

Published November 20th, 2013

Gold Award Focuses on Water Safety

Submitted by Kathy Biro

Juliana Biro Photo provided

Acalanes High School junior and Girl Scout Troop 31017 member Juliana Biro completed her Gold Award project this past May. Her project, "Water Wise: A Water Safety Program," in partnership with Lighthouse Community Charter School in East Oakland and the Downtown Oakland YMCA, provided 75 eighth-grade students instruction and offered activities about nutrition, sun safety and water safety. Students also had the opportunity to learn basic swimming skills. Water safety is a passion for Biro as she nearly drowned as a young child. As part of the Water Wise safety program, Biro organized a swim gear drive to provide suits, goggles and towels for every participating student. She also led a coffee talk at Lighthouse School for the eighth-grade parents to explain the purpose of her event and the importance of water safety. Caitlin Leverenz, a 2012 bronze Olympic medalist, joined Biro at the Lighthouse Community Charter School to kick off the event by talking to the students about her Olympic experience and what a difference swimming has made in her life. With this project, Biro hopes to break the pattern of children not knowing how to swim because their parents never learned to swim.

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