



Courtesy photo

TEEN'S TECHNOLOGY—Annabelle Miller's online video game teaches senior residents at the Calabasas Motion Picture and Television Fund how to spot online scams.

Scout project tackles digital danger

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A Calabasas teenager is helping seniors and classmates alike outsmart online scams—and earning Girl Scouting's highest honor along the way.

Annabelle Miller, a local high school student and longtime member of the Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles, has earned the Girl Scouts of the USA Gold Award for creating an interactive online video game that teaches players how to spot digital dangers.

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the organization's highest and most prestigious achievement. The award recognizes high school seniors and ambassadors who demonstrate extraordinary leadership by identifying a community issue, building a team and creating a sustainable project with measurable impact. Fewer than 6% of eligible Girl Scouts nationwide earn the distinction.

Miller's project tackles a growing problem: online scams and digital deception.

"Can you tell when an image has been generated by AI? Do you know how to navigate spam text messages? Have you ever rejected internet cookies?" Miller asks players at the start of her game.

Through interactive challenges, users learn to distinguish AI-generated images from authentic ones, practice responding to scam text messages and adjust cookie settings to better protect their privacy. The goal is to build confidence and practical skills in a digital landscape that is increasingly difficult to navigate.

The inspiration for the project was personal.

Over the past several years, Miller watched her grandparents and their friends contend with relentless scams. Some were targeted with scare tactics. Others fell victim to impersonators who stole thousands of dollars. Even those who avoided financial loss were left shaken.

Seeing the emotional toll, Miller decided to focus her Gold Award project on empowering seniors with hands-on education.

She spent more than a year researching online fraud trends, coding and testing the game. Along the way, she discovered that the need extended beyond older adults. Classmates who tested the game reported learning new strategies to identify manipulated images and avoid phishing attempts.

To bring the project directly to seniors, Miller partnered with the Motion Picture & Television Fund Wasserman Campus in Woodland Hills, a residential community for industry retirees. There, she led workshops using her game as a teaching tool, guiding residents through real-world scenarios in a supportive setting.

She hopes to expand the program to reach more seniors in Calabasas and neighboring Canoga Park.

Miller, who has been a Girl Scout since kindergarten, said earning the Gold Award is especially meaningful because it reflects years of growth in leadership and service.

With her project, she aims to ensure that people of all ages feel safer and more confident online—proving that a determined teen can make a powerful difference in the digital world.

For more information about joining or volunteering with Girl Scouts, visit girlscoutsla.org.

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