



**For Immediate Release**  
Thursday, September 16, 2021

## **Oregon Girl Scout Earns National Scholarship**

*Paige Hayward of Portland among 24 local Gold Award Girl Scouts to be recognized in national ceremony.*

### **Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington Media Contact:**

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**PORTLAND, OR** (September 16, 2021)—[Together with Girl Scouts of the USA](#), Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington is celebrating the 2021 class of Gold Award Girl Scouts: over 3,500 teen world-changers who have created lasting impact on issues important to them. Among them are 24 Gold Award Girl Scouts from Oregon and Washington who have collectively invested over 1,920 hours taking action on environmental sustainability, suicide prevention, financial literacy and much more.

The Gold Award is a Girl Scout's highest achievement, available to girls in high school who drive sustainable change on issues in their communities and beyond. Gold Award Girl Scouts identify the root cause of a problem, plan and implement innovative solutions that address that problem, and lead a team of people who support their success.

This year, Gold Award Girl Scout Paige Hayward from Portland, Oregon, was awarded a national scholarship from Girl Scouts of the USA, thanks to sponsorship from Arconic Foundation and Kappa Delta Foundation. The scholarship recognizes outstanding Gold Award Girl Scouts whose projects exemplify the [core components of the Gold Award](#).

For her project, Hayward worked with her high school community to create an ever-growing mural installation intended to beautify her campus and build unity and pride among the student body. Through research for her project, she discovered a deeper benefit—improved educational outcomes.

“When I began my project, I focused on the idea that art connects people and researched how art can be used to represent different groups or ideas,” Hayward shared. “Through my research, I learned about art’s significant impact on students and education, finding that students who see their school as beautiful—usually through the presentation of murals around the school—get better grades, have a better attendance record, and overall feel more passionate about their education.”

This is where the idea for a student-created mural project was born. To accomplish her goal, Hayward collaborated with school and district administrators, her school’s art honor society, fellow students and alumni to create pieces that reflected the school’s

diverse cultural backgrounds and experiences. Despite the challenges of COVID-19 and related school closures, Hayward found safe ways to involve 30 different students, school staff and alumni in the creation of two 4x4 painted panels that serve as the foundation for the ever-growing mural. Going forward, panels will be created and added to the mural by each future graduating class.

The finished panels received overwhelmingly positive feedback from students via a survey of their opinion of the mural, its representation of the student body and its impact on their educational experience and school pride.

The scholarship review committee remarked that Hayward's project stood out for its specificity of research and focus, and for the way she collaborated with her team.

As they take action to transform their world, Gold Award Girl Scouts gain tangible skills and prove they're the leaders our world needs. Members of the 2021 national class—including our region's 24 Gold Award Girl Scouts—say they've become focused project managers (89%), confident public speakers (84%), strong decision-makers (67%), and empathetic leaders (59%). To help finance their Gold Award projects, the majority generated funds, including from their Girl Scout Cookie earnings, which they learned how to budget. These skills give them an edge personally and professionally—[research shows](#) shows that 99% of Gold Award Girl Scout alums take on leadership roles in their everyday lives. Also according to [recent research](#), most Gold Award Girl Scouts get a boost in earning scholarships, in the college admissions process, and in professional advancement.

“Completing the Gold Award project was life changing,” Hayward reflected. “Not only did I learn many new skills and meet and learn from people who I wouldn't have otherwise, it also showed me that I could do anything I set my mind to. Through this project I gained a confidence that I never even dreamed of.”

Hayward and fellow 2021 Gold Award Girl Scouts will be celebrated at the organization-wide [Girl Scouts Change the World virtual event](#) on October 9, sponsored by the LEGO Group.

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### **About Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington**

In partnership with more than 6,800 adult members, Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington prepares more than 11,500 girls in grades K-12 for a lifetime of leadership, adventure and success. GSOSW's programs in civic engagement, financial literacy, the outdoors and STEM serve girls in 35 counties in Oregon, and Clark, Klickitat and Skamania counties in Southwest Washington. The Girl Scout mission is to build girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place. For more information or to join or volunteer, visit [girlscoutsw.org](http://girlscoutsw.org).