

Volunteer Recognition 2016



Ted Oyama – Thanks Badge II Recipient Adult Educator in Greater Los Angeles

When asked why he volunteers as an adult educator for Girl Scouts—that is, **training adults and older girls on specific outdoors and life skills**—Ted Oyama boils it down to simple math: “My daughter benefited from being a Girl Scout for 12 years, I figure **I owe Girl Scouts at least 12 years of service.**”

Ted is currently on year six and doesn’t just lead trainings—he’s **organized major events like Girl Scouts’ 100th anniversary camporee** and more. He also helps oversee a multilevel troop with 88-plus Girl Scouts at the Homba Hongwanji (Nishi) Buddhist Temple in Downtown LA.

Most often, he holds trainings for girls and adults in **CPR, first-aid, backpacking, hiking, woodcraft, Hawaiian ribbon lei-braiding, and some STE[A]M (science, technology, engineering, art, math) activities**. One specific memory stands out for him: When he helped two girls earn their Backpack badge by teaching them skills and suggesting the girls themselves train adults in map and compass work. **The girls ended up teaching 40 leaders camping skills on a weekend trip** and, though timid at first, they were successful.

“Years later, one of the girls wrote about that experience for her essay when applying to Stanford. She was accepted and is now pre-med,” Ted said. “This shows how we as trainers can affect the lives of girls in a way not imaginable. **I was only trying to help them earn their badge and yet this created a memory that remained all of those years afterward.**”

The Thanks Badge II is the highest award an adult volunteer can receive in Girl Scouts. It recognizes a volunteer who has delivered outstanding service to the council or the entire Girl Scout Movement since the receipt of the Thanks Badge. This individual has continued to perform at the same high level for the last three years, and has increased her or his influence or moved into another field of endeavor.