

Curtis Park Girl Scout troop moves on to college after six years together

*By Christine Rodrigues
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Graduation time is approaching once again at McClatchy High School, but there's something different about this year's class. Among the graduates is a very special group of young women, most of whom live in Curtis Park and have known each other since elementary school.

Sisters Kristin and Sarah Hansel, Annabelle Ostrander, Rose Levenson-Palmer, Sondra Morishima, and Emily Robinson are among the very few who have continued their membership in Girl Scouts through high school, even when others thought it wasn't fashionable.

"In middle school, some girls didn't think it was 'cool' to be in Girl Scouts," said Kristin, so the six became a troop. Five of the six graduates have been in the same troop together since seventh grade. Their leader, Kate Williams, mother of Kristin and Sarah Hansel, is understandably proud of the girls, who have all been involved in community service in a variety of ways. Many of them have completed Gold Projects, the highest Girl Scout award. Such projects take two to three years to complete.

Their work as Girl Scouts includes teaching young children, acting as a resource to fellow students, conducting supply drives for those in need, and various other forms of community service. Their focus includes the arts, environmental science, organ donation, model United Nations, and teaching tolerance.

The troop members are preparing to go college in various parts of the country and are interested in widely varying subjects. Despite the distance, they plan to stay connected via e-mail.



From lower, clockwise: Annabelle Ostrander, Kristin Hansel, Rose Levenson-Palmer, Sarah Hansel, Sondra Morishima, Emily Robinson, and leader, Kate Williams.
Photo/Christine Rodrigues

Some of the troop members have finalized their college selection while others are still considering their options. Rose will attend Columbia University in New York and will focus on biology and genetics. Annabelle is attending U.C. Santa Cruz. Emily will attend Willamette, her mother's alma mater, and is interested in pursuing psychology, literature and the humanities. Sarah plans to major in English, and is considering Willamette or Louis and Clark in Oregon. Kristin will attend U.C. Santa Barbara while Sondra is considering New York University and U.C. Berkeley.

Some of the girls' fondest memories are their time together snow camping, river rafting, surfing, and kayaking under the Bay Bridge. "This is a great group of girls," said troop leader Kate.