

## Highest Awards and COVID-19

Girl Scouts of Central Maryland (GSCM), recognizes the impact that COVID-19 'stay at home orders' are having on Girl Scouts seeking to earn their highest awards. In this time of uncertainty, we are dedicated to supporting these girls, and their leaders, as they acclimate to the new normal.

To that end, GSCM is following the guidance of GSUSA and is offering a 3-month deadline extension from September 30 to December 31, 2020 for all Girl Scouts who are graduating from 5<sup>th</sup> grade (Juniors who seek to earn the Silver Award), 8<sup>th</sup> grade (Cadettes who seek to earn the Silver Award) and 12<sup>th</sup> grade (Ambassadors who seek to earn the Gold Award) this year. These girls will officially bridge to the next level on October 1, 2020 and without this extension would no longer be eligible to earn the Bronze, Silver or Gold Award, respectively.

In order to qualify for this extension, Junior Leaders (or equivalent), Cadettes and Ambassadors must follow the following procedures:

Leaders of 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Juniors (or the parent of a Juliette) should have a project plan in place prior to September 30, 2020 and must record the completion of the Bronze Award by December 31, 2020. Everything for the Bronze Award is handled at the Troop level and therefore, all Leaders (and, if applicable, parents) are reminded to be "honest and fair" in their use of this extension and their reporting.

Cadettes must have an approved Girl Scout Silver Award Pre-Approval Screening before September 30, 2020 and the Final Report must be filed no later than December 31, 2020. Both the pre-approval and final report forms may be found on the GSCM Silver Award webpage.

Ambassadors must have an **approved** Gold Award proposal on file with GSCM by September 30, 2020 and the Final Report must be submitted no later than December 31, 2020. Any proposal not yet filed must be submitted via GoGold. The final report **must** be submitted via GoGold, regardless of the manner in which the proposal was submitted and approved. Additional information regarding the Girl Scout Gold Award requirements and GoGold may be found on the GSCM Gold Award webpage.

GSCM will not require an extension request form. However, per GSUSA guidelines, all girls and adults who are working on a Girl Scout activity must be a registered member. Accordingly, Juniors bridging to Cadettes and Cadettes bridging to Seniors must be registered as Girl Scouts for Membership Year 2021 in order to qualify for the highest award deadline extension. Ambassadors bridging to adult must be registered as adult members or Lifetime Members in order to qualify for the deadline extension.

We urge girls, and leaders, to think outside the box and transform their hands-on, interactive resource-driven projects into a new structure that accommodates today's challenges. Be patient and continue to ask: "What?, So What? and Now What?" as you navigate ways to overcome the obstacles created by COVID-19. Think about the obstacle, WHAT is changing? SO WHAT does it matter? NOW WHAT do you need do differently?

If you have not yet begun working on your highest award, now is a wonderful time to start. You can find virtual journey offerings (Insert link for virtual programs page). You can find the guidelines and training materials, including written guidelines and "on-demand" workshops for each of the highest awards on their respective GSCM webpages. Don't delay, start today!

Please know that GSCM highest award staff and Gold Award Committee Members are here to support you. If you need help, please contact us at [membercare@gscm.org](mailto:membercare@gscm.org).