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Junior Troop 11378 earns Bronze Award helping school community

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Leading with Creativity

“I wanted to earn the Girl Scout Bronze Award because the whole troop was working towards this goal, I wanted to help other kids, and I wanted to prepare for earning other Highest Awards.”

- Girl Scout Lydia

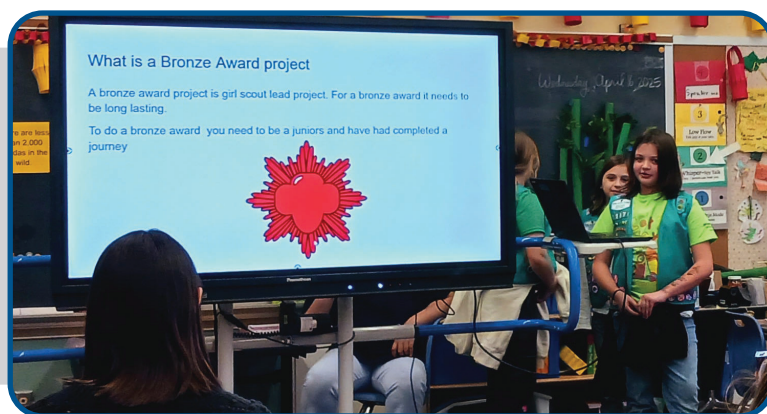
Take a creative Girl Scout troop passionate about art and two troop co-leaders who encourage practicing independence and leadership, and what do you get? The perfect recipe for an inspiring Girl Scout Bronze Award project focused on helping young children use art to better regulate their emotions. That’s exactly what Girl Scout Cadettes Chloe, Lydia, Quataleya, and Winnie from Troop 11378 did.

To earn the Girl Scout Bronze Award, Girl Scout Juniors team up to explore their community, discover a need or issue they care about, and work together to address it and make an impact. Girl Scouts spend a minimum of 20 hours on their project to deep dive into the issue and help make sustainable change.

“I wanted to earn the Girl Scout Bronze Award because the whole troop was working towards this goal, I wanted to help other kids, and I wanted to prepare for earning other Highest Awards,” expressed Girl Scout Lydia. A Girl Scout for the past seven years, Lydia enjoys going camping, selling Girl Scout Cookies, and earning badges—the photography and horseback riding badges being her favorites.

“As a group, we thought about our own interests and realized we all use art in some way to help us calm down, so we took inspiration from that and created a project that introduced other kids to use art in this same way,” shared Girl Scout Winnie, who has also been a Girl Scout since she was a Daisy. Winnie likes camping and archery, and her favorite badges earned are the horseback riding and the detective badge.

For their Bronze Award project, the Girl Scouts created and distributed five “Calming Art” kits to the lower elementary classrooms at their school. The girls first had to pitch their plans to several stakeholders for their permission, including the school’s principal, art teacher, and lower elementary



As Junior Girl Scouts, Troop 11378 learned life skills like public speaking and presenting while sharing their project with teachers and school administrators.

teachers. The girls organized meetings and presented their project with a slideshow to demonstrate their process and goal of supporting students’ mental health. With their art teacher, they learned how separate art techniques help support different areas of emotional regulation.

The group ultimately chose a mandala wheel project that encourages students to doodle to relax, as well as use a color wheel to match colors to emotions. To extend the project’s impact, the Girl Scouts taught one student from each lower elementary class how to use the kit, so those students could then share the technique with other classmates. Each “Calming Art” kit included blank mandala wheels, colored pencils, instructions, samples, and an emotions color wheel. The girls used money they earned from selling Girl Scout Cookies to purchase supplies for their kits.

“I learned and practiced so many new skills, like organization and public speaking,” remarked Winnie. “I had to overcome nervousness when pitching the project to adults and then I had to use clear communication skills when showing the other kids how to use the kits. It was amazing to hear that other kids were actually using the kits! My brother, who is in second grade, came home one day and said he learned it in his classroom!”

Lydia added, “This project helped me advance in Girl Scouting and build my confidence. It was a ton of work, and I learned that there are processes needed to accomplish things. There was a bunch of planning we had to do before we could actually put the project in action!”

“The girls’ Bronze Award project process was so inspiring because they continually got validation from adults that their idea was powerful and worth it, and that there were so many people willing to help them and invest in their idea,” shared Troop 11378 co-leader, Erin, who has been with her daughter’s troop for seven years. Erin was a Girl Scout

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- Girl Scout Lydia



herself and wanted her own daughter to experience that same magic. Together with her co-leader Raquel, the troop enjoys attending Camp Silver Brook—first as campers and now as Program Aides to support younger troops—and two overnight camping trips a year where they take on new challenges like archery, the low and high ropes courses, and learning proper knife skills.

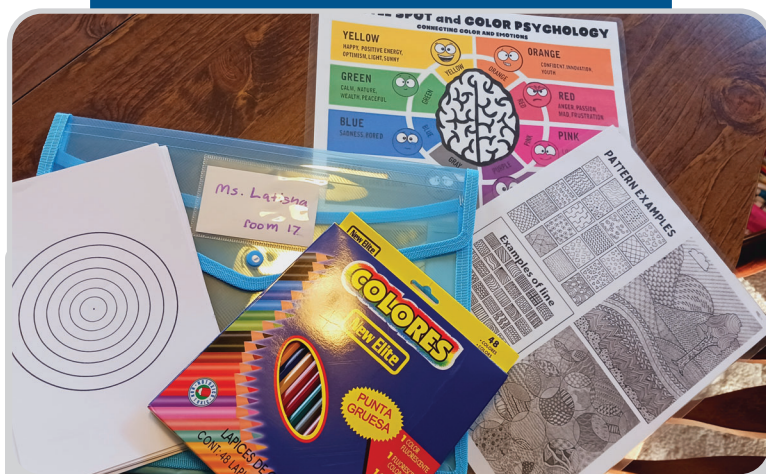
“The Bronze Award brings so many positive things to girls’ lives and takes leadership to a new level; the girls gained life skills in confidence, responsibility, and independence that they can use for the rest of their lives. It was an invaluable experience because they led the process from start to finish, overcame challenges, got out of their comfort zones, and saw that they can make a difference in their communities. Additionally, this project helped reinforce to the girls—and to their classmates—how to be introspective about their needs and emotions. It taught kids how to take care of themselves and better talk about their mental health,” added Erin.



Their sage advice to other Girl Scouts who are gearing up to earn the Girl Scout Bronze Award? Girl Scout Chloe shared, “Never give up, try as hard as you can, and do it with people you feel comfortable with!” Girl Scout Winnie added, “It takes a lot of time and dedication, but it’s worth it!” Girl Scout Quataleya shared, “Be patient and don’t rush through it.” And Girl Scout Lydia said, “Do something you are passionate about, start small, and remember that there are people to support you along the way!”

Girl Scouts Chloe, Lydia, Quataleya, and Winnie weren’t alone in their Bronze Award achievement. All the Girl Scouts in Troop 11378 committed to earning the Bronze Award. Congratulations to the entire troop for accomplishing this honor!

Your support encourages Girl Scouts to build confidence, lead with creativity, and embark on rewarding and challenging experiences that benefit their communities.



While working on their Bronze Award, Girl Scouts explore their community, discover an issue or need they care about, and work together to address it. Troop 11378 worked together to create a supportive resource for their school.

“The girls’ Bronze Award project process was so inspiring because they continually got validation from adults that their idea was powerful and worth it, and that there were so many people willing to help them and invest in their idea.”

- Troop 11378 co-leader Erin Wood

Sparkling Passions for Social Change

“Throughout the entire conference, a recurring theme was that it’s okay to take up space; that our voices and our experiences matter and we can and should use them to speak up and make real change in the world—how powerful is that!” - Girl Scout Audrianna

Girl Scout Ambassador Audrianna is no stranger to putting herself out there and taking on leadership roles. She is a current GSWISE girl board member, national council delegate, and counselor-in-training at Camp Silver Brook. Always striving to gain new leadership experiences, Audrianna attended the 38th annual Girl Scout Global Leadership Conference in Boston, Massachusetts and Newport, Rhode Island this spring.

“This trip brought many new and exciting moments to explore different career paths and cultures, develop an idea of the future I want to create for myself and others, and most of all, meet so many new people,” shared Audrianna. “A few years ago, the idea of throwing myself into a situation where I didn’t know a single person would have scared me. But I found so many genuine and strong connections with girls from all over the country, and even more than that, a better ability to try new things and challenge my comfort zone. Throughout this once-in-a-lifetime conference, I got to share ideas, gain confidence, and practice the Girl Scout values with other passionate people.”

At the Girl Scout Global Leadership Conference, select Girl Scouts in high school from across the country and abroad networked, attended leadership workshops led by women consultants, and learned how to make a difference on social issues they are passionate about. Girl Scouts listened to keynote speakers, engaged with others at a cultural expo, and participated in workshops on topics like STEM, global issues, social justice, personal growth/health and fitness, stress management, human trafficking, college prep,

financial literacy, mental health, gender, and LGBTQI issues. The Girl Scouts started the trip by exploring Boston—where they voted on touring the Freedom Trail—and commemorated the end of the conference on the coastline of the Atlantic Ocean. The girls left the Girl Scout Global Leadership Conference with new friends and a renewed eagerness to make the world a better place.

One of many pivotal moments during the conference that made an impression on Audrianna was during a breakout session on environmental policy. Audrianna connected with an environmental science specialist from Rice University, who explained specifics of climate change analysis, current and potential impacts on climate change from human activity, and how government policies and incentives impact climate change. The guest speaker’s willingness to answer questions and her passion for the field inspired Audrianna to dive deeper into the topic. Audrianna is now excited to pursue the prestigious Girl Scout Gold Award by taking action and making a lasting impact on an issue related to environmental engineering or environmental policy.

“Throughout the entire conference, a recurring theme was that it’s okay to take up space; that our voices and our experiences matter and we can and should use them to speak up and make real change in the world—how powerful is that!” commented Audrianna. “This conference was exhilarating; it served as another opportunity to push the limits of what I’m capable of while building self-confidence. I gained networking skills, became a better, empathetic listener, and grew as an advocate while exploring social issues that resonate with me. I would encourage every Girl Scout to put in the effort of exploring every opportunity available to you and using those experiences to shape the future you want for yourself.”

Your contributions create more positive opportunities for girls to create lasting bonds, explore new future pathways, and expand cultural horizons.



Girl Scout Ambassador Audrianna met Girl Scouts from the nation and globe during her Destinations adventure.



While learning about leadership and advocacy, Girl Scouts had opportunities for cultural exploration.

Chasing Career Goals at High-Speed

“Sounds fun, so why not? Let’s go to the races!”

Girl Scout Senior Breanna loves trying new things and taking advantage of the vast variety of Girl Scout programming. Breanna has attended Girl Scout summer camp, first as a camper and now as a counselor-in-training; volunteered at Girl Scout events; earned the Girl Scout Bronze and Silver Awards; and collected her favorite Girl Scout first aid, pottery painting, and STEM detective badges. Her most recent adventure? Two exclusive racing events at Road America and the Milwaukee Mile that explored careers in engineering and motor sports.

“I wanted to attend these events because some of my friends and troopmates love cars. This would be a different experience for me because I’ve never been around racetracks, but I thought it would be interesting to learn more about something that my friends are so passionate about,” remarked Breanna. “Turns out, these experiences were even more fun than I thought they’d be, and it helped confirm my interest in engineering as a future career.”

At the Road America event, Breanna and other Girl Scouts from across Wisconsin learned from members of America’s Winningest Porsche Race Team. The day included a warm welcome by Victoria Thomas, co-owner of Kellymoss; behind-the-scenes access to the Kellymoss paddock; trackside access to see racing action; a VIP lunch in the Porsche hospitality suite with Porsche drivers Ashley Freiberg and Loni Unser; and hands-on experience learning how to change lug nuts on a tire with the drivers themselves.

At the Milwaukee Mile event, Breanna enjoyed watching the cars from pit row as they completed test trials, drove laps, and went through inspections; touring the garages and talking with driver Scott Dixon; and chatting with a top female mechanic and engineer. While speaking with the

team’s head mechanic and engineer, Girl Scouts saw firsthand how these women were living out their dreams. The female professionals offered insight into how they got into the field and what inspired them, while also giving advice to the girls on how they could apply future college or higher education degrees to the racing profession.

“We got exposure to high-profile leaders, a lot of them female in a largely male-dominated field,” reflected Breanna. “I learned that creating connections through networking and internships is important in getting a step-up in careers. I learned that being able to sell yourself and your skills to other people is vital when pursuing your passions. These experiences validated my dream of becoming an engineer.”

Breanna’s mom, Andrea, is also no stranger to all the unique experiences that Girl Scouting has to offer. Andrea has been Breanna’s troop co-leader since the beginning and volunteers at Girl Scout summer camp and during the Fall Product and Girl Scout Cookie Programs.

“They ask—I come,” joked proud Girl Scout mom Andrea. “I love volunteering because it’s quality time I spend with my daughter. I help girls gain exposure to leadership opportunities, and it’s important to me to show that girls can do literally anything. I believe it’s crucial to give back, inspire more female leaders, and give girls more opportunities.”

“After hearing about all the fun that Breanna had at the Road America event, I wanted to go myself. So, I jumped at the chance to experience the Milwaukee Mile event with her,” stated Andrea. “It was special to see Breanna engage with the female role models and professionals. The takeaway messages instilled to the Girl Scouts were that the sky is the limit to what they can do, they can do anything they put their minds to, and to always follow your passions.”

“As a Girl Scout, I never thought I’d go to the races. These two racing events were loud...incredible...awesome...and totally worth experiencing,” beamed Breanna.

Donors like you empower Girl Scouts to participate in new experiences, receive mentorship from high-profile female leaders, and explore future careers.



Girl Scouts participated in hands-on activities that introduced them to engineering, mechanics, and more.

“These experiences validated my dream of becoming an engineer.”

- Girl Scout Breanna

Why I Give: Supporting a Community of Female Leaders

“I believe in giving back to an organization that instilled confidence in me and the courage to try new things.”

- Trisha Smith

Ms. Trisha Smith has a long history with Girl Scouts. As a Girl Scout herself from 2nd through 12th grades, Trisha has fond memories of attending community-led day camp with her troop. As a third-generation Girl Scout troop leader, Trisha guided her daughter's troop for 11 years—supporting them in earning the Bronze and Silver Awards, travelling to Savannah, Georgia to experience Juliette Gordon Low's birthplace, and guiding the girls as they took leadership roles at their beloved Girl Scout summer camp. Along the way, Trisha also held roles as school coordinator at three local schools, fall product and cookie program helper, service area council delegate, national council delegate, day camp older girl coordinator, and business manager and unit leader. Now, Trisha is a proud lifetime member and current chair of the GSWISE Board Development Committee. Trisha has supported Girl Scouting consistently with financial gifts for many years, amounting to a total of over \$13,500 to support the leadership development of girls. Trisha also took advantage of her employer's matching gift program, which doubled her impact.



Girl Scout alum Trisha Smith enjoys a day at Camp Silver Brook with her daughter.

“I support Girl Scouting because it is important for the development of well-rounded, accomplished women,” shared Trisha. “Built into Girl Scouting is a community of friends and adults who support each other, including during experiences outside their normal comfort zones. Girls get a unique opportunity to have fun while being supported in countless leadership development activities—from selling cookies to leading a camp opening flag ceremony.”

“I believe in giving back to an organization that instilled confidence in me and the courage to try new things,” commented Trisha. “I want girls to feel a community of support while building skills in adaptation, creativity, and leadership. Together, Girl Scouts can do amazing things.”

Whether in the office or out in the community, Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast is committed to meeting Girl Scouts where they are and championing their bold ambitions.

That same spirit is guiding our work in philanthropy. As we look ahead, GSWISE is preparing for transformative changes to ensure we can continue supporting every girl's journey — without interruption.

By 2027, GSWISE will no longer receive funding from the United Way of Greater Milwaukee. We are deeply grateful for the 20-year partnership and the impact it provided. While this marks a significant shift, it also opens the door to new opportunities. To meet — and exceed — the million-dollar gap in grant funding, we're investing in our future, including expanding our philanthropy team and re-engaging our incredible alumni network in fresh, meaningful ways.

As a valued community stakeholder, you'll begin to see exciting changes take shape in the coming months. We're bringing back beloved traditions, launching new signature events, and creating unforgettable experiences that connect our mission with the community in powerful ways.

We invite you to be part of this next chapter. Whether you give your time, talent, or treasure — or all three — your support will help us continue to build girls of courage, confidence, and character.

Mark your calendars and join us for these inspiring events:

- Donor Dinner Series – January 21 & April 22, 2026
- Breaking the Grass Ceiling Golf Outing – June 26, 2026
- She Will: A Legacy of Leadership Celebration – September 24, 2026
- Camp Rewind – October 16–18, 2026

Together, we can ensure that every Girl Scout has the opportunity to lead, thrive, and shine — now and into the future.

Here's a Peek at What GSWISE Has Been Up To



More than 3,400 Girl Scouts spent their summer learning outdoor skills, independence, and resilience while at Girl Scout Summer Camp.



Local leaders spent a weekend mentoring high school Girl Scouts at GSWISE's inaugural Camp CEO.



Dedicated volunteers from Rockwell Automation provided key assistance cleaning up and maintaining GSWISE camp properties.



Girl Scouts celebrated the new school year with hands-on activities and animal fun at GSWISE's annual Girl Scout Day at the Zoo.



Calendar of Events



January 27: Girl Scout Cookie Season Starts



March 8-14: Girl Scout Week



March 12: Girl Scouts Birthday

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Dear Girl Scout Friends,

We're a month into our new Girl Scout year, and Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast is embracing this fresh start with energy and intention as we continue to serve the young changemakers our community needs.

This membership year, we're excited about new changes that will help transform our Movement and meet Girl Scouts where they are. As Girl Scouts, like Troop 11378 (pages 2-3), work toward earning their Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards, they now have expanded prerequisite options that make these impactful, prestigious awards more accessible. Our new and refreshed suite of Leadership Awards pave the path to personal and community leadership as Girl Scouts in 4th-12th grades work to create sustainable community change.

We are also offering additional programs and leadership opportunities for Girl Scouts of all ages, with a keen focus on older Girl Scouts. Girl Scouts like Audrianna (page 4) have access to Destinations travel experiences that broaden their perspectives and build friendships across the globe. This year, high school Girl Scouts will also be able to travel to Washington, D.C. with GSWISE in summer 2026 for an exciting learning journey.

Local programs, like our career readiness and exploration initiatives (page 5), continue to grow—opening doors to transformative experiences. Through Girl Scouting, girls cultivate confidence, civic responsibility, and cultural awareness. They develop life skills, STEM fluency, and a deep appreciation for the outdoors, while also gaining entrepreneurial mindset, collaborative leadership, and the courage to advocate for themselves and others. These outcomes reflect not just what they learn, but who they become.

These new experiences are only possible through the generous support of community partners, including individuals, like Trisha Smith (page 6), who invest in the future of Girl Scouts and our up-and-coming leaders.

Now, let's go explore and see the impact Girl Scouts make in southeastern Wisconsin this year! Thank you for joining us on this journey.

Yours in Girl Scouting,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ana Simpson".

Ana Simpson
GSWISE Chief Executive Officer



Ana Simpson, CEO