

Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital Silver Trefoil Award

History

The GSCNC Silver Trefoil Award originated as the Little Flower Award, which was presented in memory of Senior Girl Scout Linda Curtis and was given for commendable service to GSCNC. In 1977, the award was expanded to include a wider spectrum of service, including government, international and council service hours. The award did not change materially between 1977 and 2009. In 2009, when GSCNC merged with Shawnee Girl Scout Council, the Silver Trefoil Award was evaluated by the GSCNC Program Policies and Goals Committee to ensure it is relevant to and attainable by today's GSCNC Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors.

2010 Award Updates

The Silver Trefoil Award recognizes commendable service. Facing the realities of a larger council and changes to the Girl Scout program model, the Program Policies and Goals Committee studied the award and recommended revisions. These updates bring the award into line with the Discover, Connect and Take Action leadership outcomes, and provide opportunities for recognition for girls throughout the council. The changes also reflect the interests of today's girls and the reality of our globally-connected society. A new emphasis has been placed on girls' reflection on their service. Girls are challenged to focus on how their service fits into the Girl Scout mission statement, and the Girl Scout Promise and Law, even before they plan their path to completing the Silver Trefoil Award.

Eligibility

The Silver Trefoil Award is earned by completing 100 service hours in defined categories. A girl may begin to work on the hours toward the Silver Trefoil Award as a Girl Scout Cadette, Senior or Ambassador. A girl may complete no more than 50 hours as a Girl Scout Cadette. At least 50 hours must be earned as a Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador.

Process for Earning the Silver Trefoil Award

1. Define your personal goals and reasons for earning the award:

2. Working cooperatively with your troop and/or teen advisor, research opportunities to fulfill hours in each category. Plan your course to completion (but be aware that your plans may change along the way!).
3. Log each hour of service given in the appropriate category on the Silver Trefoil Log and Final Report Form. Please keep an accurate record of dates and hours.
4. As you bridge to another Girl Scout program level, re-evaluate your personal goals and reasons for earning the award.
5. All service hours must be complete prior to submission of final report
6. Send final report to GSCNC via email or postal mail. To be recognized at the In Your Honor ceremony in May, a completed form must be received by 5 pm on April 1. Don't forget to keep a copy for your records.
7. Final report must be submitted by September 30 following a girl's completion of high school.

General Guidelines

- Examples are given for each requirement. These are just examples, and you should explore many other opportunities.
- Some service hours may fit into more than one category. Any given hour can only apply to one category; however, the hours of a service opportunity may be split among multiple categories.
- Girls may work together on service, but each individual girl must complete the required hours
- Service must be non-paid work
- The same service hours cannot be applied to more than one award, but may be divided between awards. For example, 40 hours of service as a Congressional Aide may be divided between the Silver Trefoil and another award.
- You will notice that the subcategory minimums do not add up to 25 – this allows you the freedom to focus more on an area you find intriguing.
- Quality of the service experience and development of skills should be emphasized rather than the number of hours. It is better to give multiple hours of service to one organization than limited hours with several organizations.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. I'm excited to start work on my Silver Trefoil hours. How can I find volunteer opportunities?

A. There are many volunteer opportunities available all around our council. To begin finding chances to help out, sign up for GSCNC's weekly e-newsletter for teens--teen-Edition--where we occasionally list options for volunteering. You may also want to ask your troop leader or Service Unit Manager for ideas. Other good places to inquire are your local parks, rec center, library, or your school or place of worship. Your friends may also have suggestions from their own volunteer experiences. You can also find good opportunities online through volunteer organizations and sites such as Greater DC Cares and Idealist.com

Q. I'd like to come in to a council office to volunteer in order to complete my Council Service Hours. Who should I contact?

A. You can contact the Program AA at rarellano@gscnc.org.

Q. Do I need to have a supervising adult sign off on each of my volunteer experiences?

A. No. GSCNC will need your signature and the signature of your Troop Advisor on the last page of your report form, but does not require a signature for each individual experience or hours category. If you are a Juliette, have a parent or mentor sign on the line designated for the Troop Advisor.

Q. Once I submit my completed form, how long will it take before I hear back?

A. Turnaround time for completed forms is typically two-three weeks. If GSCNC has any questions about your service hours, we will contact you via email to receive clarification. If you have not heard from GSCNC within three weeks, you may contact the Program Department at 202 237 1670 to inquire about the status of your award.

Silver Trefoil Requirements

Girl Scout Community Hours – minimum of 50 hours

The Girl Scout Law asks us to be a sister to every Girl Scout. To earn the Silver Trefoil Award, embody the Girl Scout law.

1. Council Service Hours – minimum of 15 hours

Volunteer at the council level, in order to provide service that has an impact on the whole council. *Below are examples of **Council** service hours. Remember, you are not limited to these examples.*

- Serve on the GSCNC Board or other council committees
- Serve as a Delegate to the GSCNC Annual Meeting
- Assist at Council events such as the Cookie College
- Help in an out-based office
- Volunteer for a day camp or a core camp
- Participate in a clean-up event for a GSCNC Camp property

2. Service Unit/Association/Troop hours – minimum of 25

Volunteer at the service unit/association level, in order to provide service that has an impact on your local Girl Scout community. *Below are examples of **Service Unit/Association/Troop** service hours. Remember, you are not limited to these examples.*

- Assist with a Daisy, Brownie or Junior troop
- Provide volunteer support to a service unit
- Plan a service unit encampment, Thinking Day or similar event.

National Service Hours – Minimum of 25 hours

This category has been redefined as national service hours, with the understanding that government remains a partial requirement. Service to country and community is part of the Girl Scout tradition.

1. Government Hours – Minimum of 10 hours

Provide non-partisan service to federal, state or local government entities. This may include non-government entities that fulfill a governmental role such as the Kennedy Center, Smithsonian or Post Office) *Below are examples of **government** service hours. Remember, you are not limited to these examples.*

- Help in a national park (federal)
- Intern at a federal agency office (federal)
- Volunteer at Girl Scout Day at the National Air and Space Museum (federal)
- Clean up a state park (state)
- Work in a local library (local)
- Clean up a county park (local)

2. Local Hours – Minimum of 5 hours

Service that fulfills a need in close proximity to your home, your school or your troop; either in your town or your county. *Below are examples of **local** service hours. Remember, you are not limited to these examples.*

- Provide service to a local soup kitchen
- Staff a first aid station at an event in your town
- Tutor another student in a subject you are knowledgeable about
- Volunteer at a nearby homeless shelter

3. **Green Hours – Minimum of 5 hours**

Service that helps protect the environment. *Below are examples of **green** service hours. Remember, you are not limited to these examples.*

- Volunteer at a park/recreation area
- Share Leave No Trace guidelines with others
- Volunteer in a recycling effort
- Join a Linking Girls to the Land project

Global Service Hours – Minimum of 25 Hours

In light of our council's expansion and to reflect the guiding principle of the Girl Scout Mission Statement: "Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place," the Silver Trefoil Award requires Global Service hours. Global Service hours encompass service to international communities and multicultural service.

1. **International Hours – Minimum of 10 Hours**

Service that has a direct impact on the global community, whether local or in another country. *Below are examples of **international** service hours. Remember, you are not limited to these examples.*

- Collect materials for those in need in other countries
- Volunteer with international festivals, museums or exhibits
- Host a foreign exchange student
- Provide relief work in another country
- Volunteer at an event at a WAGGGS World Centre

2. **Multicultural Hours – Minimum of 10 hours**

Make the world a better place where all social and ethnic groups interact with tolerance and understanding *Below are examples of **multicultural** service hours. Remember, you are not limited to these examples.*

- Run an interfaith event with a local church, temple and/or mosque
- Provide service at an event honoring a culture different than your own
- Volunteer in another region of the country
- Tutor ESL students
- Host or staff a Thinking Day celebration