

Advancement News

January-February
2019

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Prepared. For Life.®

Previous issues are available at <https://www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/advancement-and-awards/advancement-news/>

Opportunities for Advancement Administrators

Opportunities Abound to Become a Trained Leader

You have heard it said that “every Scout deserves a trained leader,” and on that point, surely, we all agree! So, certainly all direct contact leaders should take the appropriate available job-specific online or council conducted face-to-face training courses. However, how about supplemental education for already -trained leaders, or perhaps committee members, or even interested parents or other community members? Where does the BSA provide these kinds of opportunities?

Some of this can be accomplished at the annual council university of Scouting-type events or ongoing district trainings. Nationally, many of these types of supplemental educational opportunities are available in January at the Sea Base in the Florida Keys and during summer months at the Philmont Training Center in northern New Mexico. Both of these venues provide excellent housing, dining, and training facilities for participants and have fabulous spouse programs. Philmont even has age-appropriate programs for all the kids of attendees.

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Well trained Scouters and leaders are crucial to the success our children's experience in the Scouting program. Use the opportunities available to you locally and nationally to make sure that you are a contributor to a successful Scouting program for all of our youth. And, you can have some fun doing it with your spouse and family at one or the other of the national sites referenced in this article.

Great Scouting to each of you and your units and families. See you on the Scouting trail!



For more information about January 2019 Sea Base offerings go to: www.bsaseabase.org/ConferenceCenter.aspx and you will find a Volunteer Training Conference brochure with all necessary information.



For more information about summertime 2019 Philmont offerings go to: www.philmontscoutranch.org/PTC and you will find links to conference dates, registration, and family programs.

Advancement Education Materials Updates Available Soon

Your National Advancement Program Team has been reviewing and updating many of the currently available educational materials. Updates have been made to reflect the many changes in the various programs of the Boy Scouts of America. Look for the revised Advancement Educational Presentations and videocasts to be loaded to the resources page on or about February 1, 2019.

In particular, *Cub Scout Advancement: Delivering Adventure* now includes references to the Lion Cub Scout advancement. It includes references to the Cub Scout program handbooks and reviews the required adventures for all Cub Scout levels. In addition, topics such as Cub Scouts with Special Needs, Advancement, and Day and Resident Camps are addressed, and Adult Recognition awards are discussed. The presentation has an expiration date of January 31, 2021.

Also, the *Today's Advancement* presentation now includes references to girl troops and the impact on events tied to advancement. This course provides new and experienced unit, district and council advancement administrators in-depth education regarding the management of advancement according to the *Guide to Advancement*. The course has been structured to allow district and council advancement chairs to provide this education locally, on schedules which best fit council and district operations. Topics such as management of unit advancement programs, building advancement committees, available advancement education materials, mechanics of advancement, coordinating positions of responsibilities, the merit

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badge program, boards of review, and more are covered.

The current videocasts are being converted to PowerPoint presentations and should be available in February 2019. In the meantime, the content of the videocasts is good and they can be used until replaced by the new PowerPoints.

These and many other educational materials will help districts, councils and units provide accurate and timely advancement information for Scouters in their area.



On Increasing Advancement

Using Advancement in Your Scouting Program

Every Scouting activity moves and motivates our youth toward our basic aims of character development, citizenship training, mental and physical fitness, and leadership development. We achieve mission fulfillment using the methods of Scouting. These methods are Scouting's ideals, use of patrols, the outdoors, advancement, personal growth, adult association, leadership development, and the uniform. None of these methods are goals by themselves. They are merely methods that we use. All of them work together. They reinforce and enhance each other.

For example, by making proper use of advancement, the result will be to achieve greater advancement. Contrary to what some would have you believe, rank advancement is not the primary objective of Scouting. But to repeat, this is not so, advancement is merely a method we use to achieve our aims.

So, how does advancement work in our Scouting activities? Advancement serves our aims in many ways. It is a result of a well-rounded unit program. A unit's program is designed so that opportunities for advancement abound. For example, because there are advancement requirements to participate in activities involving service, meaningful service projects are included in a unit's program. Being a part of a service project teaches among other things, charity and citizenship. Because outdoor activities are included in the advancement requirements, these are part of the unit program. Because Scouts are going outdoors, they need certain skills. Many of these skills are covered by advancement requirements to learn these Scouting skills and thus, are included in the program. Advancement then becomes a natural experiential outgrowth of the program plan.

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Be sure not to neglect the final part of the advancement equation—recognition! You may have heard the myth that a Scout may be recognized only once for a particular achievement. Please be assured that this is false. Recognition is the reward a Scout receives for the achievement. Why would you be stingy with that? Take every occasion that you can to recognize a Scout's achievements. You might announce a Scout's achievement when it is first earned. Again, when you've turned in an advancement report and have the badge. Perhaps when you take the unit to church and have the badge blessed. Again, recognize the Scout at the next court of honor. Remember that you can hold a court of honor at summer camp.

Advancement recognition is the reward a Scout receives for their accomplishments. By making sure the advancement is an integral part of a unit's program, the result is to increase advancement and keep Scouts in Scouting longer. We will thus fulfill our mission. Now isn't that what we're all about.



New Member Coordinator Supports Advancement

The New Member Coordinators for units have been engaging and helping families for many months now. Though not specifically designed as a Scouting position to increase advancement, NMC's can have a positive impact on advancement within the unit.

- The New Member Coordinator shares the benefits of Scouting with new families. They can emphasize to families that the principal benefit to Scouts is in what they have learned and experienced, and they will also receive belt loops or patches to recognize their achievements.
- New Member Coordinators serve as the information source for new families, who may not be aware of the aims and purposes of Scouting and probably do not realize how the benefits of Scouting are achieved. They will help families to understand why and how Scouts accomplish advancement. For Cub Scouts, for example, they can suggest reviewing the handbooks, attending den meetings, and supplementing those activities with additional experiences within the home.
- The New Member Coordinator works to make members feel welcome and build relationships. There is no better way to develop the relationship with the family than to be sure that their Scout is advancing, and that the Scout's advancement has been recognized! A word of congratulations at the pack meeting will go a long way to encourage the next milestone.



For more information, visit the New Member Care website at [Scouting.org/NMC](https://www.scouting.org/NMC) or join the New Member Coordinator Facebook group. Send questions to NMC@scouting.org.

Cub Scouts BSA

Lions Are Up and Running



Last week, the father of a Lion mentioned that when he and his son, Charlie, attended their first pack meeting, his eyes grew wide as the flag ceremony began. Charlie was in awe, and when talking with his father on the way home that night, asked him if someday he would be able to carry the flag.

Lions, our kindergarten-age Cub Scouts, are now full members of the Cub Scout program! Until this program year, they were part of a pilot program being sampled by some of our packs. We hope that every Cub Scout pack now has an active Lion den of boys and a Lion den of girls.



In feedback received from the volunteers, parents, and councils that participated in the Lion pilot program, we learned that Lions and their families want to feel welcomed as full members of the pack. Be sure to invite them to your pack meetings and pack activities. Parents can decide what the right level of activity is for their own child, so we recognize that although Lions are invited to these activities, they may not attend each one.

Plan to make the Blue and Gold Banquet a special opportunity for the Lions and their families. Imagine how exciting it will be for our youngest members to see their entire pack celebrating together!

Hear It First on Twitter

If you want the news first, follow the National Advancement Program Team on Twitter. Topics cover the FAQs received at the national office, clarifications on policies and procedures, news on changes and new releases, and best practices in advancement.

If you already have a Twitter account, follow us at **@AdvBSA** or **"BSA Advancement Team."** If you don't have an account, it is a quick and easy process to set up an account at www.twitter.com. To limit incoming emails ('tweets'), you can select to have BSA National Advancement Team as the only account you want to follow.

Note: Advancement questions should be directed to advancement.team@scouting.org.

Did You Receive These Tweets?

- **September 20, 2018** – Say "Yes" to Florida in January! Register now and plan to attend Sea Base as a participant in the "Conference on Education for Advancement Administrators" or the "Leading & Strengthening New Troops" courses.
- **October 19, 2018** – Philmont registration for 2019 Advancement courses is now open. Register at philmontscoutranch.org/PTC/conference ... See You There!!

Scouts BSA



February 1st Is here – District Support for New Units

February 1 is a month or so away, and all-girl troops are being formed to welcome girls into Scouts BSA. Let's review how those units will be best served and get off to a great start for the youth.

- Training: Have all the future leaders of this troop been trained for their position? If adult leaders are not already selected, are the dates, times and locations of local training opportunities available to share with adults when recruiting is occurring? The district training chair will be a good resource to supply this information
- Support opportunities: In addition to taking training for the adult scouting position, most districts have monthly roundtables. Have the location information available for the new leadership and encourage attendance where they will find experienced Scouting volunteers eager to help with their questions. Don't forget the many advancement materials such as videos and PowerPoints at the Advancement Resources page.
- Unit commissioner for the new troop: The unit commissioner is an experienced adult Scouter who is a wealth of information and knowledge as to program, advancement, and local sites for fun and educational outings. They will provide great support for the new adult leaders to guide the youth troop leadership. The district commissioner will advise the new unit on recruitment efforts to provide a designated unit commissioner.
- Recruiting readiness: Review and have available appropriate official Boy Scouts of America (BSA) materials. If the troop has formulated dates for future events, a calendar to share with interested families will help the future members get excited about the great opportunities ahead.

<https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/Implementation-Details-for-Scouts-BSA-Final.pdf>

Visit this site to review the guidelines for those girls and boys just now joining Scouts BSA to follow the trail to become Eagle Scouts.

Visit the [Family Scouting page](#) Select the 'Scouts BSA Program Resources' for more detailed information.

About *Advancement News*

Follow the National Advancement Program Team on Twitter!

(BSA Advancement Team, @AdvBSA)

Advancement News is the official e-letter of the Boy Scouts of America National Advancement Program Team. Its intent is to provide and clarify procedures found in the *Guide to Advancement*, announce various changes and updates in advancement, and to assist advancement committees in making decisions that can help increase the rate of advancement. Therefore, districts and councils may reprint articles from this publication. Our plan is to distribute six issues of *Advancement News* annually, but special editions may go out whenever there is important information to share. Feedback, suggestions, and letters to the editor are welcome at

advancement.team@scouting.org.

Merit Badges

Scouting Heritage Merit Badge Update

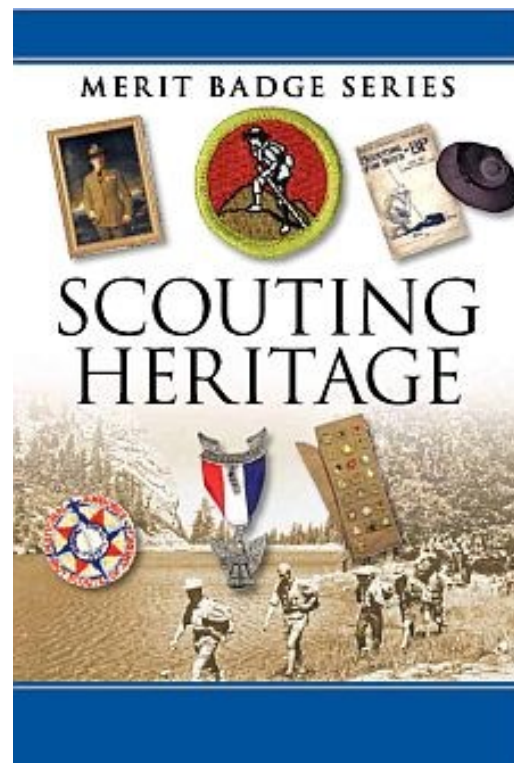
Scouting history reached a new milestone this past year as the National Scouting Museum opened at Philmont Scout Ranch. This grand opening has an effect on *one* of the requirements to earn this merit badge (Requirement 4b). This may now be accomplished by visiting the new museum at Philmont Scout Ranch in person. The alternate for requirement 4b, as before, is to write to the museum via e-mail or traditional mail to accomplish 4b. Note that there are two additional options to complete requirement #4 which may be to attend a BSA national jamboree or other similar event (4a), or to visit a local display of Scouting memorabilia (4c).

National Scouting Museum contact information:

e-mail: Philmont.Museums@scouting.org (include "Scouting Heritage Merit Badge" in the subject line)

US mail:

National Scouting Museum – Philmont Scout Ranch
Attention: Scouting Heritage Merit Badge
17 Deer Run Road
Cimarron, NM 87714



Managing Subscriptions to *Advancement News*

Advancement News is designed for council and district advancement committees, advancement staff advisors, and Eagle processors. However, any Scouting volunteer or professional may subscribe.

Subscribing. Send a message to advancement.team@scouting.org, with "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line. Indicate your name, email address, and council in the message text.

Unsubscribing. To decline future issues please reply and enter "REMOVE" in the subject line. We will remove the subscription within the next two weeks.

Receiving Multiple Copies. If you receive *Advancement News* at more than one email address, choose the one to be removed and reply with "REMOVE" in the subject line. Include a message requesting that we remove only that email address.

Duplicate Copies. If you receive more than one copy of *Advancement News* at the same email address, please reply to all but one of them with "DUPLICATE" in the subject line.

Address Change. If you want *Advancement News* sent to a different address, reply and enter "ADDRESS CHANGE" in the subject line. In your message, enter your council name and the email address you prefer.

Eagle, Summit, Quartermaster Highlights



Eagle Scout Proposal Approval – What Is Expected?

After a Life Scout chooses an idea for an Eagle Scout service project the next important step is to prepare a project proposal, and have it approved. Approvals are required from the unit leader, a unit committee representative, the project beneficiary, and a council or district representative. The criteria that individuals approving project proposals must consider for determining if the project is acceptable are specified in topic 9.0.2.7 of the *Guide to Advancement*. Keep in mind that the proposal is an overview, but also the *beginning* of planning. It shows the approvers that the following five tests can be met.

1. The project provides sufficient opportunity to meet the requirement.

To meet this test there must be opportunity for planning and developing the project, for giving leadership to others, and determining the project will be "helpful" to the beneficiary. Planning and development require forethought from the candidate to organize a successful project effort rather than just following directions prepared by someone else. The leadership component is met by organizing and directing others who help carry out the project. Finally, by having a project that is "helpful," we show that we intend for the project to have a positive impact for the beneficiary, although that does not mean that the project must have lasting value.

2. The project appears to be feasible.

Is it a project the Scout is capable of planning and developing and also managing to a successful conclusion? Is it reasonable to believe that the Scout will be able to obtain the necessary resources (material, supplies, and people) to properly carry out the project? Note that the second test says, "appears to be feasible."

3. Safety issues will be addressed.

The Scout is aware of potential safety issues and hazards and will address them in the project plan. The safety issues do not need to be addressed or solved in the proposal. Assurance needs to be given that the Scout is aware of the issues and that those issues will be addressed in the project plan. Since an Eagle Scout project is a unit activity, unit adult leadership has the same responsibility to assure safety while conducting a project as with any other unit activity.

4. Action steps for further detailed planning are included.

Does the proposal include some action steps for preparing the project plan? Those steps don't need to be very detailed, but they should provide a simple "road map" that the Scout can follow when developing the project plan. These action steps are critical to the final test.

5. The Scout is on the right track with a reasonable chance for a positive experience.

Does the Scout's proposal demonstrate a good understanding of what is to be accomplished? Is it reasonable to believe that the proposed project has a good chance of providing the Scout a successful outcome that will contribute to personal growth and development? It *doesn't* have to guarantee success.

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The detail required for a proposal depends on the project's complexity. Details provided must be enough to provide a level of confidence for a council or district reviewer that the above five tests can be met, but not so much detail that—based on the possibility that a proposal can be rejected—it does not respect the time it takes to prepare the proposal.

For further information and insight see *Guide to Advancement* topics 9.0.2.3 - 9.0.2.5 and 9.0.2.14.

Special Needs Interests

Special Needs Specialist Can Make for a Great Resource

In past issues we've talked about the importance of having a special needs specialist functioning at the council level. It is just as important to have a special needs specialist at the district level, and even at the unit level if possible.

While the *Guide to Advancement* is always available to serve as a great resource for leaders at all levels, having a point person who really understands it and can provide guidance and suggestions is a great idea. We all want to be sure that Scouts with special needs have the opportunity to participate in the advancement program and having leaders who are well versed in how that can happen is very important.

District and unit special needs specialists can assist the council chair at the grassroots level and be sure that everyone has a local resource to whom to turn. It also provides another leadership opportunity in which people may serve.

If districts and units are able to appoint the right person to serve in this role it is important that these newly appointed special needs specialists know where help can be found. Here are some places that provide great guidance:

- Chapter 10 of the *Guide to Advancement* provides detailed explanations regarding alternative requirements, merit badges, and important registration tips. This information can be found at <https://www.scouting.org/resources/guide-to-advancement/special-needs/>
- The official BSA Website offers great resources and they have been gathered at <https://www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/the-building-blocks-of-scouting/disabilities/>

Another way to stay in the loop with what's happening is to subscribe to the *Abilities Digest* which is an electronic newsletter prepared by the National Disabilities Awareness Committee. To subscribe, send a email to disabilities.awareness@scouting.org with "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line. Indicate your name, email address, and council in the message text.

We always encourage adult Scouting leaders to seek the training that is available to help them with their specific positions, and it is hoped that these resources will help everyone improve the Scouting experience for Scouts with special needs.

Venturing BSA



Reflecting on 20 Years of Venturing

Venturing was started in February of 1998 – that is 20 years of growth and development for our youth! You may have noticed some of the special patches and celebrations throughout this past year. Venturing was able to celebrate together at Venturing Fest this past summer as the first-ever National Venturing Event at the Summit.

Over these 20 years, Venturing's awards and recognition, and advancement structure have undergone some significant revisions

- Change from the structure of a Bronze Award, Gold Award, Silver Award to the new structure of Venturing Award, Discovery Award, Pathfinder Award, and Summit Award. More than 240 Venturers have earned the Summit Award since it replaced the Silver Award in 2014.
- The program has changed to include the ALPS model (Adventure, Leadership, Personal Growth, and Service) which allows Venturers to strengthen their character development in these focus areas.
- Across the country, Venturing has created Venturing Officers Associations as entities to help grow and strengthen Venturing within their respective areas.
- The Council Standards of Venturing Excellence Award (CSVE) which has been used to strengthen councils for years, will take on a new name in 2019. This will be known as the Venturing Journey to Excellence Award (VJTE).
- Ninety six youth and 78 adults have been awarded the National Venturing Leadership Awards (National VLA) for outstanding contributions to the program which have helped to develop and improve the Venturing program as a whole.

Many memories have been created in the program. Take a moment to reflect on your favorite Venturing memory. Venturing will soon be turning 21 and many more great things will continue to come. Before you know it, we will be celebrating the next big milestone together!

A Peek Ahead

Here is a glimpse at what we are working on for the next issue of *Advancement News*. As always, actual content may vary somewhat based on a number of considerations, and especially to accommodate "late-breaking" news of immediate importance to our subscribers.

Topics Planned for March-April

- **Opportunities for Advancement Administrators:** Words of Wisdom from those attending Sea Base Advancement Sessions
- **From the *Guide To Advancement*:** Will there be a *Guide to Advancement 2019*?
- **Scouts BSA:** What's new in this program area?

Worth Repeating

From On Increasing Advancement

(February 2013)

Initiating Discussions on Best Practices

In just about any group formed with a common cause, there will be members who achieve a level of excellence. It might be because they were blessed with an off-the-chart IQ, but more often it's because they have taken the time to learn from others about what works best. Success in Scouting requires an understanding of policies and procedures such as those outlined in the *Guide to Advancement*, but that understanding simply provides a strong foundation. It is the active exchange of ideas and best practices that makes the biggest difference.

Advancement committees with the strength to initiate the exchange of best practices will always have the most potential to generate significant increases in the rate of advancement. Here is how that can work at each level:

Regional volunteers responsible for advancement should set up regular conference calls among their counterparts in BSA areas and see that a list of council advancement chairs is maintained to facilitate exchanges down the line. Besides reports on rates of advancement, these calls should include discussions and subsequent emails about what is being done in the areas and councils to support increases in advancement.

Area volunteers responsible for advancement should also establish conference calls for the same purposes and facilitate best methods discussions and email exchanges between councils. They should also encourage councils to similarly support the exchange among districts.

Council advancement chairs who have not heard from their counterparts in the region or area should find out who these individuals are and ask for assistance in discovering the names and contact information for their neighboring council advancement chairs. Discussions with volunteers at the region, area, and council level will almost always uncover best methods or trigger ideas that will lead to furthering advancement across council boundaries. The most important responsibility for council advancement chairs, however, is to build strength in the council advancement committee so it can reach out and support exchanges among the districts and encourage district advancement chairs to reach out to all unit advancement coordinators.

District advancement chairs, similarly, share in that most important responsibility of building committee strength. The district advancement committee should strive for achieving at least the capacity to reach out to unit advancement coordinators and to provide them training and support to facilitate the exchange of ideas and best practices.

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Editor Note: This article was written before girls were introduced into Scouting programs. Additionally, since this article was written, the Varsity Scouting program has been discontinued. Therefore, appropriate modifications to the original 2013 article have been made to reflect these more recent changes.

Unit advancement coordinators can generate idea exchanges as well. Unit leaders and their assistants should contribute to the process. Seeking the opinions and thoughts of other unit committee members and parents will also be helpful. But let's not forget the youth. Scouts, Venturers, and Sea Scouts should be solicited for their thoughts on advancement and how to fold it into a strong unit program. Forums such as the patrol leaders' council and boards of review can provide a wealth of information.



2019

ADVANCEMENT ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS—Week 6: July 14-20

If you are an experienced volunteer Advancement Administrator, consider taking your game to the next level. This case study based conference is designed for Unit, District, and Council Advancement Coordinators, Chairs, Committee Members, and Staff Advisors. If that's you, start making plans now to take advantage of this opportunity to share ideas with other committed Advancement Administrators at Scouting's premier destination.

Conference participants will not only learn about the latest updates on advancement issues, but more important, they will analyze, discuss, and solve case studies similar to those regularly dealt with by the National Advancement Program Team and the Eagle, Summit, and Quartermaster Issues Task Force. The result will be a better understanding of the effective use of the *Guide to Advancement* and also the confidence to handle difficult issues at the Council level.

MECHANICS OF ADVANCEMENT—Week 7: July 21-27

This course is a MUST for Advancement Administrators in Districts or Councils, whether they be volunteers or professionals just in need of a refresher or new to advancement procedures. Conference attendees will gain an in-depth understanding of the essentials of advancement and an appreciation for the rationale behind the policies and procedures governing it. Group discussions will focus on effective ways to resolve the related issues and challenges that arise on a regular basis. Staff members are very well founded in advancement issues and have a full understanding of the *Guide to Advancement*.

SCOUT TROOP ADVANCEMENT—Week 7: July 21-27

Are you a Troop Leader, Committee Member, or Unit Advancement Coordinator needing to increase your knowledge of how advancement drives the Scouting program and is effectively administered? Perhaps you have just finished or are in the process of starting a new troop. If so, this is the course for you. All aspects of advancement will be addressed as it relates to the troop and the success of our youth. Topics covered will include Scoutmaster conferences, electronic reporting, merit badge issues, service projects, boards of review, disability issues, Eagle issues, and more. See how program planning leads to strong advancement. Meet like-minded volunteers and share in building the capacity to strengthen your unit and its youth!

Registration available at

<http://www.philmontscoutranch.org/PTC/conferencesO.aspx>

Helpful Links

Here are some links to the most current materials of interest for Scouters who are involved in the administration of advancement. These and many more resources are available via the **Advancement Resources** web page at www.scouting.org/advancement.

[Merit Badge Group Instruction Guide](#)

[Advancement Educational Presentations:](#)

- Today's Advancement
- Cub Scout Advancement: Delivering Adventure
- Developing Council and District Advancement Committees
- The Eagle Scout Service Project Coach
- The Eagle Scout Service Project
- Effective Troop Advancement
- Essentials of Serving Scouts with Disabilities
- The Essentials of Merit Badge Counseling
- The Merit Badge Program
- Getting the Most From Internet Advancement
- Including Scouts With Disabilities
- Videocasts on *Guide to Advancement*, selected topics
 - ◊ Introduction to the Guide to Advancement
 - ◊ Judgment Calls
 - ◊ Boards of Review
 - ◊ Boards of Review Under Disputed Circumstances
 - ◊ Boards of Review Appeals
 - ◊ The Eagle Scout Application Process
 - ◊ Eagle Scout Boards of Review
- Videos
 - ◊ On Increasing Advancement
 - ◊ Why Advancement?
 - ◊ Guardian of the Gate



[Guide to Advancement 2017](#)

[Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook](#)

[Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project: Information for Project Beneficiaries](#)

[Eagle Scout Service Project Coach Application](#)

[Eagle Scout Rank Application](#)

[Merit Badge Counselor Information](#)

[Reporting Merit Badge Counseling Concerns](#)

[Quartermaster Rank Application](#)

[Quartermaster Leadership Service Project Workbook](#)

[Venturing Summit Award Service Project Workbook](#)

[Venturing Board of Review Guide](#)

[Individual Scout Advancement Plan](#)

[Lone Scout Friend and Counselor Guidebook](#)