

PRESS RELEASE



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FOR RELEASE ON RECEIPT

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COLUMBIA CITY – Melissa Didion, of Columbia City, received the Girl Scout Gold Award; the highest award a Senior Girl Scout can earn, at Indiana Lakeland Girl Scout Council's Girl Awards ceremony conducted at Bethany Church of the Brethren in New Pairs, on Monday, April 14.

The award was presented by Kara Noland, teen projects coordinator at Indiana Lakeland Girl Scout Council, for distinguished achievement by demonstrating leadership, strength of character, commitment to excellence, service to community, and for exemplifying the ideals of the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

Didion focused her community service project on youth empowerment by conducting a Leadership Academy for girls 8-12 years old. The emphasis was on self confidence, positive attitudes, teamwork, communication skills and assertiveness. She worked with 2 different groups of girls, one in Columbia City and one in Churubusco, meeting once a week for 6 weeks.

Also stressed in the Leadership Academy was the importance of community service. Didion initiated a pen-pal program between the girls in the Leadership Academy and residents of a local retirement center. As a result, the girls in the program connected with the residents and continue to stay in touch and plan activities together.

In recognition of her Gold Award, Didion received congratulatory messages from over 30 state and local organizations including; Girl Scouts of the United States Chief Executive Officer Kathy Cloninger,

President and Laura Bush, Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels, Senator Evan Byah, Columbia City Mayor James Fleck and representatives from the FBI, Attorney General, Columbia City Chamber of Commerce, Wrigley Jr. Company, CIA, Navy, Air Force, Kiwanis, Rotary and the Columbia City Elks Lodge #1417.

Didion is a senior at Columbia City High School and has plans to attend Manchester College to major in Physical Education and minor in Adaptive Physical Education. In addition to her Gold Award accomplishment, Didion has been chosen to receive a \$500 college scholarship from Indiana Lakeland Girl Scout Council.