

Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council 2023 Annual Report



Dear Friends,

As we reflect on the incredible journey of the Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council, we are thrilled to share the exciting developments and inspiring moments that have defined the past year. The following pages will provide an overview of the state of our council and a few stories that represent the transformative impact of Girl Scouting in shaping resilient, confident, and compassionate leaders. We are grateful to point out that our membership grew to 55,238 members in 2023, a 9.2% increase over the previous year. While growth is important, the story of each girl is the true testament to the enduring spirit of Girl Scouts. Within our council, there are thousands of Girl Scouts with inspiring stories that embody the essence of their journeys – tales of growth, resilience, and boundless potential. Whether scaling new heights at the Adventure Park at Camp Agnes Arnold, participating in one of our equestrian teams, or sharing stories around a campfire, the possibilities are as limitless as the aspirations of our Girl Scouts. We hope you enjoy reading the stories of Aditi, Sabrina, Audrey and Amanda.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the dedicated volunteers and generous donors who are the backbone of the Girl Scout movement. Your unwavering commitment and generosity sustain the momentum of this great movement, enabling us to grow and equip girls with the skills and values they need to thrive in an ever-changing world. Your philanthropic investment in our girls, our future leaders, is a testament to your belief in the power of Girl Scouting to make a lasting impact. Thank you for believing in the work of the Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council and for entrusting us with the responsibility of nurturing the next generation of women leaders. Together, we are shaping a future where these young leaders will contribute to making the world a better place for us all.

Yours in Girl Scouting,



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Marguerite Woung-Chapman".

Marguerite
Woung-Chapman
President and Board Chair
2020 -2023
2



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Betsy Kamin".

Elizabeth "Betsy" Kamin
President and Board Chair
2023 - 2026



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mary Vitek".

Mary Vitek
Chief Executive Officer



Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council at a Glance



Membership by Girl Level

Daisy
8,017

Brownie
8,310

Junior
7,486

Cadette
10,382

Senior
2,636

Ambassador
1,675

Total Membership for 2023 was
55,238, including 38,506 girls and
16,732 adults.

Number of girls who earned highest awards in FY 2023 in our council

Gold Award: 116

Silver Award: 273

Bronze Award: 744

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the mark of the truly remarkable. Through pursuing the Gold Award, Girl Scouts change the world by tackling issues they are passionate about to drive lasting change in their communities and beyond while they learn essential skills that will prepare them for all aspects of life. As a bonus, the Gold Award opens doors to a variety of scholarships, preferred admission tracks for college, strong networking and amazing career opportunities, and much more.



Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council at a Glance

Badges Earned in 2023

Entrepreneurship:
24,605

Life Skills:
30,038

Outdoor:
20,437

STEM:
20,139



41,509

girl experiences at
all camps in 2023

918

girls participated in summer
overnight camp

872

girls participated in
summer day camp



203

girls were
awarded camperships

**15,113 girls participated in
the 2023 Cookie Program.**



**5,846 girls participated in
the Fall Product Program.**

At Girl Scouts, girls learn and grow in a safe, all-girl environment, discovering who they are, connecting with others, and taking action to make the world a better place.



Counties We Serve



Gold Award Project for the Birds

By Gold Award Girl Scout Aditi Chaubal

Every year, one billion birds die in the U.S. due to window collisions and bright lights. Large picture windows are very dangerous for birds. The reflection of the sky and foliage during the daytime and lighted windows during the nighttime have resulted in many collisions with windows. In many cases, these collisions are fatal. Even if the birds do not die upon contact with the window, they may suffer internal injuries that result in their death later. In addition, bright lights disorient birds, making it difficult for them to find a safe place to land. These birds may die of exhaustion because they are unable to find resources or a safe place to land.



The Central Flyway is a major migratory bird pathway through Houston for about 15 million birds. Sadly, Houston is the second most dangerous city in the U.S. for birds. This is due, in large part, to the large number of city lights, especially in downtown Houston. For my Gold Award project, I decided to raise awareness about this relatively unknown issue. My goal was to target business owners and homeowners. I reached out to businesses in downtown Houston and the Homeowners Associations in my community. I met with representatives from the company's sustainability team and board members of the HOA. In my presentations, I encouraged downtown businesses and homeowners alike to keep their lights out during migration season. My efforts secured pledges from companies, such as Wells Fargo, Kinder Morgan, and Sysco to keep the lights out in their downtown Houston buildings during migration season.

In addition to campaigning at local organizations, I partnered with Houston Humane Society to create and disperse educational flyers and videos to businesses and homeowners to bring visibility to this issue. I also designed and built birdhouses to donate to the HHS for them to sell at their center, created a video for their social media, and developed a pamphlet to keep at their center. Through my project, I was able to reach out to businesses and homeowners to educate them about the dangers of light pollution to migratory birds.





Girl Scout Credits Camp for Helping Her Overcome Fears

By Sabrina Rendon

My favorite time of year is summer. That's when I pick out which Girl Scout camp and theme I will attend. Then I go to camp and have fun making friends and learning new things. I remember my first summer at camp and how I did not know how to swim. I had a fear of drowning and was not allowed in the deep end of the pool.

At camp, girls take a swim test and are limited to certain areas of the pool based on their swimming ability for safety reasons. When I left camp that summer, I was determined to learn how to swim. I did not want to be limited to where I could play in the pool, especially if it was up to me.

I dedicated many hours learning how to swim and, in the process, discovered a sport I now love – water polo. In 2018, I returned to camp as an experienced swimmer. In the summer of 2023, I took part in the Junior Olympics in California, competing in water polo. I would have never imagined I would become an Olympic athlete.

In 2022, I won a silver medal in the 12 under co-ed division. My all-girl water polo team competed against teams with mostly boy team members, and at times, my team was not seen as a threat. We surprised the crowds and earned the boys' respect. Being in Girls Scouts has allowed me to work well with others, and it helps girls see the positive strengths within themselves. Camp gave me the confidence and courage to test my abilities.

The counselors are an important part of the camp experience. They are so kind and willing to push you to the best of your abilities. One of my biggest fears is heights, especially very high things that are wobbly. Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council has an obstacle course called Adventure Park at its Camp Agnes Arnold campsite. At one summer camp, everyone was excited about Adventure Park except for me. I wasn't even planning to go up one of the tall elements, but a counselor named Firefly supported and encouraged me as I went through the course. I ended up going through the first level. All the counselors were willing to help any child in need who had trouble going to bed or if they felt ill. They were so chill and sweet.

At camp, you can keep in touch with your parents. You can send them letters by mail and tell them about the long days of summer fun you had. Good vibes linger all around the camp. It brings me such pleasure to know that I can come to camp with no friends and come back with new friends and be filled with excitement.

Sabrina is a Cadette Girl Scout. She takes part in the Olympic Development program with the USA Water Polo Association. She will compete in the Super Regional Tournament in Dallas this month. She hopes to be selected to play at the National Tournament in California in March.



Camp Helps Girl Scout Break Out of Her Comfort Zones

By Audrey Rendon

People say camp is an essential part of the Girl Scouting experience. But, when I became a Girl Scout, I didn't want to go to camp. I feared bugs and being away from home for a week or two. As time passed, I gradually gained confidence and courage and decided to attend camp. Now I love going to camp! Words cannot describe the experiences and friendships I have made along the way, but I will try.



Camp is a chance for kids like me to try new things that we might never have if we didn't go to camp. My first camp experience was at Misty Meadows Ranch, where we did many activities. For example, I learned how to make friendship bracelets, tie-dye, ride a horse, and many other things.

At first, I was a little shy when I got to camp. What really helped me come out of my shell were the amazing counselors who welcomed me and showed me where to go. The counselors had an endless amount of energy. They performed many skits and sang songs that were easy for all the campers to sing along. That made me feel welcome. It also made me, and the other campers, forget about home.

Next door to Misty Meadows Ranch is Camp Agnes Arnold, which has a lake where campers can canoe and kayak. The counselors taught us how to be safe at camp, including water safety. I used to be so scared, thinking about how I might tip over the canoe or kayak and fall into the water and not be able to get back into the boat. The whole time I was in the water, I kept my balance while reminding myself to just have fun.

Another camp I attend is Casa Mare near Galveston Bay. The camp is where Girl Scouts learn how to sail. Although I was afraid of sailing, my friends, who were also scared and nervous, told me everything would be fine. We spent two weeks at camp. During the first week, we learned how to rig the Sunfish, which means how to assemble it and make knots, plus all the parts of the boat.

What I gained from these experiences is how to take charge, incorporate what I've learned into my daily activities, speak out, and be more extroverted. Another thing about camp is once you are there, you are sad to think of the last day. Camp felt like my second home, a home away from home. Every time I go, I make friends, and on the last day of camp, we all cry because we have to say goodbye after spending a week or two with each other. When you get to camp, it's like a black hole. It sucks you in (in a good way), and it's hard to leave. I'll never forget camp, and I thank Girl Scouts for that.

Audrey Rendon is an Ambassador Girl Scout and a member of the council's Girl Scout Media Team. She took part in the Mariners special interest group at Casa Mare, completed CIT training to become a camp counselor, and looks forward to summer camp.



Nature Sparks Gold Award Project Idea



By Gold Award Girl Scout Amanda Morse

In an ever-digitalizing world, the idea of humans and wildlife coexisting in recreational areas is often deemed unfeasible. I wanted to challenge that. I came to this realization after innocently signing up to volunteer for one day of tree planting at Exploration Green, a defunct golf course that had recently been converted into a wildlife preserve. Growing up in a neighborhood near Exploration Green, I was able to witness the transformation of the land. I was inspired to help turn the development into not only a beautiful and environmentally friendly space, but also an opportunity for education of the public.

An idea that addressed the root of this inspiration sprouted in me: a seamless blend between nature and innovation that would not only enhance visitors' experiences, but also educate them about Exploration Green and its surroundings. This idea became the seed of my Girl Scout Gold Award project. I began by developing my interactive species guide—a webpage that hosts descriptions of the animals and vegetation inhabiting Exploration Green. These species were broken down into six categories: wetlands and plants, animals, insects, birds, grasses and forbs, and trees and shrubs. Countless pages of my notes transformed into concise, educational, and entertaining content.



The second stem of my project, the scavenger hunt, was born. Within the activity, visitors are provided five clues that introduce them to manmade features along the 1.5-mile trail. Though I anticipated this aspect would add a fun dimension to learning, I realized that the value of digital resources depended on the ease of accessibility. To change this, I proposed plans to build small signs on the park grounds that permanently house a QR code that patrons can scan to launch the species guide and scavenger hunt.

When I installed the signs on the preserve grounds, I hosted a community event where visitors gathered at Exploration Green to complete the Scavenger Hunt and learn about 81 species using my Interactive Species Guide. Whether visitors access my materials at home by visiting the Exploration Green website, or by scanning the QR code on my signs in person, they can learn about the ecosystems present around them while being immersed in nature.

Thank You, 2022-2023 GSSJC Donors!

Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council (GSSJC) expresses its deepest appreciation to the donors listed on the following pages for their generous contributions in support of Girl Scout programs between September 1, 2022 and August 31, 2023. More information on opportunities to support GSSJC is available by contacting Diane Likeness at dlikeness@sjgs.org or 713-292-0346

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Great care has been taken to ensure the proper recognition of our donors. If an error or omission does occur, we sincerely apologize and hope you will bring it to our attention. Please address all corrections to Suzanne Carmona as the contact 713-292-0334. Thank you for your continued support.



Thank You, 2022-2023 GSSJC Donors!

Juliette Gordon Low Society

For more than a century, Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council has inspired and enriched the lives of girls in our community. Preserving and building upon positive outcomes for future generations of girls is the mission of the Juliette Gordon Low Society, whose members have included GSSJC in their estate plans, no matter the amount. We are proud to recognize those who have already made commitments to our legacy society and invite others to join them as we build a sound future for GSSJC. For information on creating a legacy for the benefit of GSSJC, contact Susan Thraen at sthraen@sjgs.org or 713-292-0331

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The Emerald Circle

The Emerald Circle awards scholarships to graduating seniors who have earned the highest award in Girl Scouting, the Gold Award. Funds are derived from membership dues and donors as well as The Emerald Circle Gold Award Scholarship Endowment Fund. Since 1996, The Emerald Circle has granted 535 scholarships totaling \$720,000. To join or to give to the scholarship fund, contact Katie Gordon at 713-292-0358 or kgordon@sjgs.org.

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Thank you for your generous gift to the Emerald Circle.

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Women's Leadership Network

The Women's Leadership Network is designed to bring together strong, connected women and men, who are passionate about supporting the next generation of female leaders through the best leadership development program for girls—today's Girl Scouts.



Become a member of Women's Leadership Network by making a leadership gift of at least \$1,000 and join a group of individuals who share the same vision and values as you - empowering girls and young women with the tools they need to succeed. For more information contact Diane Likeness at 713-292-0346 or dlikeness@sjgs.org.

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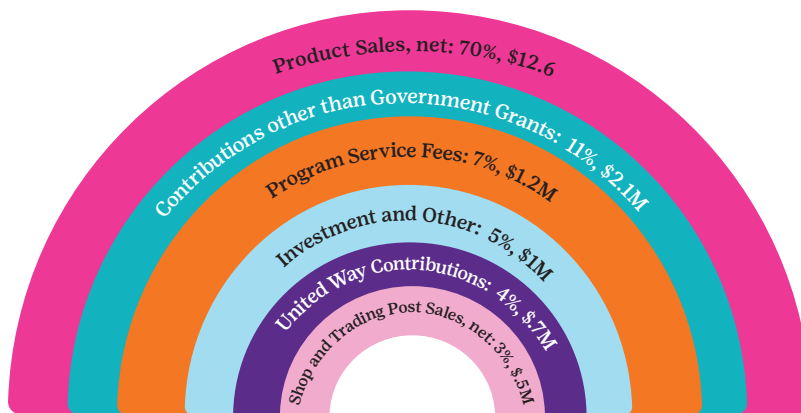




Financials

Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Revenues

Product Sales is the largest source of revenue for GSSJC, totaling \$12,635,000 in net revenue. Product Sales includes the Girl Scout Cookie and the Fall Product programs. In addition to being the premier financial literacy program for girls, the Cookie Program generated gross revenue of \$20,318,000. Costs included cost of cookies sold of \$5,323,000 and bonuses for troops of \$3,073,000. The Fall Product Program is a friends and family sale that provides funding for troops around the beginning of the school year. This sale generated gross revenues of \$1,739,000, cost of sales of \$610,000, and troop bonuses of \$417,000.



Endowment Funds Composition

Monies contributed to the Endowment funds are intended to ensure the future of Girl Scouting for girls over the next century. By making gifts to the endowment fund with direct cash gifts or through various charitable vehicles, including wills and charitable trust, you are ensuring the legacy of Girl Scouts in San Jacinto Council.

2023	\$8.8 M
2022	\$8.7 M
2021	\$9.7 M
2020	\$8.3 M
2019	\$7.3 M

Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Expenses

Eighty-six percent of total expenses are used for programs directly benefiting members of GSSJC. Management & General costs as a percentage of total expenses are 9% and Fundraising expenses are at 5% of total expenses. In 2023, approximately \$979,000 was spent on capital improvements to our camps and resource centers.



Operating Expenses

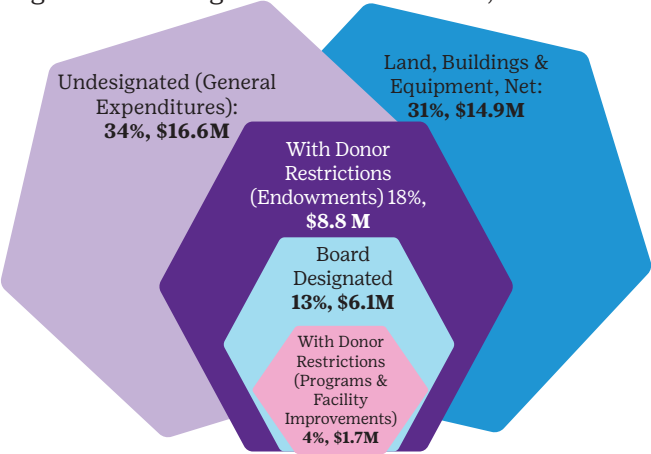
It costs \$503 per girl to make Girl Scouting a reality locally

- \$264** Provides Council-wide programs and activities at all levels that enhance troop participation and allow girls the opportunity to build new skills. It also provides the opportunity for girls to participate in activities beyond the traditional troop setting.
- \$111** Develops and imparts the very best training, materials and curriculum for adult volunteers, ensuring the needs of each Girl Scout are met.
- \$82** Supports membership development, including recruitment and registration of girls and volunteers, staff support to volunteers and financial assistance available for all members.
- \$46** Maintains resource centers, GSSJC headquarters and the Program Place for Girls.



Net Assets as of August 31, 2023

GSSJC's goal is to maintain 6-12 months of assets available for general expenditures. Due to the timing of our operations, funds raised in one fiscal year are expended in the next. Our fiscal year begins on September 1 and ends on August 31. The Girl Scout Cookie Program is the largest source of revenue, and proceeds are generally received between February and May each year. Remaining proceeds at the time of GSSJC's fiscal year end earned during the Cookie Program are reflected as undesignated net assets without donor restriction. Also, net assets for GSSJC reflect a large investment in land, buildings, and equipment, which are not available for general expenditures.





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