



Michaela Paltzik

Helping Paws

Michaela Paltzik's love for animals, education, and community service inspired her Gold Award project, Helping Paws. What began as a personal goal to train her own dog as a therapy animal quickly grew into a larger mission as Michaela discovered her passion for dog training and wanted to help others experience the benefits of therapy dogs and learn how to train their own. Michaela used her experience training her dog, Fifi, and volunteer work across Phoenix with the Alliance of Therapy Dogs, to develop a comprehensive training manual and lesson plan to guide others in certifying their pets as therapy animals. Michaela distributed her manual and created a Therapy Dog Patch program, educating over 100 Girl Scouts on the role of therapy dogs and their impact. Helping Paws extended throughout Phoenix to bring comfort and long-lasting awareness of therapy dogs to the community. An 11-year Girl Scout, Michaela is now preparing to attend Texas A&M University, where she will major in Animal Science with plans to become a veterinarian.

