

Membership Year 2024 (MY24): October 1, 2023 - September 30, 2024







# A Letter from the Board Chair & Chief Executive Officer

Dear Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York Members,

As we close Membership Year 2024, we celebrate another incredible year of Girl Scouting! Thanks to your dedication, our membership remained strong, and we provided life-changing experiences for Girl Scouts through innovative programs and unforgettable camp adventures.

One of the year's highlights was the rare opportunity to witness the solar eclipse in totality at Hidden Lake Camp in Lake George. Girl Scouts and their families gathered under the open sky, experiencing a moment of awe, wonder, and learning—just one of the many ways Girl Scouting connects girls to the world around them.

Additionally, our Council's National Delegates participated in a Special National Council Session called by Girl Scouts of the USA. Engaging in Movement-wide strategic planning, they joined delegates from across the country in important discussions about the future of Girl Scouting. A key outcome was the decision to increase national dues over the next two years to support the Movement's long-term success. Through this process, our girl and adult Girl Scout members experienced democracy in action—using their voices to shape the future of Girl Scouting. The thoughtful dialogue and debate that took place reinforced what we know to be true: Girl Scouts have the power to change the world through their courage, confidence, and character.

As we look ahead, we invite you to continue to be a sister to every Girl Scout, and to help people at all times. Together, let us continue to make the world a better place! Whether by volunteering, promoting or making a gift to support our mission, your involvement strengthens our Council and ensures every girl has access to the life-changing experiences that Girl Scouting provides.

Thank you for being a part of this journey. Here's to another year of growth, leadership, and adventure!

Yours in Girl Scouting,

Brenda Episcopo, Chief Executive Officer  
Debernee Privott, Ph.D., Board Chair







# Governance

## Board of Directors *Executive Committee*

Board Chair  
Debernee Privott, Ph.D.

First Vice Chair  
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Catherine Lewis

Kasey Kirk

Dominique Wheeler

Jamie Peluso

Victoria Zinser Duley

Katie Fontaine

Freya Mercer

## *Girl*

## *Members At Large*

Ellen G.

Rachael S.

## 45 Service Unit Delegates

28 adults + 17 girls

## 5 National Delegates

2 adults + 3 girls

Adults and girls 14 years old and older may serve as national or service unit delegates or alternates. Service Unit delegates are responsible for being the voice of their Service Unit to and from the Board of Directors primarily at the Annual Meeting of the Members and other delegate meetings. National Council Delegates represent Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York to and from the National Board of Girl Scouts.



## Board Committees: Leadership

Audit Committee: Kathryn Rose

DEI Task Force: Dominique Wheeler & Katherine Nadeau

Executive Committee: Debernee Privott

Finance Committee: Christine Stuto

Philanthropy Committee: Katie Fontaine & Jamie Peluso

Properties Committee: Paula Bianchi

Nominating & Board Development: Kristen Navarette





# Leadership & Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York (GSNENY) participated in the Girl Scouts of the USA Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Racial Justice (DEIRJ) Peer Affinity Group Workshop to discuss tools and needs for councils.

Eight members of the GSNENY staff completed Inclusive Community Builders (ICB) Train the Trainer sessions, empowering them to deliver ICB workshops to their peers.

MY24 Performance Appraisals added goal of at least 3 hours of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion-focused training for all staff.



**Chief Executive Officer**  
*Brenda Episcopo*

Executive Assistant &  
Governance Liaison  
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Vice President of  
Finance & Operations  
Denise Williams

Vice President of  
Mission, Strategy & Delivery  
Jill Rafferty-Weinisch

Vice President of  
Fund Development  
Renee Isgro Kelly





# Membership







# Membership

## HIGHLIGHTS

Attended 120 school open houses (a return to pre-COVID-level outreach!) by leveraging the help of all staff and many volunteers throughout our 15-county Council footprint.

Launched a new Membership Placement & Leads staff position to convert leads gathered by recruiters in the field into new members.

Boosted attendance at recruitment events by expanding upon GSUSA's Robot Party model to develop 6 new party themes. Party themes focused on population segmentation data gleaned from research on shared interests in various geographic areas.

Leveraged GSUSA's Daisy Experience Boxes to promote the formation of new Kindergarten/1st Grade troops.

GSNENY holds a 6.4% market share of Kindergarten, compared to a national market share of 5.7%

GSNENY ranks 32nd in the country for girl market share (out of 112 Councils)

Members	MY23	MY24	% Change
Girl	5,328	5,164	-3.08%
Adult	3,400	3,523	3.62%
Lifetime	1,149	1,219	6.09%
Total	8,724	8,687	-0.47%





# Membership & Volunteer Services



## DAISY GIRL SCOUT EXPERIENCE BOX



In August 2024, the Girl Scout Experience Box launched an amazing resource for new leaders of first-year Girl Scout Daisy troops (grades K-1 in the 2024/2025 school year). New Daisy troop leaders receive a monthly supply box filled with step-by-step instructions, ready-to-go supplies, and thoughtful script suggestions for activities that can be completed during a troop meeting. This complimentary resource follows the Daisy First Year Troop Plan and was conveniently delivered directly to 22 new GSNENY Daisy troop leaders last year.



# Membership & Volunteer Services

## MEMBER RETENTION

**69.9 %** GSNENY girl retention in MY24, compared to 66.9% average girl retention in councils across the U.S.

**74.7%** GSNENY volunteer retention in MY24

**12**

volunteers received  
Lodge Only Training  
for camping  
without outdoor  
cooking

**27**

volunteers  
attended  
Outdoor  
Education Day

**28**

volunteers  
attended MY24  
Volunteer  
Conference

**84**

volunteers  
completed New  
Troop Leader  
training

**35**

volunteers  
learned Blended  
Outdoor Skills





# Volunteer Services







# Volunteer Services



## Mental Health Matters

In MY24, GSNENY reinforced its holistic approach to supporting volunteers through mental health-focused education.

- Trained two staff members to deliver the Youth Mental Health First Aid program to volunteers
- Trained a third staff member to deliver the Talk Saves Lives program, which is now offered to volunteers bi-monthly
- Continued delivering the Resilient, Ready Strong patch program to Girl Scouts
- Continued building mental health awareness into everything we do, including camp, programs, and adult programming, including self-care for volunteers

## Three Cheers for Rallyhood

Usage of Rallyhood, the all-in-one platform for Girl Scout collaboration and communication, increased by 165% in MY24. Each new troop has been given their own rally, setup for them by Volunteer Services. Single purpose rallies are highly successful too, such as those for individual weeks of camp.







# GSNENY Properties



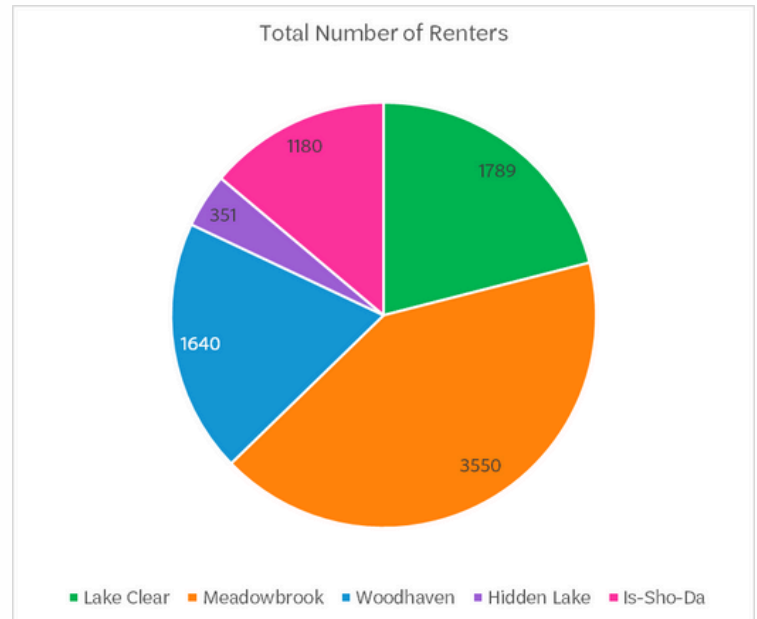




# GSNENY Properties

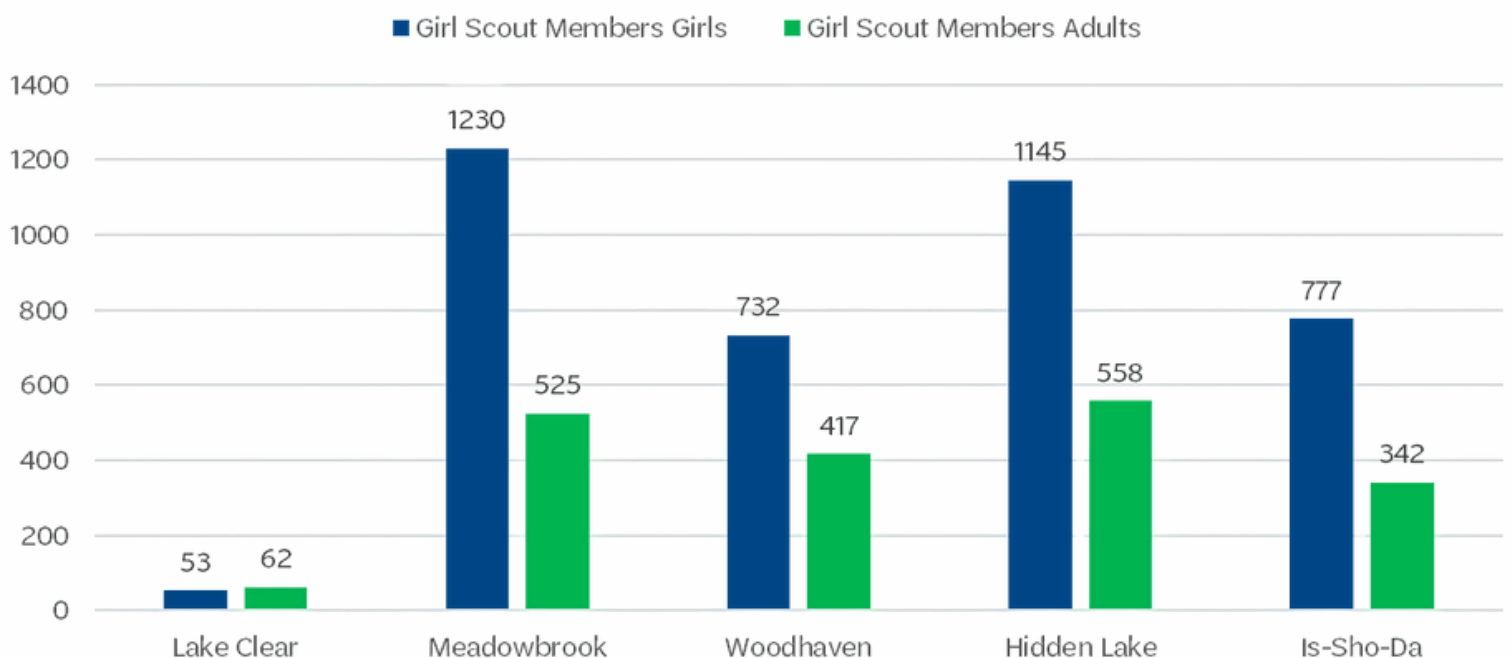
## HIGHLIGHTS

GSNENY is fortunate to be the environmental steward to five camp properties throughout our Council footprint. Summer camp is offered annually at Camp Is-Sho-Da (day camp), Hidden Lake Camp (day and overnight camp), and Lake Clear Camp (day and overnight camp). All three summer camps, as well as Camp Meadowbrook and Camp Woodhaven, are available for rent by Girl Scout members and non-members (general public), year-round, with the exception of Lake Clear Camp near Saranac Lake, which closes for the winter.



Girl Scout troops and service units host an array of events, from weekly troop meetings with a dozen members to annual service unit encampments with a few hundred girls, volunteers, and caregivers.

### Camp Usage by Members







# Customer Care

## HIGHLIGHTS

11,788

Total cases handled  
by Customer Care in  
MY24

4,728

Cases closed by  
Customer Care alone  
without having to  
transfer to another  
department

88.5%

Council Data Health  
Score from GSUSA





# Marketing

## HIGHLIGHTS

Launched a form for volunteers to submit stories to Council for use in GS Express (weekly newsletter), social media, and media stories.

Began curating a database of photos featuring GSNENY Girl Scouts to use in marketing materials.

Refined communication channels to ensure that messaging is reaching the intended audience.

Curated our social media platforms through a marketing lens to better showcase the things we do as Girl Scouts with the intention of appealing more to the families of prospective members.

# 5,001

unique individuals who  
receive GS Express  
each week

# 39,579

annual unique visitors  
to the GSNENY website  
[girlscoutsnyny.org](http://girlscoutsnyny.org)

# 598

## LinkedIn followers



# 1,431

## Instagram followers



# 7,200

## Facebook followers







# Product Program

## Cookies

The Axolotyl, an unusual type of salamander, was the MY24 cookie mascot



### HIGHLIGHTS

96% of cookie sellers made it to, at least, the first reward level

2,756 girls earned Cookie Dough vouchers that can be used toward Council-sponsored programs and camp

2,581 packages of cookies were sold by top seller, Marybeth H., earning her Cookie CEO for The Day

\$752,914 in proceeds were retained by troops to help fund their activities

18,961 packages of cookies were donated by individual customers through Gift of Caring

	MY23	MY24	% Change
Net Sales \$	\$2,473,280	\$2,808,168	-12%
# Packages Sold	836,249	766,417	-8%
# Girls Selling	4,070	3,955	-3%
Per Girl Average \$	\$205	\$193	-6%



# Product Program Cookies



1,399  
Council-sponsored  
cookie booths in  
MY24,  
an increase of  
16% over MY23







# Product Program Sweets & Treats

## HIGHLIGHTS

The MY24 fall product program mascot was the Ocelot, a medium-sized spotted wild cat.

In MY24, 20 girls with the highest sales earned the top prize of either a vlogging kit or a ski scooter. Prizes were valued at \$1,200.

Per Girl Average

**\$302.98**

an increase of  
\$14.00/girl over MY23

Girl Participation  
Rate

**1,994**

girls sold Sweets &  
Treats in MY24, down  
3.8% from MY23

MY24 Net Sales

**\$262,623**

1.3% less than MY23







# The Girl Scout Experience



## Highlight

April 8, 2024, was a spectacular sunny day as more than 100 Girl Scouts, caregivers, family members and council staff joined the World Above Astronomy Club (GSNENY's girl-led group) for a Solar Eclipse Party at Hidden Lake Camp. There were hands-on cooperative learning stations for girls and their families, as well as Moon Pies for snacking. But the sun and moon were the stars of this party with the crowd safely gazing skyward as the sun reached 98% totality in the afternoon.





# Girl Scout Experience Programs

## HIGHLIGHTS

Council-sponsored events offered by staff around the four pillars of: outdoor education, STEM, Life Skills, Entrepreneurship.

136  
programs  
run

2,967  
registrations

## Outcomes

as reported on post-program surveys

77%  
tried something new

99%  
felt included

81%  
learned something about the  
outdoors & nature

89%  
increased appreciation for the  
outdoors

53%  
improved sense of self confidence

**Thank you GlobalFoundries  
for your sponsorship of Girls  
CAN Do!**



## Girls CAN Do

Eight teams of Girl Scouts participated in this annual food drive/canned structure building contest, held each year at the Empire State Plaza, in partnership with Capital Region CANstruction.

Each team hosts canned food drives in their local communities while determining what their structure will represent, based on the year's theme.

In MY24, 2,830 lbs. of food was collected, and donations were distributed to 74 individual food pantries through the Food Pantries of the Capital Region.





# The Girl Scout Experience

## GSNENY'S COMMITMENT TO MENTAL WELLNESS



This year, GSNENY made a significant commitment to mental wellness. We launched a web page dedicated to Girl Scout mental health programs and began a dedicated mental health feature in our weekly email newsletter, GS Express.

We partnered with NAMI-New York State and MHANYS to offer trainings and provide resources to staff, camp staff and volunteers, using widely recognized training like Youth Mental Health First Aid and Talk Saves Lives.

Through a generous donor to GSUSA we were able to make the all-levels, Resilient Ready Strong patch available to our girl members for free. More than 150 Girl Scouts have completed the patch, providing local information about GSNENY's impact on girl mental health.



**96%**

of Girl Scouts said that being a Girl Scout helps them feel less stressed and anxious.

**98%**

said that completing the patch helped them think differently about the things that make them feel sad or worried.

**99%**

said that Girl Scouts was a place they felt they belong





# The Girl Scout Experience







# The Girl Scout Experience

## Highest Awards

### 2024 Gold Award Scholarship Recipient



**Elizabeth  
Andrus**

Campaign & Lobby  
Efforts for Legislation  
for Free Meals for NY

Gold Award Girl Scout  
Elizabeth Andrus's project on  
food insecurity earned her a  
prestigious Gold Award  
Scholarship from Girl Scouts  
of the USA.

### Highest Awards Earned By GSNENY Girl Scouts in 2024



13



39



102

2024 Honorary Gold Award  
Girl Scout Melanie Sawyer  
historical forager, educator,  
and Girl Scout volunteer







# Girl Scout Experience Summer Camp

9

International staff  
from the U.K.,  
Austria, and  
Germany



810

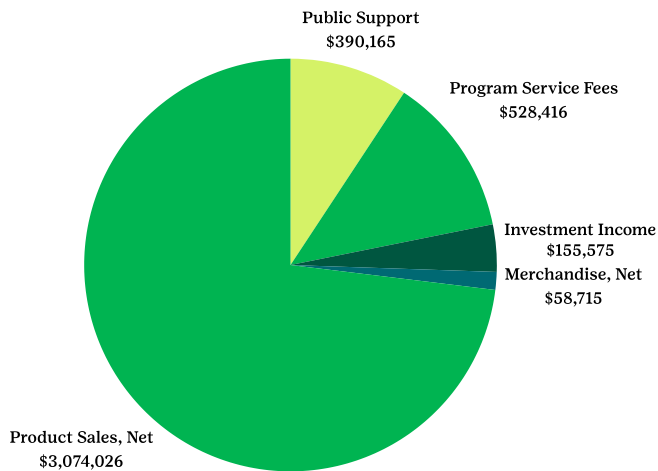
camp total camp  
registrations



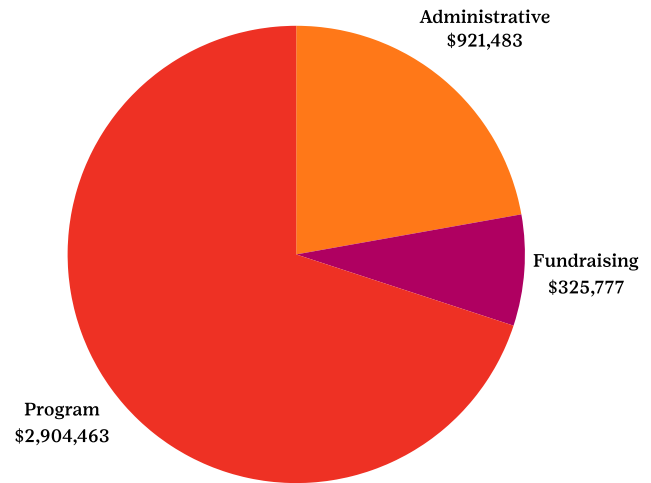


# Fiscal Year 2024 Financials

## Income



## Expenses



## Financial Assistance Awarded in Fiscal Year 2024

Type of Award	# of Awards	Total Awarded
Membership	533	\$15,440
Uniform	103	\$2,534
Camp	111	\$35,560
Program	23	\$1,289





# Fund Development Events

## Ignite Her



Flame  
Offline



A heartfelt thank you to all supporters of our 4th annual - and first ever in-person - fundraiser for camp and outdoor programming! Your contributions will allow more Girl Scouts to discover the joy of learning new skills and reap the benefits of being in nature. A special shout-out to Melanie Sawyer, our esteemed guest, who made the event truly memorable!



### We appreciate our Honorary Committee:

Ms. Erin Kilmer

Mrs. Wendy Delehanty

Ms. Greta E. Davis

Ms. Chandler M. Ralph

Dr. Debernee Privott

Dr. Kristin Navarette

Thanks to sponsor, Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.



Gallagher

For the inaugural Ignite Her Flame Offline event in support of camp & outdoor programming. Girl Scout alumnae, volunteers, and supporters of this previously virtual fundraiser gathered at Hidden Lake Camp, during its 80th anniversary year, to enjoy a wine bar, buffet dinner, Girl Scout traditions and sisterhood. The highlight of the evening was an exclusive experience with Melanie Sawyer, historical forager, educator, and star of the History Channel's reality show, ALONE.





# Fund Development Events



## Gerri Kaplan-Downs

2024 Distinguished Personal Achievement Award



Women of  
Distinction

*“Community work is not glamorous—it’s often hard, thankless, and messy. But it’s also beautiful. It’s in those quiet moments when someone says, ‘thank you, you’ve made a difference,’ that we realize the true power of giving back. As I stand here today, I am reminded of the many hands that have lifted me along the way.”*





# Fund Development Events



Women of Distinction is a nationwide GSUSA program. Since 1985, GSNEY has recognized women within our Council footprint for their strength of character, dedicated community service, emphasis on lifelong learning, along with their dedication to fostering self-confidence and leadership skills in others. Funds raised at this event support the Girl Scout Experience.



**Lauren Colver-Currie**, 2023  
Distinguished Personal Achievement  
**Chandler Ralph**, 2007 Distinguished  
Community Leader  
**Victoria Zinser Duley**, 2007  
Distinguished Junior Trailblazer  
**Theresa Bennett**, 2013 Distinguished  
Personal Achievement  
**Linda Bourgeois**, 2018 Distinguished  
Community Leader  
**Joyce Rafferty**, 2013 Distinguished  
Trailblazer

## Reception & Awards Program



September 25, 2024  
West Side Ballroom  
Plattsburgh

Like the Girl Scout Experience, the Women of Distinction Awards Event is notably girl-led. This year's emcees, Claire C. and Grace D., are Juliette Girl Scouts from Service Unit 425. Claire is an Ambassador and this was her fifth performance as emcee of this event. Grace is a Senior Girl Scout who made her debut as co-host this year.



The audience was treated to special remarks from Girl Scout Cadette Ava C. In 2023, Ava was awarded the Medal of Honor, the highest award in Girl Scouting, from Girl Scouts of the USA for her courageous act of saving a child from drowning.





# Honor Roll of Donors

## Juliette Gordon Low Society

Roberta Alexander

Anonymous (5)

Mary and Jim Buszuwski

Alexandra De Grandpre

Jennifer M.W. Demarco

The Dianne Belk & Lawrence Calder Girl  
Scout Movement-wide Planned Giving  
Challenge

Brenda and Matt Episcopo

The Erik and Eva Anderson Girl  
Scout Movement-wide Planned Giving  
Challenge

Donna Rae Gelder Bigelow

Marilyn Gillespie

Kathleen Godfrey

Susan Gustafson Byrnes

Cindy Hess

Craig Hilchey

Lynn Hilchey

Carol Hyde

Sue and Robert Larsen

Alaina McCreary

Jill Rafferty-Weinisch

Chandler M. Ralph & David K. Aldrich  
Roo

Sanford and Martha Searleman

Joann Tiemann

Valerie Trudeau

Diane White

Chancey Ann Young



The Juliette Gordon Low Society recognizes those who have made provisions for Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York in their estate plans or through life income gifts.







# Honor Roll of Donors

## Pearl

**Donors of  
\$5,000 & Above**

Anonymous  
Girl Scouts of the USA  
GlobalFoundries, Inc.  
Carol Hyde  
Margaret Janes  
NBT Bank  
Joan Ahr Robertson  
Stewart's Foundation

## Gold

**Donors of  
\$2,500 to \$4,999.99**

Adirondack Foundation  
Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.  
Barbara C. Dangman  
David S. & Janet R. Sheridan Foundation  
Donna Rae Gelder Bigelow  
Greene County Youth Bureau  
Daniel L. Grygas  
Regeneron  
Target Corporation  
United Way of the Adirondack Region

## Silver

**Donors of  
\$1,000 to \$2,499.99**

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Bank of America  
Bank of Greene County  
Charitable Foundation  
Mary Buszuwski  
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the Greater Capital Region  
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Jill Rafferty-Weinisch  
Sherri Ruggles  
Sandy Hill Foundation  
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**Thank you for supporting the Girl Scout mission:  
building girls of courage, confidence and  
character who make the world a better place.**



# Honor Roll of Donors

## Bronze Donors of \$500.00 to \$999.99

Anonymous  
Beth Ashline  
Jennifer Booth  
Karen D'Ascoli  
Brenda Episcopo  
Victoria L. Gray  
Hannaford  
Renee Isgro Kelly  
Chandler M. Ralph  
Kathryn Rose  
Rotary Club of Plattsburgh  
Rotary Club of Scotia  
UVM Health Network -  
Champlain Valley  
Physicians Hospital

## Gifts in Kind

Nichole Shakerley  
Brianna Geleta  
Saratoga Arms  
Ethel Duncan  
Paula Follett-Murphy  
Jill Stott



## Friends Donors of \$100 to \$499.99

Carol Borthwick  
Harlean Bruce  
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Christina Santor  
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Loyal Order of the  
Moose Canajoharie  
Lodge No. 853  
Tri-City ValleyCats  
Eric Durr  
Lisa Folio  
Jessika Hazelton  
Nicole Oherien  
Liv Pope  
Samantha Smith  
Fay M. Graham  
Alisa Henderson





# Honor Roll of Donors

## Friends Donors of \$100 to \$499.99

Jane Fulton Hess  
Doreen E. Morgan  
Carol Nersinger  
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Gail W. Sanderson  
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Colleen McCoy Lowry  
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[Give2GirlScouts@GirlScoutsNENY.org](mailto:Give2GirlScouts@GirlScoutsNENY.org)

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8 Mountain View Ave., Albany NY 12205

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