



FACT SHEET

Distinguished Service Awards

The Awards

As a movement whose leadership is overwhelmingly volunteer, the Boy Scouts of America recognizes the need to acknowledge the invaluable services that men and women render to youth. Of the hundreds of awards that the BSA presents each year to those on the local council, regional, and national levels, the Silver Buffalo, Silver Antelope, Silver Beaver, and Silver World awards are the most prestigious. Although the criteria are different for each of these awards, there is one common thread: The recognitions are granted by one's own peers in Scouting for distinguished service to youth. Other BSA awards, by comparison, are granted only to those who have completed a prescribed course of study or have participated in special training sessions.

Silver Buffalo



The Silver Buffalo Award, created in 1925, is bestowed upon those who give truly noteworthy and extraordinary service to youth. This award, Scouting's highest commendation, recognizes the invaluable contributions that outstanding American men and women render to youth. The service must be national in character and can be directly connected with the BSA or independent of the movement.

The first Silver Buffalo Award was conferred upon Lord Robert Baden-Powell, founder of the Scouting movement and Chief Scout of the World. Other award recipients have included aviator Charles A. Lindbergh; artist Norman Rockwell, well-known for his many Scouting paintings; General Colin L. Powell; Apollo 13 commander James A. Lovell Jr.; artist and film producer Walt Disney; baseball Hall of Famer Hank Aaron; entertainer Bob Hope; Marian Anderson, first African American singer to appear at the Metropolitan Opera; football coach Vince Lombardi; Carlos P. Romulo, Pulitzer Prize-winner and cofounder, Boy Scouts of the Philippines; Neil Armstrong, first man to set foot on the moon; Dr. Ralph Bunche, former U.N. mediator and Nobel Peace Prize winner; cartoonist Charles M. Schulz; Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund; and 13 presidents of the United States.

Silver Antelope



The Silver Antelope Award, created in 1942, is granted for outstanding service to youth within the territory of a BSA region. The criteria are similar to those for the Silver Buffalo, with one major difference: A recipient must be a registered adult member of the Boy Scouts of America. The awards are presented in connection with regional meetings or at other public functions within the region. The National Court of Honor bestows Silver Antelope Awards on the basis of the number of registered volunteers in a region.

Silver Beaver



Established in 1931, the Silver Beaver Award is presented for distinguished service to young people within a BSA local council. More than 50,000 recognitions have been conferred to date. As with the Silver Antelope, a recipient must be a registered adult member of the BSA. The awards are bestowed at appropriate local functions. Silver Beaver Awards are presented on the basis of the number of units in a council.

Silver World



The Silver World Award, conceived in 1971, is presented by the BSA to world citizens who give outstanding service to their nation's youth or to young people in other countries. Award recipients must be citizens of countries whose Scout associations are members of the World Scout Conference. United States citizens may receive the recognition only if they are not registered members of the Boy Scouts of America.

Distinguished Eagle Scout



Created in 1969, the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award is the only distinguished service recognition that depends on one's association with Scouting as a youth. The recipient must have attained the Eagle Scout rank a minimum of 25 years before his nomination, and over those years he must have rendered outstanding service to others. Award recipients have included 38th President Gerald R. Ford; former astronaut Neil Armstrong; cartoonist Milton Caniff; late actor Ozzie Nelson; H. Ross Perot, founder of Electronic Data Systems and The Perot Group; United States Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld; retired General William C. Westmoreland; retired Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr.; Senator Richard G. Lugar; film director Steven Spielberg; former FBI Director William S. Sessions; former United States Representative J. J. Pickle; Donald F. Wright, senior vice president of the Times Mirror Co.; and former Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander.