

Sanctuary Girl Scouts win top honor

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Four Cadette Scouts from Troop 13779 of Sanctuary Covenant Church were recognized for earning the second highest honor available to a young woman in Girl Scouting – the Girl Scout Silver.

Dee Dee Anderson, an 8th grader at Minnehaha Academy, Destiny Washington, a 7th grader at North View Junior High School, Jasmine Bussie, a 7th grader at Brooklyn Center Junior/Senior High School and Rachel Clifton, a 7th grader at Beacon Academy celebrated this prestigious achievement for their two-year service project known as Project 5000. The award was presented at the Ted Mann Concert Hall (University of Minnesota) on June 1.

The Silver Award is the highest award earned by Cadette Girl Scouts. It is a national award with national standards, awarded by Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys on behalf of Girl Scouts of the USA. This award acknowledges achievements in leadership development, with community-based actions outside of Girl Scouts having a sustainable element and incorporating personal growth.

Project 5000 involved girl led, outcome based, sustainable leadership projects based in the girls' community. A project is considered leadership when the girls address the "root cause" of an issue they are passionate about and which incorporates the community the community.

Project 5000 was born from a desire to address the growing issue of hunger in the state of Minnesota. According to a study released by the Hunger in America/Minnesota Study, hunger has doubled in Minnesota over the past five years and 40 percent of those seeking hunger relief in Minnesota are now children under the age of 18 years. Further research conducted by Feeding America revealed that one in 10 Minnesotans does not always know where he or she will find his or her next meal.

Project 5000 was inspired by a parable told in the book of Mark 6:30-44 in which Jesus feeds a crowd of 5,000 people. The goal of the project is to help end hunger by teaching people how to grow food themselves and educate adults and children on the importance of eating healthy food and what qualifies as eating health food.

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Over the span of two years, the Project 5000 team spent their Saturdays learning about permaculture and working alongside urban farmers affiliated with PRI Cold Climate and the University of Minnesota's Master Gardners' programs. The scouts also partnered with Gardening Matters to deliver harvest to a local food shelf in north Minneapolis. To address the sustainable component of their project, the team partnered with 3rd and 4th grade students from Lucy Craft Laney School to grow seedlings over the winter months which eventually the students transferred into large containers to be housed in their back yards for the purpose of providing healthy food to their families and others in their communities.