



## Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois

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## Madeline Schmitz receives the Girl Scout Gold Award... the highest individual achievement in Girl Scouting

**Glen Carbon, Illinois** -- The Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois (GSSI) is pleased to announce that Madeline Schmitz of Belleville has received the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award a Girl Scout can receive.

For her Girl Scout Gold Award project, Madeline developed an anti-bullying education and prevention outreach program using a live role-playing format. In partnership with the Belleville West STOP (Students and Teachers Offering Protection) committee, she led a student team who visited elementary and junior high schools to deliver a 30-minute anti-bullying program. During the anti-bullying program, students were presented with various scenarios on bullying and then challenged to find appropriate ways to respond to or prevent future bullying. At the end of the program, students were asked to sign a pledge banner where they promised to be bully free.

“Achieving my Girl Scout Gold Award seemed like a daunting task initially,” said Madeline, “But once I got started on this year-long journey, I realized the importance of taking a stand on something that you feel strongly about and that every person has the potential to make a difference for the better.”

Madeline is the daughter of Mark and Katherine Schmitz and currently attends Belleville West High School. After graduation, she would like to attend college and earn a degree in Pharmacy or Civil Engineering. Madeline was also a finalist for the Greater Belleville Area 2011 Youth Salute Program.

The Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award a Girl Scout can earn, recognizes a Girl Scout's commitment to excellence as she develops skills and values to meet present and future challenges in her life. To earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, a Girl Scout Senior or Girl Scout Ambassador must design and carry out a project that fulfills a need within a girl's community, creates change, and is sustainable. The project must be completed with a suggested minimum of 80 hours of work. Only about 6 percent of eligible girls earn the prestigious Gold Award.

Today, Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. is the largest voluntary organization for girls in the world. Its sole focus is to meet the needs of all girls (ages 5-17) from diverse racial, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Today's Girl Scouts not only enjoy camping and crafts, but they also explore math and science and learn about diversity, good citizenship, leadership and teamwork. Girl Scouting is the place where girls experience the fun, friendship and power of girls together.

The Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois is a not-for-profit organization supported by various United Ways throughout the region. The Girl Scouts is a Proud Partner of United Way. For more information, please call Erin Johnson at 618.692.0692.

Also check us out at: [www.gsofsi.org](http://www.gsofsi.org)

