

Elizabeth Schisler's Gold Project: Summer Reading Camp

For Schisler's Gold Award project she successfully created a summer reading camp at the Boys and Girls Club of Ozark. Schisler first came up with the idea for her Girl Scout Gold Award project after noticing a friend having a hard time spelling. After doing some research, she found that this wasn't uncommon for people who didn't get a firm foundation in reading and spelling. That's when Schisler decided she needed to take action and fight against illiteracy in her community.



Please give an overview (summary) of your Gold Award Project and the steps you took to complete it. My Gold Award project was a summer reading camp at the Boys and Girls Club of Ozark. It dealt with fighting against illiteracy in my community. The camp lasted for eight weeks and I took several steps in my project. The main step in my project was research. I spent a lot of time researching different techniques and learning methods that would work best for my project. Another important step in my project was training. I had to go through Gold Award training and Boys and Girls Club volunteer training. The next step was planning. Without my lesson plans I would have had a hard time at the beginning of my project.

How did you come up with your idea? I came up with my idea when I noticed a friend of mine, who was a Girl Scout in my troop, was having a hard time spelling simple words. With her being a senior at the local high school, this really troubled me. I did some research and found that this was common. Kids would not get a sound foundation in reading and spelling when they were young and it would get worse if not corrected. This surprised me and inspired me to fight this in my community.

Did the scale of the project intimidate you? At first, I was nervous to start my Gold Award. It is such a huge accomplishment to complete it. My sister, Stephanie Schisler, assured me that I would have no problem completing my project. She told me that if I worked hard and believed in what I was doing I would succeed. I took what she said to heart seeing as she had completed her Gold Award several years ago. She helped me overcome my intimidation for my Gold Award.

How did you keep up the momentum for the project? I would remember why I was doing this project and whom it was for. I would think about how proud I would be when I finished my project. That helped me get through some of the rough days I had.

Were you ever discouraged? If so, what did you do to overcome that? I would get frustrated sometimes because I had to wake up every morning at 6:00. Also, I could never take a day off my project. I would sometimes miss out on hanging out with friends and family. Whenever I felt discouraged, I remembered why and whom I was doing this for. That would give me the energy I needed to wake up and finish the day wholeheartedly.

Can you tell us a little story about some part of your project that was special to you? Something funny, or touching, or that went terribly wrong and how you fixed it? Something I thought funny about my project was that every day before Mrs. Jessica had given me my class, I would go into the gym. All the kids that attended the Boys and Girls Club would be sitting in lines with the rest of their age groups. There were always several volunteers in the gym to ensure that the kids did not get out of control. When I would walk in the gym, several of my students would see me and run out of their lines to hug me. Then they would tell me a story about what they did the day before all at once. This would always frustrate the volunteers because the kids were supposed to be seated in their lines. The volunteers would tell them to sit down but they would always run back to me to finish their stories.

How will people benefit from this? People benefited through my project in different ways. The kids who participated were greatly benefited because they all sharpened their reading skills. That is something you never forget. Also, the parents and the Boys and Girls Club benefited because my program was free to participants. Therefore, the parents did not have to pay any extra money for their kids to be in my class, and the Boys and Girls Club had a free program that did not deal with playing video games. The kids who completed my program and ones who will complete it in the future will never forget what they learned.

How did you feel after you finished? I felt good when I had finished my project. On the last day of class, all the kids were smiling and showing off their medals to each other. That really made me proud of what I had done and myself. I made a real difference in their lives and in that Boys and Girls Club.

What advice would you give to other girls considering a Gold Award? When you're choosing what to do for your project, make sure you choose something that speaks to you. You have to put a lot of time and energy into this project. Make sure you spend it doing something you love.

Your Gold Project made a change for the better in your community. Did it change you? If so, how? Did you learn new skills, or change your outlook on an issue? What will you take away from this experience? My project forced me to get out of my comfort zone. I was the center of attention in the classroom every day. I remember how nervous I was on my first day. I thought I might say something wrong and everyone would laugh at me; however, I found the kids were just as nervous as me. When it came time to read, some of the kids did not want to read for the same reasons as me. I quickly got over my nervousness and began to help my students overcome theirs.

Please give us a brief outline of your Girl Scout history and your future plans. I have been involved with Girl Scouts ever since I could walk. My mother, Pam Schisler, has always been a troop leader. She would take me to meetings when I was little. I naturally joined Girl Scouts as soon as I was able. When I was still young, I remember my sister completing her Gold Award. She was so passionate about what she was doing that she would work all day. I admired her and wanted to complete my Gold Award from then on. I have been in Girl Scouts from Daisies to Ambassador, and I plan on being involved long after I finish.