

Girl Scouts Louisiana East Announces 2025 Gold Award Earners

GONZALES, LA, UNITED STATES, April 10, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Girl Scouts Louisiana East (GSLE) is proud to announce the nine members of the 2025 Girl Scout Gold Award Earners, who made a sustainable impact addressing causes they care about in southeast Louisiana communities. This year's earners are Addison Altland from Mandeville; Alexa Chandler from New Orleans; Susannah Donoghue from Mandeville; Natalye Hilliard from St. Gabriel; Riley Kinler from Mandeville; Reese Napolitano from Destrehan; Emily Simmons from Mandeville; Eliana Slocum from New Orleans; and Alyssa Vought from Belle Chase.

"We are incredibly proud of this Gold Award class. They deserve recognition for all the hard work in achieving Girl Scout's highest honor," said Rebecca Pennington, CEO of Girl Scouts Louisiana East. "Girl Scout Gold Award earners are recognized by colleges and employers for the significance of this achievement, knowing that those who earn the Gold Award bring an unparalleled level of leadership, discipline, and impact-driven mindset."

Addison Altland noticed people with special needs should be able to attend and enjoy live music and events just as easily as anyone else. Live events can be overwhelming and overstimulating. For her Gold Award project, Music Without Limits, she contacted local music venues to find out how we could better accommodate those needs. Due to her efforts, nine venues now provide headphones to those with sensory sensitivities.

Congratulations, Girl Scouts!



Addison Altland



Alexa Chandler



Susannah Donoghue



Natalye Hilliard



Riley Kinler



Reese Napolitano



Emily Simmons



Eliana Slocum



Alyssa Vought

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Alexa Chandler wanted to educate her community about the root causes of flooding and the reliance on levees, floodwalls, and pumps to manage water overflow. She helped develop the Morris Jeff Rain Garden at her high school as a solution to slow down fast-moving water near roadways, preventing much of it from eroding yards and overwhelming storm drains.

Susannah Donoghue wanted to help fellow student writers share their work more easily. Through her Gold Award project, Let's Get Lit(erary), instead of just the one spoken-word event where students shared their writings, she enabled writers at her school to share and critique their work in the form of a literary magazine. She then introduced this plan to the public so others could learn how to start their own literary magazines for themselves, their peers, and the community.

Natalye Hilliard wanted to address the lack of access to music education due to low income, inconvenient times of classes, and access to qualified music teachers. For her project, A Musical Community!, she provided free piano lessons on days and at times that were most convenient to her students. In addition, she made simple step-by-step recordings, which are available at the public library for the community, along with a keyboard for practice.

Riley Kinler wanted to help families going through therapy at Hope House. The office had little room for family members to sit and wait while others attended counseling. For her project, Swing of Hope, she designed and installed a rock platform and erected a wooden swing on the lawn. This area provides a welcoming and comfortable outdoor space where family members can sit and relax, enhancing their overall experience during difficult times.

Reese Napolitano wanted to address the lack of information about how to become an organ donor and the many myths surrounding organ donation. To help educate the public, she created two videos that play in high school health classes across Louisiana and an informational video that plays at the Office of Motor Vehicles. She helped organize organ donor awareness events at her high school football game to dispel myths and sign people up for organ donation. Shortly after the game, their head coach received a kidney transplant after years of waiting.

Emily Simmons sought to educate and help those affected by Scoliosis; an abnormal curvature of the spine most often diagnosed in children between 10-15 years old. For her project, Scoliosis: Raising Awareness and Providing Support, she helped to ease the fear of recently diagnosed patients at Children's Hospital by creating care packages filled with community support resources. In addition, she created detailed resource guides listing online support groups, physical therapy clinics, helpful books, advice on accommodations for school, under brace shirt recommendations, and counseling resources. She created a Facebook support group for Louisiana teens and did a fundraiser.

Eliana Slocum wanted to show the world that a Girl Scout with a disability can actively participate, achieve, and set goals. For her project, A Girl Scout's Journey on the Upside of Down Syndrome, she demonstrated this by creating a film highlighting her eight-year Girl Scout

journey. The film demonstrated the success of a person with a disability and raised awareness about acceptance and inclusion.

Alyssa Vought sought to address the issue of women's physical health and mental health during pregnancy. She helped to raise awareness surrounding the resources and support that could aid mothers during pregnancy and childbirth. Alyssa updated a Pregnancy Resource Manual that organizations provided to mothers in need to help them find the best resources in the community. The Community Center for Life keeps the manuals in stock. She also hosted an event called "Blossom: Nurturing Life in the Community" and provided her manuals to new mothers, pregnant mothers, and families.

Girl Scouts Louisiana East will honor the 2025 Girl Scout Gold Award class on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, at the Clarion Inn and Conference Center in Gonzales, La.

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Girl Scouts Louisiana East (GSLE) is the leading organization for leadership development of girls, grades K to 12, in 23 parishes of southeast Louisiana. Chartered by Girl Scouts of the USA, GSLE serves over 10,200 girls, with 3,400 adult members. Girl Scouts offers every girl a chance to practice a lifetime of leadership, adventure, and success. To volunteer, reconnect, donate, or join, visit www.gsle.org.

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