

"Because of you I didn't give up."



BOULDER CREST
RETREAT



Going for Gold

GABRIELLE STETHM, GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARD RECIPIENT

While many are familiar with the Boy Scouts of America and the Eagle Scout Award, Gabrielle Stethem wants everyone to know about the Gold Award; the highest achievement bestowed upon a girl from the Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA).

Gabrielle started Girl Scouts as a Brownie, since she was too shy to be a Daisy. She has always loved being a Girl Scout but there was always one issue for her. "Boy Scouts seems to revolve a lot around the military and Girl Scouts is focused on community and environment," she explained. Gabrielle did not want to be limited in her quest to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, and embarked on a mission to earn the award with a focus on what she holds close to her heart, the military.

In order for a project to be considered for the Gold Award, it has to be self-sustaining, or continue on after the project ends. Gabrielle's project included working with military kids from **Boulder Creek Retreat for Military and Veteran Wellness**, a center to heal military members, veterans, and their families dealing with combat-related stress. "While the veterans and spouses have therapy or activities to help them reach the best life they can have, there's a gap in the activities for the kids, so I tried to fill that for my Gold Award."

Focusing on three different elements, Gabrielle worked to develop fun, engaging, productive activities. Through play, art and games, Gabrielle interacted with the kids. "We talked about feelings a little bit so they can feel more comfortable with the situation they have been put in," described Gabrielle. "We had a lot of fun... but I also wanted these kids to walk away from Boulder Crest knowing that someone acknowledged and appreciated them for sharing their parents with the rest of us."

Gabrielle stressed the importance of military kids knowing and understanding that they, and not just their parents, are special to their country, too. Her project's goal was to ensure that all members of a military family are appreciated and they all have resources to cope. It was important to Gabrielle that military kids felt, "...proud for being a part of their military family. I also hope that my project encourages people to remember the kids of those who serve."

