

QUICK & EASY RECOGNITIONS FOR THE ENTIRE YEAR

THANK YOUS

YOU MAY ASK “WHY DO WE GIVE THANK YOUS?”

Awards or Recognitions are given when a person meets all the criteria for that certain award. A “Thank You” is given to volunteers and leaders for a job well done and/or to show appreciation for their efforts. These may be given at any time and hopefully in front of their peers. Thank Yous can be given for being a product manager, chair of an event, helping at Service Unit Events, taking troops on outings, or many different things. They should be timely, given as soon as possible. Here are some ideas for Thank Yous.

- ❖ Casserole for a leader who has just taken her troop on an outing and does not have to cook a meal for her family when she gets home.
- ❖ Cover the costs for a Girl Scout training or workshop – or offer to babysit while the Leader is taking it.
- ❖ Girl Scout mug and a bag of coffee or tea.
- ❖ Put a sign outside her/his door,
“Our Girl Scout Leader lives here. Thank You.”
- ❖ Flowers
- ❖ Wrap a few cinnamon buns or cupcakes with a note saying, “Thanks for working your buns off” or “You take the cake!”
- ❖ Candle: “No one holds a candle to you. Thanks for your leadership.”
- ❖ A gift certificate
- ❖ Pasta Spoon: “Girl Scout Volunteers provide wonderful “Pastabilities for girls”
- ❖ Million Dollar Chocolate Bar: “Thanks a Million”



Internet References

Here is a list of the URL for websites you might like to check out for more ideas.

<http://www.scoutingweb.com/scoutingweb/SubPages/ThankYou.htm>

<http://www.scoutingweb.com/scoutingweb/training/Awards.htm>

Or, go to Google and type in Girl Scout awards, recognition, “thank you volunteers”

“Just for Fun Taglines”¹

Squirrel &/or Bag of Peanuts: *“I’m nuts about the new Journey Series.”*

Ice Cream Scoop & Baskin-Robbins Ice Cream Candy: *“Have you heard the latest scoop?.. Volunteer Weekend was a huge success!”*

Starburst Candy: *“Congratulations... You are a Star.”*

Life Savers: *“You’ve been a real LIFESAVER!”*

Garden Gloves: *“Thanks for digging in and lending a helping hand!”*

Samoas Lip Gloss: *“Just when you do so much, you are always willing to do some moa.”*

Sunglasses: *“We love your bright ideas.”*

Million Dollar Chocolate Bar: *“Thanks a million.”*

Measuring Cups: *“Thanks, Girl Scout Volunteers! You really ‘measured up’ during volunteer recruitment.”*

Popcorn Bag: *“Just ‘popping’ in to say, thanks for helping me today!”*

Seeds: *“Plant the seeds and watch girls grow with Courage, Confidence, and Character.”*

Guitar: *“Girl Scout Volunteers ROCK & ROLL!”*

Bright Colorful Band Aids: *“We appreciate our First Aiders!”*

Berry Jam: *“You are ‘berry sweet!’”*

Pom-Poms: *“Three cheers for our Product Sales Team!”*

Magic Wand: *“You make the ‘Magic’ happen on our Learning Team!”*

¹ from Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida

Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles

Lemonade Mix: *"We love your recipe for Volunteer Service"*

1 Tablespoon of Patience

1 teaspoon of Smiles

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of Sincerity

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of Dedication

Mix well and serve constantly

10 Things to Remember About Giving Recognitions²

- **Give it or else.** If you don't recognize people they will feel unappreciated and go elsewhere to have their needs met.
- **Give it frequently.** People forget quickly that they received a "Thank You." So – staff, volunteers, parents, and girls – keep doing it!
- **Give it different ways.** Use more than one method. Not everyone likes the same thing. Here are four methods:
 - From a person, for the work the volunteer did. (Good job, Thank you)
 - From a person, for being part of the organization. (Recognize Birthday, You are always so positive, Leader's Day)
 - From the organization, for work the volunteer did (Volunteers of the Month from http://www.girlscoutsla.org/pages/for_volunteers/volunteer_month.html, Appreciation Pin).
 - From the organization, for being part of the team. (Years of Service, newsletter story about person – not based on a single thing done)
- **Give it honestly.** Don't give praise unless you mean it. If you praise poor performance, the praise you give to others for good work will not be valued. If you are praising effort, say so.
- **Give it to the person, not the work.** Praise the organizers of the event rather than the event itself.
- **Give it appropriately for the achievement.** Small accomplishments should be praised with low-effort methods, large accomplishments should get something more.
- **Give it consistently.** Those doing the same work should receive recognition of the same type or effort.
- **Give it on a timely basis.** Show appreciation as soon after the event as possible. Don't make people wait.
- **Give it in an individualized fashion.** Be personal. Match the person's motivation for volunteering: feels good to help, learn new skills, meet new people

² Adapted from Volunteer Management, By Steve McCurley and Rick Lynch

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- **Give it for what you want more of.** Recognize those doing a good job now, as well as those you want to encourage to do better.

Recognition Highlights from Research by GSUSA**

Recognitions with overwhelming (80%+) or strong appeal (70% - 80%):

Volunteer ideas (p17&18)

- Recognized by troops/individual girls 88.9%
- Free Girl Scout trainings and workshops 88.5%
- Council shop discounts 87.5%
- Acknowledgment in council publications 82.7%
- GSUSA awards (badges, pins) & certificates 80.2%
- Council-specific awards (badges, pins) & certificates 78.7%
- Award for new volunteers 78.2%
- Volunteer-of-the-Month gift certificate 76.7%
- Have open volunteer nominations (online) so anyone can nominate volunteer 76.6%
- Acknowledgment on council or national Web site 72.4%
- Local unit event 71.5%
- Tickets to reserved, local recreational or theme park 71.1%
- Handwritten thank-you notes 70.8%

New Ways of Recognizing Volunteers:

Council ideas (p10)

- Host a spa or relaxation party for volunteers to take time out for themselves
- Create new recognitions at the council and service unit levels
- Post service unit recognitions on council Web site
- Compile and disseminate book of bright ideas on Leader Appreciation Day
- Streamline awards process into one easily accessible awards information booklet
- Recognize episodic, short-term, and community volunteers formally at end of service instead of only at annual awards dinner
- Tailor recognitions toward age groups (i.e., 18–25 year olds not interested in awards dinners or pins may be offered cool Girl Scout T-shirts, movie night for themselves and their families)
- Create a self-nominating “super volunteer” award for volunteers who have completed a certain number of items on a list
- Promote leader appreciation to parents, girls, and families

** Volunteer Recognition Research, Full Report GSRI, 2008 **al Ways to Recognize**

Volunteers:

Staff ideas (p11)

- GSUSA develop and offer a greater variety of recognition awards that *volunteers can choose for themselves* (e.g., letter to employer, personalized gift certificate, free movie tickets, free spa treatment, free and fun learning opportunity, weekend getaway for honoree, scholarships for honorees, free and fun family day, retreat at Edith Macy Conference Center)
- Highlight volunteer honorees on council Web site with “Volunteer of the Week/Month”
- Highlight all volunteer honorees in local/national media during prime time
- Hold a luncheon in volunteer’s honor with local TV coverage, where all honored volunteers do not have to pay.
- Have continuous & open volunteer nominations or kudos on Web site. A process so anyone (other volunteers, girls, families, staff) can recognize volunteers
- Hold large national recognition in New York City hosted by GSUSA, where each council sends best volunteer (leader, service area manager, etc.) to be honored

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- Have local, regional, national public figures/celebrities/GSUSA honor volunteers at award ceremonies
- Have troops/individual girls recognize the honorees and host the recognition event
- Recognize volunteer honoree's employer operating under "paid leave time to volunteer"
- Host leader convention (possibly by GSUSA), where GSUSA CEO and other senior staff would attend and recognize volunteer honorees