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Troop 32193 honors 2020 Gold Award Girl Scouts

Submitted by Joan Toney



Elizabeth Paul with dad, Ben Paul. Photos
Jennifer Davis

Lafayette Girl Scout Troop 32193 celebrated the achievements of its 2021 graduating seniors, Leda Abkenari, Deja Cooper, Lauren Davis, Emilia Gutman, Alex Hascall, Miriya Huie, Elizabeth Paul, Madison Payne, Sydney Rohrbough, Shelby Suppiger, Charlotte Toney, and Chloe Parmelee (class of 2020), in a March 21 garden ceremony. Almost all 12 members have been Girl Scouts since Daisy Scouts, earning over 50 skill badges and achieving Bronze and Silver Awards, the highest achievement for Girl Scouting in fifth and eighth grades. In the fall of 2020, members Elizabeth Paul and Charlotte Toney achieved their Gold Awards, the highest rank for high school Ambassador Girl Scouts, involving over 80 hours of work and leadership on their chosen project. Additionally, both young women were honored by Girl Scouts of Northern California in a virtual Gold Award ceremony in January.

Elizabeth Paul drew inspiration for her Gold Award project from her experience teaching children at Congregation B'nai Tikvah's religious school. During the COVID shutdown, religious schools moved to virtual learning and Paul noticed students were falling behind in their Hebrew reading skills. She created an eight-week "Summer Tutoriam" program aimed at teaching anyone, regardless of age, how to read Hebrew. She trained a group of 11 Jewish teens on how to tutor, communicate professionally by email, and how to utilize different Hebrew reading resources. By the end of the summer, 30 students had shown improved reading speed, confidence tackling challenging words, and mastery of the language on par with their religious study peers. Due to its success, this program will continue to run every summer at Congregation B'nai Tikvah for students and any others interested in learning or improving their Hebrew language skills.

With funding from community donations, cookie sales, and garage sales, Charlotte Toney designed her Gold Award project to assist Hope Solutions in fully furnishing and outfitting four apartments for formerly homeless families. Toney led a team of volunteers to move furniture and set up the apartments prior to the tenants moving in. In addition, she organized and cataloged a storage unit for overflow donations, updated the "needs list" for future donations, and created a list of community members with businesses that could donate furniture on a regular basis. She was proud to partner with Hope Solutions in their efforts to provide supportive housing to at risk and homeless families in Contra Costa County.



Charlotte Toney with mom, Joan Toney.

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