

Rachel Peck's Gold Project: Aerial Silks Physics Lab

Rachel developed a physics lab curriculum that applies challenging concepts to real-life applications in the dance and circus world. Her motivation for the project was to inspire students and engage them mentally and physically.



How did you come up with your idea? My sister Emory and I were messing around in Aerial class, when our teacher, Megrez Mosher, jumped up and yelled, “PHYSICS!” She proceeded to talk about how physics concepts applied to our circus tricks, especially spinning. It was at home that night that the project was born during a conversation between my mom and I. We talked about the timeliness of a project like this, as well as why this project would be needed.

Were you intimidated by the scale of the project? At first, I thought I would be fine. Then, I realized how much work there was to do. There was a daunting moment when I legitimately thought I would not succeed. Thankfully, with the help of my team, we managed to overcome the mountain of work.

How did you keep up the momentum for the project? Having a set schedule, and my mentors to constantly push me helped me get things done.

Were you ever discouraged? I was discouraged when I started working on the project. Planning and getting it approved was one challenge, but actually doing the project was even harder. Thankfully, I had the support of my friends and family to get me through.

Can you tell us a little story about some part of your project that was funny, or touching, or that went terribly wrong and how you fixed it? They say that hate is a strong word, so I guess I “strongly disliked” it when my editing program deleted my entire project... multiple times. The frustration and disbelief were unfathomable. I can’t tell you in words how much I wanted to cry. But of course, I couldn’t. I was too numb. Where was my project? Why wouldn’t undo work? Control-z? That didn’t work either. I tried every trick in the book. But no, I was stuck. Thankfully it all worked out, so it’s nice to look back and laugh at my “little” bump in the road.

How will people benefit from this? Over 300+ people have already benefitted from my project, and that number rises every day (within and outside my community).

How did you feel after you finished? Relieved because there was this huge weight lifted from my shoulders. I was done, and everything was complete. Looking back over the project there was no way to avoid a sense of pride. This was my project through and through, and no one could take that away from me.

What advice would you give to other girls considering a Gold Award? Make sure you don't bite off more than you can chew. You want your project to be manageable. Also, the product will almost never look like the image in your head. So, don't torture yourself when something doesn't go as planned. Sometimes changes are necessary.

Your Gold Project made a change for the better in your community. Did it change you? My Gold Project honed my leadership skills in ways I didn't know existed. I learned the values of time management and relying on a trusted team.

Please give us a brief outline of your Girl Scout history and your future plans. I've been a Girl Scout for 13 years. I was a brownie, a Junior, a Cadette, and now a Senior ready to take on the world. Girl Scouts has shown me what true sisterhood looks like, which is why I plan on joining as a lifetime member.