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Girl Scouts honor volunteers, community organizations

STAFF REPORT

Volunteer Belia Garneau of Imperial Valley and three organizations from the area were honored during Girl Scouts San Diego recent Volunteer Celebration.

"We applaud the Imperial Valley award recipients for their outstanding contributions to Girl Scouting," said Nina Crabtree, Girl Scout membership recruitment and support specialist for Imperial Valley.

Garneau received an appreciation pin for bolstering the Girl Scout mission. As a Girl Scout troop leader, Garneau has grown Girl Scouts' presence in the Imperial Valley, creating countless community service events and increasing participation in the Girl Scout Cookie program, through which girls learn key life and leadership skills. Plus, she heightens Girl Scouts' public profile by reminding troops to wear their uniforms, a practice she models by always dressing in Girl Scout attire herself.

The following establishments were presented with Friendship Awards for supporting the Girl Scout mission through superior service, contributions or assistance:

■ Grace Lutheran Church was recognized for providing space for Girl Scout events for the past six years—heightening Girl Scout visibility in El Centro while serving as a place for volunteers to connect and build friendships. Represented at the Volunteer Celebration by Reverend Doug Griebenaw, the church hosts ser-



Imperial Valley was in the spotlight during Girl Scouts San Diego's 2019 Volunteer Celebration. Back row, from left: volunteers Stephanie Campos and Rene Pollard; Girl Scouts San Diego's Nina Crabtree and CEO Carol Dedrich; volunteer Kay Hodges; volunteers Rebecca Haro and Edith Amador. Front row: Rev. Doug Griebenaw, Grace Lutheran Church, El Centro; volunteer Belia Garneau; Gina Hendrix, Imperial Unified School District. COURTESY PHOTO

vice unit meetings, a special summer camp showcase, a Girl Scout Sunday program, and many CPR and council trainings. Girl Scouts' Imperial Valley Service Unit (which supports members in the area) credits its expanding membership to the collaborative efforts of Rev. Griebenaw and his church.

■ The Imperial Unified School District received the accolade for delivering an exceptional level of support to

Girl Scouts in the area. Gina Hendrix, director of business services, accepted the award during the event. The district encourages parents to get involved in Girl Scouts, and provides space for troop meetings and other functions. Its schools have become popular meeting spots for "IV" Girl Scouts. The school district also supports the Girl Scout Cookie program by allowing volunteers to host kickoffs for upwards of

200 girls per campus. And on cookie delivery day, the schools transform into convenient "mega drop" sites for volunteers.

■ Gateway Church of Brawley was lauded for becoming a hub for the Imperial Valley Service Unit's expansive northern area. The church opens its doors for a wide range of Girl Scout events, from trainings, to adult recognitions and troop activities. Most notably, it provides a pinewood track for the annual Girl Scout Powder Puff Derby. Gateway's contributions include testing the track in advance so volunteers can focus on the running the program.

"We deeply appreciate the achievements of this year's Volunteer Celebration honorees," said Girl Scouts San Diego CEO Carol Dedrich. "Their support is key to our mission of building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place."

Emceed by KUSI News Co-anchor and Girl Scout alum Ginger Jeffries, the Volunteer Celebration took place at the San Diego Hilton Resort on Mission Bay. The awards program commends individuals who were selected by their peers for going above and beyond the duties of their volunteer positions.

Girl Scouts is the best leadership development organization for girls. To learn about Girl Scouting opportunities for volunteers and girls in grades K-12, visit sdgirlscouts.org, or contact Nina Crabtree, ncrabtree@sdgirlscouts.org, (760) 996-4497.

Girl Scouts find magic at Camp Winacka

BY STEFANIE CAMPOS

Special to This Newspaper

Imperial Valley Girl Scouts experienced a magical weekend May 3-5 at Camp Winacka in Julian at the Imperial Valley Service Unit's annual encampment.

This year's theme, "HERry Potter," guided 130 attendees — 93 girls — of all ages through lessons in potions (slime), wands (STEM) and outdoor skills (high and low ropes courses, archery, slingshot, hiking) as well as bonding over conversation and emerging leadership skills.

Genie Flores Wyatt, with encampment co-chair Letty Flores Perez, spent a great deal of their time preparing and implementing for a challenging and inspiring weekend.

"I did really enjoy planning and executing a fun outdoor weekend for troops to bond. I love that the girls chose to challenge themselves on the ropes courses and learn electronics with the wand making," Flores Wyatt said.

If you have a girl who would like to build her courage and confidence through Girl Scouts, call Nina Crabtree, membership recruitment and support specialist in Imperial Valley at (760) 996-4497 or email ncrabtree@sdgirlscouts.org.

