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Media Contact:

Jaime Alvarez
Senior Director of Marketing & Communications
315.698.9400 x2049 office
315.263.5957 mobile
jalvarez@gsnypenn.org

Vestal Girl Scouts Named Prudential Spirit of Community Local Honorees

Cicero, N.Y. (May 11, 2021) — Alexia Michitti and Katelyn Sonnen of Vestal, NY, Ambassador-level Girl Scouts (grades 11-12) in the [Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways Council](#), have been recognized for exemplary volunteer service as local honorees in the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards.

Alexia and Katelyn were awarded for Take Action projects they developed to earn their Girl Scout Gold Award, one of the highest awards in Girl Scouting. They are members of the “Class of 2021” GSNYPENN Gold Award Girl Scouts—members who earn the award during the 2020-21 membership year.

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards is a nationwide youth volunteer recognition program sponsored by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals. GSNYPENN served as the nominating organization.

“Alexia and Katelyn exemplify the Girl Scout Mission, Promise and Law. We applaud their volunteerism in making the world a better place and congratulate them on this prestigious honor in wider recognition of their Girl Scout Gold Award projects,” says GSNYPENN CEO Julie Dale.

Alexia Michitti



“For my Girl Scout Gold Award, I created a Take Action project to leave a lasting impact on the world. I attended Vestal Hills Elementary School. Each month, students participated in a morning program about character education traits. Traits would often be presented by two puppets, Inch and Miles. Being a young child, I was amused by the puppets, but as I grew older, I began to lose interest.

For my project, I gathered a diverse team of people and formed the group 13positv. We created videos that address character education traits and connected them to real-life examples of hard work, determination, acceptance, skill, etc. The videos are being used at some local elementary schools and are posted on my personal YouTube channel with viewers from states including New York, Florida, Michigan, Illinois and even around the world. I also created an Instagram account, @13positv.

From being a young Daisy selling as many boxes of cookies as possible to eventually earning my Gold Award, I’ve created many memories over the past 13 years in Girl Scouts. I’ve also learned valuable lessons along the way— working with others, giving back to the community and using your strengths to benefit and impact others. Every endeavor I’ve created or led as a Girl Scout has allowed me to communicate at a global level—making the world a better place.”

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Katelyn Sonnen



“I’ve been a Girl Scout for 12 years, starting as a Daisy in kindergarten. It has made me the woman I am today. I have worked to improve our community throughout my years in Girl Scouts and knew for my Gold Award Take Action project that I wanted to leave a lasting impact on those around me.

As a member of Kopernik Observatory since elementary school, I decided to focus on making STEM education easily accessible and fun for families and educators visiting the new Kopernik Science Park. Kopernik Observatory was a home away from home for me and shaped me into the huge space enthusiast I am today. It has provided me with incredible opportunities, and I wanted to give back.

With the help of my project team, I designed and fabricated interactive educational signs for each of the 10 pieces of equipment at the park. Each sign has a QR code to effectively transport visitors to web pages with additional information and educational aspects related to the play equipment. I hope the new Kopernik Science Park will inspire others to appreciate the science all around us and spark interest in younger minds.”

“Young people who contribute their time and talents to their communities are role models for all of us,” says Prudential Chairman and CEO Charles F. Lowrey. “We salute their dedication, their achievements, and their spirit of community.”

“Demonstrating civic responsibility through community volunteerism is an important part of life,” says NASSP Executive Director JoAnn Bartoletti. “These honorees practice a lesson we hope all young people, as well as adults, will emulate.”

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards represents America’s largest youth recognition program based exclusively on volunteer service. Since 1995, the program has honored more than 140,000 youth volunteers at the local, state and national level. Learn more at spirit.prudential.com or nassp.org/spirit.

Girl Scouts serves girls in grades K-12. Annual membership is \$25. Financial assistance is available. To register a girl, visit gsnypenn.org/join. To become an adult volunteer, learn more at gsnypenn.org/volunteer. To help make Girl Scouting possible for girls in your community, visit gsnypenn.org/donate.

(Photos provided with copyright permission by families, courtesy of Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways)

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About Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways, Inc.

Girl Scouts is the preeminent leadership development organization for girls. We believe in the power of every girl to change the world. Our extraordinary journey began in 1912 when our Movement was founded by Juliette Gordon “Daisy” Low. Today, we continue the Girl Scout mission of building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

GSNYPENN is chartered by Girl Scouts of the USA to administer the Girl Scout program in 24 counties of New York and two in Pennsylvania. We offer every girl a chance to practice a lifetime of leadership, adventure and success. Girl Scouts serves girls in grades K-12. Annual membership is \$25. Financial assistance is available.

To register a girl, visit gsnypenn.org/join. To become an adult volunteer, learn more at gsnypenn.org/volunteer. To help make Girl Scouting possible for girls in your community, visit gsnypenn.org/donate.