



Dear Graduating Ambassador Girl Scout Leaders,

Thank you so much for your dedication to your girls and the Girl Scout organization. We know that over the years, you have paved the path for our girls to have bright futures where anything is possible. Over that time, we are hoping you and your girls had opportunities to improve yourselves and the world.

Now as you may be embarking on another chapter in your lives, please know that your Girl Scout sisterhood will always be here for you. In fact, we hope that you and your girls continue as members and remain part of our 2.5 million strong network.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced the cancellation of many programs and activities that 12th grade Girl Scouts had planned for the spring and summer of 2020: extended travel, bridging-to-adult ceremonies, camping, Gold Award projects, and other Girl Scout activities. In response to this current situation, GSUSA has provided the following recommended guidelines. Please read through them carefully. In addition, council is requesting you take a moment to let us know what your plans are for next year by completing our brief survey found at the end of this page. If you are not planning on extending any activities into the next Girl Scout year, please complete the survey [here](#).

Graduating Seniors Funds Extension Guidelines

Financial Considerations

- To meet the needs of troops/groups or girls who had plans for spring/summer 2020 that were interrupted due to COVID-19, **the deadline to use the funds will be extended from 9/30/20 to 8/31/21**.
- Troop should follow all procedures for disbanding troops by 8/31/21, including financial reconciliation and closing bank accounts.
- After 9/30/20, these young alums **may not** participate in the Fall Product or the Cookie Program, and they may not do any additional money-earning to finance activities planned for the 2020-2021 membership year. The **single exception** to this guideline is money-earning for Gold Award projects: funds intended to be used toward Gold Award projects must be raised and used by December 31, 2020, following all standard council guidelines. See "Gold Award Guidance" below.

Membership

- **All participants must maintain a current membership.** Graduating girl members can take advantage of the "young alum" discount by purchasing a Lifetime Membership or purchase an adult annual membership for the 2020-2021 membership year. Adults working with the young alums must also have active memberships.

Use of Funds

- **All activities and use of funds must be directly tied to the mission of Girl Scouts** and be permitted Girl Scout activities by council.
- **Continue your usual diligence to avoid individual accounting.** Mixed-grade and multi-level troops/groups who have money-earned together should continue to make group decisions on use of funds.

- **All standard safety and risk management procedures should be followed** for group activities including Volunteer Essentials and Safety Activity Checkpoints for girl activities. Special guidelines include:
 - The young alums participating in activities during the 2020-2021 membership year should be treated as **Ambassadors**. Use the same guidelines and ratios for the supervision of young alum members as for supervision of Ambassador Girl Scouts. One exception: for group overnight travel that includes both girl members and young alums, steps should be taken to provide separate sleeping arrangements for the girl members; the young alum members; and the adult members.
 - If the group plans to take an extended trip, the standard recommendation to purchase the additional Mutual of Omaha insurance stands.

Gold Award Guidance

- Girl Scouts is offering a **3-month deadline extension from September 30 to December 31, 2020** for Girl Scouts who are graduating from 12th grade and who seek to earn the Gold Award this year. These Girl Scouts will bridge to adults officially on October 1, 2020 and, without this extension, would be no longer eligible to earn the Gold Award.
- **Funds intended to be used toward Gold Award projects must be raised and used by December 31, 2020.** Given that each council handles highest award project tracking, approvals and recognitions differently, Girl Scouts should follow local council guidelines and procedures.
 - If a girl's troop has disbanded, but she wishes to raise additional funds for her Gold Award project, funds must be deposited to the council, to be held in an approved bank account that is registered to the council's EIN.

We recognize that rescheduling activities for next year may not be practical in many cases; troops may have girls dispersing to different states, with uncertainty about their plans for summer 2021. For some troops, disbanding, and finding a rewarding way to deploy the funds they earned on behalf of Girl Scouts, may be their best path. Troops should have a frank discussion now about the possibility of using their funds next year, and possibly revisit the conversation in December to make their final decisions.

In the event that your girls decide to deploy their funds elsewhere, we offer the following suggestions:

- Design and execute a Take Action project – perhaps one that addresses the current pandemic
- Purchase “young alum” Lifetime Memberships at the special discount price of \$200
- Donate to an existing Service Unit scholarship fund
- Donate to your council's financial aid fund that supports Girl Scouts membership for families in need

Please be sure to complete this brief [Survey](#) to let us know what your plans are for next year.

You may reach us with any questions or concerns by emailing info@gshnj.org or by calling 908-518-4400 option 2.

Thank you again for your leadership over the years and we wish your girls the absolute very best in all of their future endeavors!

GSHNJ Membership Team