Hays, Emporia and Garden City. Founded in 1912, Girl Scouts is the leading authority on girls' healthy development and is the pre-eminent leadership development organization for girls. Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place.



About the Girl Scout Gold Award

Since 1916, Girl Scouts have been making meaningful, sustainable change in their communities and around the world. The Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest honor a Girl Scout can earn, acknowledges the power behind each recipient's dedication to not only empowering and bettering herself, but also to making the world a better place for others. These young women are courageous leaders and visionary change makers. *They are our future, and it looks bright!*

