

# Nashua organization names year's top girl

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### Staff photo by Emily Berl

Girl Inc.'s 2007 Girl of the Year Kristina Gibbs, left, is congratulated by 2006 Girl of the Year Destiny Davis at the Girl of the Year ceremony in Nashua on Wednesday.

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NASHUA – None of the 12 girls at Girls Inc. knew who would be named Girl of the Year on Wednesday during ceremonies held in the club's back yard.

But each sat quietly on a stage facing an audience of club and family members, hoping to be the one.

Each had been a Girl of the Month and included Paige Hubbard, June's girl; Thalia Garcia, July; Kaitlin McKinley, September; Deja Clark, October; Kristina Gibbs, November; Maria Guerrero, December; Ayla Thorntona, January; Lizbeth Ramirez, February; Miranda Zwicker, March; Amanda Buckley, April; and Samantha Brooks, May.

"We wish we could have picked all of them," Nicole Power, the club's regional director, said. "But there's only one Girl of the Year."

Then the director began to describe the year's winner.

"She lives for and loves Girls Inc.," Power said, using the word "dedicated" to describe the girl who was being recognized for her leadership, compassion, perseverance and sincerity.

It was the word "dedicated" that made Kristina Gibbs perk up.

For years, adults have used that word to describe Kristina, praising the youngster for her enthusiasm, sense of humor and involvement in the club.

"She's a part of everything," Power said during an interview before the ceremony. "She's involved in sports. She volunteers."

Kristina, dressed in a jean skirt, T-shirt and flip-flops, walked the short distance from her chair to where Power was standing holding a pastel-colored gift bag.

She accepted two hugs; one from Power and another from Pamela Caetano, assistant regional director, while the audience of club and family members cheered, hooted and howled their congratulations.

Kristina was named Girl of the Month in November, the fourth time she received the honor in four years.

"She's very comical. She can make anybody laugh. She's a good friend. She's committed to the program," Power said.

As Girl of the Year, Kristina will be recognized with an engraved plaque hung in the building. She will also attend a statewide Girl of the Year banquet at the Manchester Country Club on June 19.

There are four Girls Incorporated programs in the state, and each club selects a Girl of the Year.

Kristina is the daughter of Nashua residents Peter and Cheryl Gibbs. She attends Elm Street Junior High School, where her favorite subjects are math and technical education.

She excels at sports and has studied clarinet for four years, she said.

The middle child in a family of three girls, Kristina said she wants to be an automotive master mechanic when she grows up.

For now, though, her sights are set on the immediate future: her 13th birthday on June 21, a year traveling across the state to make public appearances as Girl of the Year, and entry into the eighth-grade next fall.

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