

## Katie Kirk's Gold Award: College Entrance Test Prep Resources

Katie's Gold Award project focused on providing internet resources for high school students preparing for college entrance examinations. Her website is <http://everystudentcan.weebly.com/> We interview all Gold Award recipients, asking them to tell us more about their personal journey, to give other girls an idea of how it feels to go through the Gold Award process.



**How did you come up with your idea?** I noticed that many of my friends had no idea how to start preparing for exams related to getting into college, like the ACT, SAT, and PSAT. In high school, I was lucky enough to get test prep and to have teachers and friends' older siblings to tell me how to these tests strategically, and I wanted all students in my community to have access to the information that I had. I decided to create a website to house the information I gathered throughout my high school career.

**Were you intimidated by the scale of the project?** I've been a Girl Scout since I was seven, and I knew since I was ten that I wanted to earn the Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards. Although there were days when I said I "wanted to give up," I knew what I really wanted was to have the website finished so that students could have access to my information even after I graduated and to earn the Gold Award I had spent so much time preparing to earn. And in the words of the Baker's Wife from *Into the Woods*, "If you know what you want, then you go and you find it and you get it."

**How did you keep up the momentum for the project?** I kept talking to students and parents and homeschool groups and guidance counselors, all of whom reinforced my gut feeling that the project filled a need for the students and families who needed information about preparing for college.

**Were you ever discouraged? If so, what did you do to overcome that?** I got very frustrated late one night while I was about halfway done writing the content for the website. I put away the computer, called my best friend Stephanie, and went outside. Stephanie gave me a pep talk, proofread what I had done so far, and gave me the permission to call it a night and the encouragement to keep going tomorrow.

**Can you tell us a story about some part of your project that was special to you?** A local student told me that my website was like a giant pep talk and that my research took a weight off her shoulders. That made the project worth it.

**How will people benefit from this?** Local students now have a well-known resource with convenient, encouraging information about preparing for college entrance exams.

**How did you feel after you finished?** Relieved.

***What advice would you give to other girls considering a Gold Award?*** Writing the proposal is the hardest part. Push through that phase. Explain your idea to everyone who will listen, and soon you'll figure out a way to explain it quickly and effectively that works for the proposal.

***How did your Gold Project change you?*** I learned that as soon as a genuine need is identified, community support is fierce. I learned to give myself grace.

***Please give us a brief outline of your Girl Scout history and your future plans.*** I started in Troop 7098 as a first-year Brownie, and stayed in the same troop until I graduated from high school. I am currently a student at Auburn University with a double major in philosophy and history.