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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TWO SOUTHLAND GIRL SCOUTS RECEIVE NATIONAL HONOR FOR CREATING SUSTAINABLE HEALTH, EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Yue “Cherry” Ying (Santa Monica) and Sharleen Loh (Placentia) are two of 10 Girl Scouts in the U.S. named 2017 National Young Women of Distinction

LOS ANGELES COUNTY/ORANGE COUNTY, CA — Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles and Girl Scouts of Orange County are proud to announce that Yue “Cherry” Ying (from Santa Monica) and Sharleen Loh (from Placentia) have been selected by Girl Scouts of the USA as two of the ten 2017 National Young Women of Distinction, the highest honor in Girl Scouting, for their Girl Scout Gold Award projects, “Hand in Hand” and “STEMup4Youth,” respectively.

This special honor and designation by Girl Scouts of the USA showcases Yue’s and Sharleen’s extraordinary leadership on projects that have measurable and sustainable impact. Both girls addressed issues they saw in their communities. Yue took action on standardized health best practices in Chinese hospitals and Sharleen took action to provide STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education for youth in underserved areas. They each received \$15,000 in college scholarships from The Kappa Delta Foundation and Susan Bulkeley Butler, founder of the Susan Bulkeley Butler Institute for the Development of Women Leaders. Additionally, Sharleen Loh received the Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes and \$5,000 scholarship for her Girl Scout Gold Award project.

Yue and Sharleen will be honored at a national recognition ceremony as well as participate in a breakout discussion with Chelsea Clinton at Girl Scouts of the USA’s [G.I.R.L. 2017](#), the largest girl-led event in the world, Oct. 6–8 in Columbus, Ohio. Sharleen also recently gave remarks during the grand opening of Girl Scouts of Orange County’s Argyros Girl Scout Leadership Center, a brand new hub for Girl Scout STEM programs in Newport Beach.

Yue “Cherry” Ying, Greater Los Angeles:

After coming by herself to Santa Monica for high school from her hometown of Ningbo, China, [Yue](#) noticed that U.S. hospitals had something that she had never heard of at home: hand sanitizer stations. So, after joining Girl Scouts in order to tap into her leadership potential, she [began a Girl Scout Gold Award project](#) that eventually jumpstarted a government-sponsored program that distributes hand sanitizer every month to community hospitals in Ningbo. For her project, which took place in both U.S. and China, Yue fundraised and bought 90 bottles of hand sanitizer for community hospitals, created brochures and posters, hosted school lectures, and taught residents in the hospitals how to properly use hand sanitizer. Now, Yue is a freshman at the University of Chicago, studying actuarial studies and programming—her goal is to use data analytics, math, and technology to solve the world’s existing problems, such as cancer.

“I’d never heard about anything like Girl Scouts until I came to the U.S. three years ago by myself from China. When I learned that Girl Scouts helps girls make the world a better place, I joined right away,” Yue said. “Pursuing the Gold Award can be a great conclusion to the Girl Scout journey and an amazing start of something big in the future.”

Sharleen Loh, Orange County:

Sharleen, an avid STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) enthusiast, realized that the U.S. was lacking a sufficient STEM workforce to fill the millions of job openings projected for the next few decades. A driven self-starter, she took action to create change. For her Girl Scout Gold Award Project, Sharleen began introducing STEM to children at an early age, especially underprivileged youth who have the least resources. She founded the nonprofit [STEMup4Youth](#); recruited more than 140 volunteers; and developed more than 100 fun, hands-on STEM activities that have benefitted more than 5,000 children across Southern California. Sharleen and her volunteers host STEM programs at Boys and Girls Clubs, libraries, expos, showcases, festivals, schools, and children’s learning centers across Orange County.

“I love being able to share my passion for STEM,” Sharleen said. “I’ve become more confident and outspoken and gained practical life skills. Girl Scouts has given me the tools to solve problems and make a positive difference in the world!”

About Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles:

Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, serves more than 40,000 girls in partnership with 24,000 adult volunteers throughout the diverse communities of Los Angeles County and parts of Kern, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles is the largest girl-serving nonprofit agency in Los Angeles. Through the council's programs in entrepreneurship, life skills, outdoors, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), Girl Scouts prepares girls to practice a lifetime of leadership. To join, volunteer, reconnect, or support, visit GirlScoutsLA.org or call 213-213-0123.

About Girl Scouts of Orange County:

We are Girl Scouts of Orange County. We are 34,000 strong-- nearly 21,000 girls and 13,000 adults who believe in the power of every G.I.R.L. (Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader)™ to change the world. With programs in every zip code in Orange County, Girl Scouts offers every girl opportunities to practice a lifetime of leadership, adventure, and success. To volunteer, reconnect, donate, or join, visit GirlScoutsOC.org.



Photo caption: Yue "Cherry" Ying, a Girl Scout alumna from Santa Monica and Ningbo, China, created a program that jumpstarted a government program to bring hand sanitizer to Ningbo, China. Her project included hosting school lectures and more. For her work, she was named one of 10 2017 National Young Women of Distinction by Girl Scouts of the USA.



Photo caption: Sharleen Loh, a 17-year-old Girl Scout from Placentia, CA demonstrates the classic Mentos and Coke volcano with kids at a Boys and Girls Club participating in a program provided by her nonprofit, STEMup4Youth. For her work, she was named one of 10 2017 National Young Women of Distinction by Girl Scouts of the USA.