

PRESS RELEASE

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GIRL SCOUTS OF GREATER LOS ANGELES JOINS *STUDENTS STAND WITH MALALA* TO AWARD SCHOLARSHIPS TO LOCAL GIRL SCOUTS FOR INCREASING ACCESS TO EDUCATION

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 19, 2016 – In partnership with Students Stand with Malala, Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles (GSGLA) awarded \$15,000 in scholarships to six LA-area high-school Girl Scouts for leading service projects that address the global need to increase girls' access to education.

Awardees **Jena Anastasi (Grand Prize, Chino Hills)**, **Meera Varma (Second Prize, Burbank)** and Honorable Mention recipients **Sarah Andrews (Burbank)**, **Sierra Brooks (Gardena)**, **Natalie Gold (Santa Monica)**, and **Jayleen Ramos (Glendale)** were recognized in a special ceremony with Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles CEO Lise L. Luttgens on Dec. 8.

The scholarship opportunity required girls in grades 11–12 to develop and implement a [Girl Scout Global Action Award](#) project, joining a movement of 10 million girls who together are sowing the seeds of global social change. The goal of this award program in Girl Scouts is to provide girls the opportunity to understand and address the challenges associated with and the specific root cause of barriers to girls' access to education.

About the winners:

[Jena Anastasi](#), Chino Hills (Grand Prize, \$6,000)

In order to provide girls with the confidence to explore careers in STEM, Jena taught four science lessons with corresponding experiments to students at the Chino Teen Center. She was also invited by Threshold Technologies to present experiments at the Love, Hope, & Charity Foundation for youth and families. Participants were so impressed with the program, she was invited back to present a program to 800 more youth.

[Meera Varma](#), Burbank (Second Prize, \$3,000)

Meera addressed the lack of female representation in the computer science field by working with the Women in STEM club at Burbank High School to provide coding/Java workshops to fifth graders. The program will continue on a monthly basis.

[Sarah Andrews](#), Burbank (Honorable Mention, \$1,500)

Sarah spent more than 116 hours on her project which aimed to increase girls' exposure to STEM-related careers. She taught robotics to girls ages 11–14 and inspired them to form two FIRST Lego League robotics teams.

[Sierra Brooks](#), Gardena (Honorable Mention, \$1,500)

Sierra partnered with a local YMCA in support of a reading program. She replaced books, created a reading area with reading buddies and comfortable chairs, and coached girls to read above their grade

levels. By the end of her project, 95 percent of the participants were reading above grade level, furthering their academic success.

Natalie Gold, Santa Monica (Honorable Mention, \$1,500)

Continuing her Girl Scout Gold Award project to inspire and encourage girls to explore careers in engineering, Natalie created and conducted a workshop, “Engineering, the E in STEM” at a Title I school, bringing in a STEM professional to assist. She also delivered a speech regarding the STEM gender gap to more than 180 Girl Scouts and their families. Her [project website](#) has more than 12,000 hits.

Jayleen Ramos, Glendale (Honorable Mention, \$1,500)

With the goal of encouraging more girls to explore STEM-related career paths, Jayleen coached a FIRST Lego League all-girl robotics team. She focused her efforts on an all-girl team to encourage each girl to learn and lead in team-tasking, which is often done by boys on co-ed teams.

About Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles

Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, serves more than 40,000 girls in partnership with more than 20,000 volunteers from the diverse communities of Los Angeles County and parts of Kern, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles is the largest girl-serving nonprofit agency in Los Angeles. Through the council's programs in entrepreneurship, life skills, outdoor, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), Girl Scouts prepares girls to practice a lifetime of leadership. To join, volunteer, reconnect, or support, visit www.girlscoutsLA.org or call 213-213-0123.



PHOTO CAPTION: From L to R, Jayleen Ramos, Sarah Andrews, Sierra Brooks, Lise L. Luttgens (Girl Scouts of Greater LA CEO), Natalie Gold, Meera Varma, and Jena Anastasi.