

Fall 2017

# THE COMMISSIONER

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## Commissioner Training Update

By Tim Acree and Julia Farr

### Online Basic Training

Commissioner training and Scouting U are excited to announce the availability of Region and Area Commissioner Basic online training. The new course tracks are available in the BSA Learn Center. See the Commissioner Position Trained Requirements elsewhere in this issue for the listing of required courses.

We are also pleased to announce that Commissioner Basic instructor-led training has been updated to match the online version topic by topic. This new version of the training includes all positions except Region and Area Commissioner Basic. Those courses will now be available only via the BSA Learn Center.

Thanks to Dave Fornadel and his team for the hard work they put into updating the instructor-led versions.

### College of Commissioner Science (CCS) Curriculum Update

The National CCS Curriculum Update Task Force members met in June during Commissioners Week at the Philmont Training Center and again in August during the College of Commissioner Science Dean's Retreat at the Scouting University Westlake Campus, where they redirected efforts to refresh and rebuild the college curriculum in light of the new online Commissioner Basic Training video modules, the revisions in progress to the commissioner manuals and the promotion of five focus areas for commissioner service. Task force members are hard at work planning a revitalized curriculum that would take commissioners beyond their online position-specific basic training and engage them in active learning whether in creating a Unit Service Plan, supporting unit growth through Journey to Excellence, supporting timely charter renewals, linking unit needs to district operating committee resources, contacting units and capturing unit strengths and needs in Commissioner Tools, delivering effective roundtables, effective recruiting and retention, or building relationships.

At the Dean's Retreat, task force chair Julia Farr, assistant council commissioner and College of Commissioner Science dean in the National Capital Area Council, had the opportunity to introduce task force members, share an update of the team process in rebuilding the college curriculum, and explain the transparency of the task force's work. Task force member Scott McKenzie, National Commissioner Support Staff roundtable chair, shared the current plan to begin creating a master's in roundtable commissioner program as part of this task force.



*Tim Acree*  
National Commissioner  
Service Training Chair  
[tim.acree@comcast.net](mailto:tim.acree@comcast.net)

Task force member Peter Matrow, assistant council commissioner and College of Commissioner Science dean in the Western Massachusetts Council, discussed the doctorate degree requirements and shared the development of a doctorate degree booklet. Task force member Kresha Alvarado, assistant council commissioner for training in the Circle Ten Council, shared upcoming plans for commissioner training at Florida Sea Base.

After reworking learning maps with new curriculum topics, the task force will begin developing the course materials (i.e., course outline, teaching notes, alternative training methods, resources, etc.) and expects to have first drafts of course materials well underway by this fall/winter. The target date for launching the updated college curriculum is prior to the 2018 National Annual Meeting.

Commissioners serving on this task force represent every region and include the following:

Task force chair: Julia Farr

Northeast Region: Craig Donais and Peter Matrow

Central Region: Jody Batten and Stephen Meinhardt

Southern Region: Kresha Alvarado and James Thielen

Western Region: Scott McKenzie and David Lown



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Advisors: Tim Acree, Larry Chase, David Fornadel,  
and Steve Sawyer

All commissioners are invited to send their updates for any national course materials and creative alternative training methods to the task force for consideration at [farr.scouts@gmail.com](mailto:farr.scouts@gmail.com).



*Members of the National CCS Curriculum Update Task Force at the Dean's Retreat at Scouting University*

## **Westlake Training Center—Commissioner College Dean's Retreat**

The third annual Dean's Retreat was held August 18–20 at the Scouting University Westlake Campus. There were 30 participants for the weekend. We started off Friday afternoon with a tour of the National Service Center where we had a chance to spend some time with Chief Scout Executive Mike Surbaugh. Then we headed to downtown Dallas for a tour of the Texas School Book Depository building, where the shooter who killed President Kennedy was positioned on November 22, 1963. It was a most interesting and educational tour. Dinner at the Iron Cactus was most excellent.

Saturday started with a keynote address by Ellie Morrison. The lunchtime address was given by Mark Logemann, the BSA's group director for Membership Growth, who discussed a variety of topics, including family Scouting. The day was a facilitated discussion—with no PowerPoint slides—of commissioner

college best practices that included various aspects of conducting a college, a number of interesting topics, and lots of sharing. For dinner, the group headed out to Hard Eight for Texas-style barbecue.

Sunday, we had a nondenominational church service and course wrap-up. If you have not attended a Dean's Retreat, you should plan to attend in 2018. This is one of the most fun and finest trainings available in the BSA. You will not be disappointed!

*Tim Acree is the National Commissioner Support Staff training chair and Julia Farr is an assistant council commissioner and College of Commissioner Science dean in the National Capital Area Council.*

