

# Housatonic Council Advancement Procedures and Practices



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## Overview

Advancement is a key component in the Scouting program. It provides opportunities for youth to learn and grow, to develop character and to become good citizens. It is fun with a purpose. It is not like school although it is meant to educate. It is age appropriate for all Scouting youth. In Scouting there are four steps to advancement: a boy learns, he demonstrates what he has learned, his learning is reviewed and he is recognized for what he has learned.

The requirements for a boy to advance in rank are established by the National BSA. Local councils are not permitted to add to or subtract from these requirements except for those with disabilities. National has established policies and general procedures for all rank advancement. These are found in the publication *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures, No 33088D*.

The following procedures outline the specific guidelines and practices for advancement in the Housatonic Council. It attempts to answer many of the routine questions that new leaders ask. It outlines the methods for recording and reporting the advancement that takes place in Cub, Boy Scout and Venturing units. The Eagle rank is a special case that involves many steps. This document supplements the National information concerning the Eagle advancement procedure.

There are special considerations for Scouts with disabilities.

## Responsibilities

Advancement begins at the unit level. The unit leader is responsible for providing the youth in the unit with advancement opportunities and guidance. The leader is expected to make advancement an integral part of the unit program. The National guideline is that every boy should advance at least one rank each year. How this advancement takes place depends on the type of unit and the ages of the youth. Each unit should have one committee member responsible for tracking unit advancement, organizing recognition ceremonies, conducting Boards of Review (Troops and Crews) and participating in council advancement activities.

The Council has an Advancement Committee. It is the responsibility of this committee to promote advancement within the council, provide information on advancement, resolve advancement problems and maintain advancement standards in accordance with this document and the National policies.

The Housatonic Council has an Advancement Committee made up of the Troop advancement chairpersons. It is the responsibility of this committee to promote advancement council-wide, to resolve problems and ensure that advancement occurs uniformly and fairly throughout the council. This committee also maintains the advancement section of the council website [www.housatonicbsa.org](http://www.housatonicbsa.org) and is responsible for maintaining this document.

The Council Service Center administers the advancement program. The service center is responsible for processing and maintaining the official advancement records and for providing professional guidance and support to the council advancement committee.

## Cub Scout Advancement

The requirements for advancement in the Cub Scout pack are found in the *Cub Scout Handbooks*. The ranks of Cub Scouting are Tiger, Bobcat, Wolf, Bear and Webelos. Almost all Cub Scout advancement takes place in the home between the boy and his parents. The Den leader encourages, instructs and guides the boy and his parents in the steps for rank advancement. The pack leadership is responsible for the appropriate and timely recognition of those boys who have advanced. The pack leader or committee member maintain records of advancement and reports these advancements to the Council Service Center. (See Advancement Recording and Reporting below.)

Cubs with disabilities follow an advancement program that is adapted to match the abilities of the Cub Scout. The pack leadership, or parent, may modify the advancement requirements, as needed, to meet the objective that each boy “does his best”.

The monthly Cub Leader Roundtable is an excellent resource for adding sparkle to the pack advancement program and for help in conducting appropriate recognition ceremonies.

Questions regarding Cub Scout advancement can normally be answered by your pack leader, pack committee advancement person or your unit commissioner.

## Boy Scout Advancement

The requirements for advancement in the Boy Scout troop are found in the *Boy Scout Handbook* and *Boy Scout Requirements No. 33215*. The ranks of boy scouting are Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life and Eagle. Boy Scout advancement takes place at troop and patrol meetings, at troop events, at summer camp, with a Merit Badge Counselor and in the home. The process of advancement is: the Scout is taught, the Scout demonstrates, the Scout is tested, the Scout is recognized. The troop leaders encourage, provide opportunities and guide the boy in the steps for rank advancement. The troop leadership is responsible for the appropriate and timely recognition of those boys who have advanced. The troop leader or committee member maintain records of advancement and reports these advancements to the Council Service Center. (See Advancement Recording and Reporting below.)

To advance to the Star rank and above a boy must earn merit badges. The merit badge program is administered by the council. Scouts work with Merit Badge Counselors, people with expertise in the specific requirements of each badge. In the merit badge program the troop is responsible for guiding the scout to a counselor and reporting the badges that have been earned. Adults in the troop may serve as merit badge counselors but this is not a responsibility of the troop. All counselors must be registered and be approved by the council. (See Merit Badge Program below)

Scouts with disabilities follow an advancement program that substitutes equivalent learning experiences for any requirements that are beyond a Scout’s capability. Any alteration of the rank advancement requirements to accommodate a disability must be requested and approved in advance using a special form provided. (See Advancement for Scouts with Disabilities below.)

When a boy reaches the Life Scout rank the troop leadership is responsible for guiding the boy through the many steps to Eagle. The council advancement chairperson is a

valuable resource on the Eagle procedures, especially for inexperienced unit leaders. (See Eagle Advancement below)

The monthly Boy Scout Leader Roundtable is an excellent resource for improving the troop advancement program, for getting answers to advancement questions and for help in conducting appropriate recognition ceremonies

Questions regarding Boy Scout advancement from Tenderfoot to Life Scout can normally be answered by your unit leader, unit advancement person or unit commissioner. Questions regarding the Eagle rank and the Merit Badge program should be referred to your council advancement chairperson.

## **Venturing Advancement**

The requirements for advancement in a Venture Crew are found in numerous books and pamphlets. These can be obtained from any of the scout shops. Venturing offers the Bronze, Gold, Silver, Ranger and Quartermaster Awards. Any crew member who has attained the rank of First Class while registered in a scout troop may continue to work toward the Eagle rank. Venturing advancement takes place under the guidance of the crew advisor in any setting appropriate to the crew. Advancement is largely an individual activity. The crew leadership is responsible for the appropriate and timely recognition of those members who have advanced. The crew determines who and how the advancement records will be maintained and reported to council. (See Advancement Recording and Reporting below.)

Venturers may receive multiple credit for requirements in Venturing. For example, obtaining the Standard First Aid certification may be used for the Ranger core requirement, as well as the Silver first aid requirement. Venturers who are also members of a Boy Scout troop may receive credit for work done simultaneously toward Boy Scout advancement and Venturing advancement. An example would be getting credit for hikes for the Backpacking merit badge and Backpacking elective. Venturers may not receive multiple credit when requires to do a tabletop display or presentation.

Any crew member working toward the Eagle rank follows the same procedures that apply to scout troops.

Venturers with disabilities follow an advancement program that substitutes equivalent learning experiences for any requirements that are beyond crew member's capability. Any alteration of the rank advancement requirements to accommodate a disability must be requested and approved in advance using a special form provided. (See Advancement for Scouts with Disabilities below.)

## **Adults**

Adults do not participate in the advancement program; however, there are many ways in which Scouting recognizes the contributions and expertise of its volunteer leaders. It is important that all units create opportunities to recognize the adults in their units. (See Appendix IV.)

# Advancement Recording and Reporting

## ***Recording Advancement***

Advancement is normally recorded in four ways.

- The boy keeps a personal record. The Cub and Boy Scout handbooks provide a convenient way to keep these records. The Scout is responsible for maintaining his own handbook records. In time, this record could become the basis for his *Eagle Application*.
- The unit maintains a record of all unit advancement. This can be entries in a journal type log, stored copies of the advancement reports, or in a computer based system. The Advancement Committee strongly encourages units to use a *ScoutNet* compatible software package such as *PackMaster* or *TroopMaster*. A software package is very helpful in reducing paperwork. Many functional status reports are included to help unit leadership manage advancement as well as most every other facet of unit operation. In addition many awards are pre-programmed to pop-up once requirements are met.
- The Unit Advancement Chair enters the advancement of each youth into the National database utilizing Internet Advancement. Units should provide safe storage of their copy of the records.
- All scouting units should retain their advancement records for a minimum of 8 years.

## **Internet Advancement**

### ***Reporting Advancement***

All rank advancement including merit badges is reported either on paper forms or with BSA compatible software. This data is used to update the National database. The National database is the only official record of a Scout's advancement history.

### **Using forms**

Submit an *Advancement Report (Form No 34403)* often called an "advancement sheet".

The advancement report is used to record the following specific items:

- Rank advancement, belt loops and achievement pins for Cub Scouts
- Rank Advancement (or lack of advancement) occurring at a Board of Review for Boy Scouts and Ventures. (See details under Boards of Review below)
- Completed merit badges.

No other award or recognition should be entered on this form. If you use this form to keep track of other types of recognition such as Activity badges, Mile Swim, Interpreter Strip, Totin' Chip, etc., list them on a separate Advancement Report that you do not file with the council.

Enter one award per Scout per line. If the Scout has earned more than one award, list all the additional awards on subsequent lines. Make sure that the dates are included. List the Scouts in alphabetical order by last name.

Use the standard forms and be sure to submit two copies. Keep one additional copy for the unit records. Make sure that the form is dated and properly signed.

### **Using software and disks**

Submit an advancement report disk and a report printout from BSA compatible software. This allows faster and more accurate updating of the national database. It automatically covers the items listed above.

Print two additional copies of the advancement report, one for the council and one for your unit records.

### **When using either forms or computer disks**

- Make sure that every scout is registered. The National database will not accept data for an unregistered scout.
- In the Cub Pack, submit this report after every monthly cub pack meeting if advancement has occurred during the past month.
- In the Scout Troop or Venture Crew, submit this report after each Board of Review. The report should list those scouts who were interviewed for rank advancement (or for not advancing) on the date indicated in the block labeled Board of Review Date. Only scouts reviewed on the date specified should be entered on a given Advancement Report. Board of Review members should have an unsigned report form available so that it can be filled out and signed immediately following the session. When using software the results should be entered immediately following the review. The report should then be printed and signed.
- When reporting completed merit badges, the merit badge(s) for each scout are listed with the date earned. A merit badge is earned on the date of the merit badge counselor's signature. Only the signature of a troop leader or unit committee member is required on the advancement report.
- Some units have reported that it is easier to report merit badges by using computer disks and rank advancement using advancement sheets. Software and processing improvements, however, should make computer disks the preferred choice for all advancement reporting.
- Do not wait for a Blue and Gold or a Court of Honor. Submit the data monthly or after each Board of Review to ensure timely entry into the National database.
- Mail the reports to the Council Service Center, 326 Derby Avenue, Derby, Connecticut, 06418 or deliver them to the Council Scout Shop. Do not rely on someone who is "going to council" to deliver them for you. The more people involved, the more likely the reports will be mislaid or lost. The most reliable method is to hand deliver it to council and get your copy date stamped.
- Badges or awards for rank advancement may not be purchased until the Advancement Report has been submitted to the Service Center.

- Check with the registrar at the Council Service Center occasionally to verify that the data on the advancement sheets or computer disks has been entered in the National database.
- Use the unit copy of the Advancement Report to track the advancement in your unit and offer timely guidance to boys who may not be advancing.

### ***Advancement for Scouts with Disabilities or Special Needs***

Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Venture Scouts with disabilities or special needs participate in the same program as their peers. In so far as possible, the BSA treats members with disabilities and special needs like any other member; however, the council can make adjustments in the advancement requirements to accommodate specific disabilities.

Giving more time and permitting the use of special aids are other ways leaders help youth with disabilities in their efforts to advance; the unit leader plays a crucial role in this effort. Refer to BSA policy on <http://www.scouting.org/factsheets/02-508.html> for further clarification.

Cubs with disabilities follow an advancement program that is adapted to match the abilities of the Cub Scout. A Cub Scout parent or leader, with the approval of the pack leadership, may modify the advancement requirements, as needed, to meet the objective that each boy “does his best”. No further approval is required.

Boy Scouts with disabilities follow an advancement program that substitutes equivalent learning experiences for any requirements that are beyond a scout’s capability. A scout, parent or leader may request changes in the Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class rank requirements. Procedures are described in the latest edition of the *Boy Scout Requirements, No. 33215*. Any alteration of the rank advancement requirements to accommodate a disability must be requested and approved in advance using a special form provided.

When working toward the Eagle rank there are eleven required merit badges. A Scout with a permanent physical or mental disability may select an alternate merit badge in lieu of a required merit badge if his disabling condition prohibits the Scout from completing the necessary requirements. Note that he must choose a substitute badge, not modify the required badge. The substitute must provide a "similar learning experience." Full guidelines and explanations are available through the local council and on the *Application for Alternate Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges, No. 58-730*. The local council advancement committee must approve the application before work on the substitute badge begins.

These steps can take some time, so the process should begin as early as possible. At the latest, it should begin when the Scout earns the Life Scout rank.

The steps for processing approval of the *Alternate Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges* application are as follows:

1. The unit leader and appropriate unit committee people hold a conference with the scout and his family. They determine which of the required merit badges are beyond the scout’s physical or mental capability. They then agree upon appropriate alternate merit badges that conform to the instructions on the application. To avoid delays in the approval process, the unit leader should advise the Council Advancement Chairperson of the forthcoming application.

2. A clear, concise medical statement is secured from a physician, psychologist or medical professional concerning the Scout's disability and his inability to meet one or more of the requirements for the required merit badge(s) on the application.
3. The unit leader or designee prepares the application on behalf of the scout and submits the application to the council advancement committee.
4. The Council Advancement Chairperson then reviews the proposed alternate merit badges. The recommendations are forwarded to the council advancement committee for final approval.
5. The council committee reviews the application. Following council approval, the unit leader and scout are notified and the scout begins work on the alternate merit badge(s).

The local council action on the use of alternate merit badges for the Eagle Scout Award does not require National Council approval. When the scout has completed all the requirements for the Eagle Award he must attach the approved *Alternate Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges* form to his *Eagle Application*.

## **Merit Badge Program**

### ***Overview***

The merit badge program is designed to give scouts the opportunity to explore career choices, develop hobbies and avocations, meet new adults, develop responsibility for their own education and develop a deeper sense of civic responsibility. Scouts are responsible for choosing and earning merit badges. There are currently more than 100 badges from which to choose. A few merit badges such as First Aid and Lifesaving are taught in a class-like setting but class settings are too much like school: they defeat the purposes of the program. Class room instruction is discouraged in all but the most obvious cases.

The merit badge program is administered by the Council. Boy Scouts may earn merit badges until their 18th birthday. Venturers, who are not Boy Scouts, may not earn merit badges. Cub scouts do not participate in the merit badge program.

### ***Responsibilities***

The Scout is responsible for choosing merit badges, finding a counselor, completing the requirements and keeping a personal record of badges earned.

The Unit Leader is responsible for ensuring that the scout uses only merit badge counselors on the current (delete "district") council Counselor List. If the counselor is outside the Housatonic Council the unit leader must ensure that the person is qualified and registered.

The Council Advancement Chairperson and/or delegated member(s) of the Council Advancement Committee hold responsibility for approving counselors within the council and maintaining an up-to-date Counselor List of qualified and registered counselors.

## **Requirements**

The requirements for each of the badges are found in the individual *Merit Badge Pamphlet* and *Boy Scout Requirements*. These can be purchased at any scout shop. The requirements, updates, new badges and revisions are also posted on [www.meritbadge.com/mb/index.htm](http://www.meritbadge.com/mb/index.htm). Please note that this is not an official BSA site and that the requirements as published in the individual *Merit Badge Pamphlet* and *Boy Scout Requirements* take precedence. No one may add to or subtract from the requirements for any merit badge. When the requirements for a specific badge have changed, the scout may qualify either under all the requirements that existed at the time the scout began the badge or all the new requirements, but not selectively from both old and new.

## **Steps in earning a badge**

1. The scout chooses a badge of interest.
2. He obtains a *Merit Badge Application* form; commonly known as a Blue Card, from his unit leader and gets his unit leaders signature. (Suggested to delete this line: or from Council Service Center. (See Merit Badge Application below). (delete)
3. The scout finds a Merit Badge Counselor using a list that is published by the council. For some badges a counselor will be available within the unit, most others will be available within the council. A scout may select any counselor he chooses, even one outside the council; however, the person chosen must be an approved, qualified and registered Scouter. (See Merit Badge Counselors below)
4. The scout contacts the counselor to make arrangements to earn the badge. If the scout cannot locate a counselor he or his unit leader should call the Council Advancement Chairperson for assistance.
5. Before meeting with the counselor the scout fills out the blue card, leaving all the signature lines blank. Some unit leaders ask to sign the card before the scout begins the work, others will sign after the badge is complete. The scout should determine which practice is used in his unit. Remember, the counselor must be properly approved and registered. If there is any doubt, the scout or unit leader should discuss this with the Council Advancement Chairperson or his designee.
6. The scout works on the merit badge. Each badge is different. For some, all the work will be done before the scout meets with the counselor, others require instruction from the counselor, and still others require several meeting with the counselor. The counselor determines the manner in which the badge will be earned. For the protection of both the boy and the adult, a scout and a counselor should never meet alone. The scout can bring a friend, a parent or another scout when meeting the counselor. The counselor can also meet the scout in a public location, such as the library or church hall. Often two or more scouts will work together on a badge.
7. When the scout has successfully completed all the requirements, the counselor signs and dates the Blue Card, retains his or her segment for his or her records and the scout gives the Blue Card to his unit leader.

There is no Board of Review for merit badges. The completed badges are reported to council using the *Advancement Report*, # 34403. (See Reporting Advancement above.)

## ***Steps for earning a merit badge in summer camp***

The Edmund Strang Scout Reservation of Housatonic Council, as well as summer camps in other councils offer many merit badge opportunities. The steps are essentially the same as above with the following exceptions:

- It is desirable but not mandatory that the scout choose the badge(s) to be worked on before leaving for camp. His unit leader may require that he take approved Blue Card(s) to camp.
- Merit badges are taught by camp staff instructors, most of whom are under 21 years of age. Counselors must be 21 or older so the camp Program Director or his designee acts as the official counselor and signs the blue cards.
- Many badges that are worked on in camp cannot be completed in one or two weeks. For example, Physical Fitness requires a 3 month program of physical development and record keeping. In these cases, the scout can bring evidence of prior completion of the requirements or can receive a "Partial Completion" which shows the specific requirements completed in camp. (See partial completion under the Application for Merit Badge section below)

## ***Application for Merit Badge***

The *Merit Badge Application* is a three part form: one part for the scout, one part for the unit and one part for the merit badge counselor. The three sections are called: *Applicant's Record*, *Application for Merit Badge* and *Counselor's Record*. The applications are available from the unit leader, the Service Center, Scout Shops and in summer camp. The merit badge application is commonly known as a Blue Card.

The Blue Card is the scout's personal record of the badges that he has earned. When a badge is completed, the scout should be sure that all three sections of the card are filled out in full, properly signed and dated. (If the badge was earned at summer camp enter the name of the summer camp on the address line.)

A scout must see his Scoutmaster or designee for signature before he begins work on a merit badge. This assures that the unit leader knows and approves the merit badges that the scout has chosen. (Some badges are best earned after others; for example; Swimming must be earned before Lifesaving.) The unit leader should sign the applicant's record only. This indicates to the merit badge counselor that the unit leader approves.

When the requirements are completed the counselor signs and dates the Application and Applicant sections of the blue card. The counselor keeps the Counselor's section.

After the counselor has signed the Blue Card, the scout gives the completed card to the unit leader who signs again, gives the scout his copy and initiates the processing of the application. The unit leader should verify that both the Application section and the Applicants section are signed and dated by the counselor.

If a scout believes he has been unfairly treated by a counselor he should discuss this with his unit leader. If the unit leader agrees, they should contact the council advancement chairperson so that appropriate action can be taken.

## ***Processing***

A designated unit person should process the completed Blue Card. The section of the card called Application for Merit Badge is used to enter the information on an *Advancement Report (Form # 34403)*. Enter the scout receiving the merit badge, the badge name and the date earned. The date earned is the date the counselor entered as the completion date.

Send the Application section of the card and the Advancement Report to the Service Center.

The council registrar will input the information into the computer system and then sign, initial or stamp the application. The council approved Application is then returned to the unit. The purpose of this approval step is to ensure that any badges later submitted with an Eagle Application have been prescreened and approved.

When an Eagle Application is received the merit badge applications are then checked. Since many months or even years may elapse before the merit badge is checked, it is important that the unit keep accurate records and make sure that their scouts are using registered and approved merit badge counselors.

Some units return the Application blue card to the scout to submit with his Eagle Scout Application.

## ***Partial Completions***

A scout may receive a “Partial Completion” for a merit badge when he has passed some but not all of the requirements for a merit badge. This can occur during summer camp or when a scout moves or changes units. It is the scout’s responsibility to ask the counselor for the “partial” when this occurs. A “partial” is valid until a Scout’s 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

A counselor will note on the Blue Card the requirements completed and initial the card.

When a Scout presents a “partial” to the merit badge counselor the work previously completed may or may not be accepted. Most merit badge counselors will discuss with the Scout any previously completed work. The discussion will continue until the counselor is satisfied that the Scout did in fact complete the requirements indicated on the “partial”.

## ***Merit Badge Counselor***

Steps to becoming a merit badge counselor:

1. If you are new to Scouting, fill out an adult leader application form. BSA requires that all counselors be registered Scouters. The most recent version of the application must be used and filled in completely. The information provided is treated confidentially and will be used to perform a background check of the applicant. The Council Advancement Chairperson will sign the application in the block marked “Chairman”. There is no fee to be a counselor.
2. If you are already registered, then you must fill out a new adult application and identify the merit badge counselor code (# 42).
3. Fill out a *Merit Badge Counselor Information Sheet*, specifying the badges that you wish to teach. Please list only those badges for which you are fully qualified. Place an explanation of your qualifications next to the badge, if more room is needed, use the back of the form.

4. Both the adult application and the information sheet are available from the Service Center or from the council advancement chairperson.
5. Send the adult application and information sheet to the Scout Office or the Council Advancement Chairperson.
6. The Council Advancement Committee reserves the right to approve or disapprove the adult application. Council will then file a copy of the information sheet, and add your name to the list of approved merit badge counselors. Each applicant will be notified in writing regarding the disposition of their application.

Note: The Advancement Committee strongly recommends that a counselor be available to all scouts. There are many counselors for almost all badges; therefore, no counselor should be overwhelmed. One of the objectives of the Merit Badge Program is for boys to meet new adults in other communities and learn how to interact with people they do not know. We encourage unit leaders to help scouts seek counselors outside their units.

### ***Information for Counselors***

We require all merit badge counselor to take the Youth Protection course before meeting with Scouts to teach a Merit Badge. This can be done on-line at the council's web site. The course is located at [www.housatonicbsa.org](http://www.housatonicbsa.org). After accessing the web site select the Youth Protection Training link near the bottom on the left side of the page. For the protection of both the boy and the adult, a scout and a counselor should never meet alone. The scout can bring a friend or parent when meeting the counselor. The counselor can also meet the scout in a public location, such as the library or church hall. Often two or more scouts will work together on a badge. This also satisfies the Youth Protection objective.

Counselors should obtain a copy the *Merit Badge Pamphlet* for each merit badge they teach. This provides the detailed requirements for each badge and Scouting's expectations for the badge. The counselor should also obtain a copy of *Merit Badge Counselor Orientation* which is also available from the website or from the Service Center.

The council adds the counselor's name, phone number, home town and badges taught to the *Counselor List*. Copies of the list are distributed at roundtables and available on request. Scouts use the list to find a counselor for the badges they choose to earn. If you do not want this information published, please do not apply to be a merit badge counselor.

National requires that each adult re-register every year. Since there is no fee involved the council simply confirms that each counselor intends to remain a counselor for the coming year. You will be contacted to confirm your continuing interest. If you are not contacted, call your council advancement chairperson before year-end or you may be dropped from the list.

If a Scout calls and you are unable to help him, simply advise him to find another counselor with the help of his unit leader.

As a counselor you are expected to instruct, guide and/or counsel the scout so that he can complete all the requirements for the badge within the framework of the *Merit Badge Pamphlet*. You may neither add to nor subtract from the requirements but there is no limit

to the additional information, encouragement or support that you can give a scout, depending upon his level of interest in the subject.

The merit badge requirements are full of action verbs like write, describe, demonstrate, build, show, provide, etc. Be sure that the scout has an opportunity to fulfill each of the requirements as intended.

We understand that many Scouts will want to use a counselor from their own unit; a person who they know. The program is designed to teach boys the value of communicating with people they do not know. Please enthusiastically encourage Scouts to get at least half their merit badges from counselors outside their unit.

Whenever possible, Council recommends that if there are several Merit Badge Counselors for any given merit badge, that parents should not be the merit badge counselor for their own child.

### ***Parent Merit Badge Counselor Policy***

Parents may only be the Merit Badge Counselor for their own child if:

The merit badge is offered as a program to a group of four (4) or more scouts, and each scout is limited to obtain a total of no more than 2 eagle required badges from any or all parents and/or relatives, or

There are no other merit badge counselors for any given merit badge within the Housatonic Council.

Exceptions to this policy may be granted in advance by the Council Advancement Committee.

If you or any unit leader observes that a counselor asks too little or too much of a scout in qualifying for a badge, please advise the district advancement chair so that appropriate action can be taken.

## **Boards of Review**

### ***Standard Boards of Review (Tenderfoot through Life)***

Please see the section labeled “How to conduct a board of review” in the most recent edition of *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures, publication #33088*.

Training in the conduct of a Board of Review is offered during regular Specific Leader Training sessions and is often a subject during Roundtables. Additional opportunities may be available through the Council Training Committee.

Help in conducting a Board of Review also is available through the Council Advancement Committee.

### ***Eagle Boards of Review***

The Eagle Board of Review is the responsibility of the council and is an integral part of the eagle advancement process. See Eagle Advancement below. Also see *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures, #33088*

# **Eagle Advancement**

## ***Award Requirements***

The Eagle Award requirements are found in *Boy Scout Requirements, Eagle Scout Rank Application No 58-728* and *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook No 18-927*. There is additional information on the council and national websites, [www.housatonicbsa.org](http://www.housatonicbsa.org), [www.bsa.org](http://www.bsa.org), [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org) or [www.nesa.org](http://www.nesa.org) respectively. The websites and the workbook all list “The Twelve Steps to Eagle” which is a concise outline of the process. The steps are similar to the lower ranks of scouting except for the service project.

## ***Service Project***

The service project provides a scout with the opportunity to demonstrate his leadership skills. Of particular importance are the skills of planning, organization and direction of personnel. A well planned, organized and directed project can help develop important life skills, bring great personal satisfaction, and benefit the community significantly. The success of the project is measured more by the quality of leadership than by its outcome or benefits.

## ***Responsibilities***

The scout is responsible for the entire project. The scout may seek help, guidance, information, advice etc. from anyone but no one should step in and take over any of the tasks. He is responsible for obtaining all of the required approvals at each step in the project. Failure to do so could result in rejection of the project. He must use the *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook No 18-927* while planning and carrying out the project.

The unit leader, or designee, is responsible for counseling the scout to ensure that he understands the requirements and has the support of the unit. The unit leader or another adult should monitor the project to make sure that no unsafe or age inappropriate activity is planned. Occasionally an adult will have to step in if the scout encounters a conflict that he cannot resolve.

## ***Project Requirements***

The service project requirements are given in detail in the *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook*. This workbook must be used for all eagle projects. It is the primary tool for planning and reporting upon your project. Do not attempt to start a project until you have read and understand all the steps in the workbook. In general, the steps are as follows:

- Read the workbook
- Develop an idea for the project
- Get the idea approved
- Plan the project
- Get the plan approved **as required**
- Organize the project based on your plan
- Get any significant revisions approved
- Carryout the project

- Write your final report
- Get the completed project approved

Each of these steps in the workbook is discussed in more detail below.

## **The Workbook**

The scout must use the *Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook, No. 18-927*. This can be downloaded in a PDF or word format from the National, Council web sites. It is highly recommend that the scout use the Word Version. This makes the project neat and easy to read, edit and correct.

The project must follow the guidelines as described within the workbook.

## **Idea**

The workbook gives a number of project ideas. There are hundreds of fine projects. Pick one that fits your own interests. Help an organization that is meaningful to you. Strive for something that has permanence so that you can still see your work five years from now. Review the Limitations sections, page 2 of the workbook to make sure that your idea can be a valid project.

Scouts approaching their 18th birthday should think carefully about the time that their project will require. Do not underestimate the time required for approvals, permits, material deliveries, scheduling delays, weather or any other factors which may be unique to your project. If the project is for a town or governmental body, ask about local permits or approvals and how long they take. It is your responsibility to select and plan a project that can be completed before your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Time extensions are not granted for situations that are under your control.

## **Idea Approval**

Before you begin the detail planning make sure that you have an acceptable idea. Talk with your unit leader or call your council advancement chairman. Don't guess. If the idea makes sense and is neither too large nor too small it will be approved.

## **Plan**

Planning is the key to a successful project. The plan must be clear and complete. Give your plan this simple test: is your plan so clear that another scout, who knows nothing about your project, could use your plan and successfully complete the project without you?

Details, details, and more details – A project has never been rejected for having too many details.

You must include the following items in your plan unless they are clearly not applicable:

- “Before pictures” of the project area.
- Sketches, diagrams, maps, photos or blue prints that explain or illustrate the plan.
- Material lists. What materials are to be used for the project?

What quantities?

Where used?

Where they will you get the materials?

How much will they cost?

- How will the money for the materials be obtained. Include plans for fund raising. If thru donations, then where and how will the donations be solicited.
- Tools and equipment needed such as hammers, rakes, shovels, etc.  
If power equipment is used, then who will operate? See the *Guide to Safe Scouting* for reference.
- What type of personal protective equipment for the workers will be used and from where will it come. For example, safety glasses and work gloves.
- What federal, state and local regulations need be followed?
- Who will do the work? How will it be organized? When, where and how will this work be done.
- How do you plan to direct the work?
- Estimated hours for doing each part of the project including the planning, fund raising, management, preparation, work days, reporting etc.

Be sure that the organization for which you are doing the project fully understands your plans and agrees. Make sure that they understand what is expected of you to become an Eagle Scout. It is your project-not theirs.

As you develop your plan, questions may arise. Feel free to contact your Troop Advancement Chair or the Council Advancement Chair for help.

## Plan Approval

As described in the workbook, the project must first be approved by a representative of the organization for whom the project is being done and then by the unit leader and the unit committee. Before approval, any defects should be indicated to the Scout for correction. These corrections should be reviewed before the troop leadership approves the project and signs the workbook. **Some projects may require additional approvals (i.e., local land use boards, zoning boards, etc). Add these approvals to your workbook and consider the time required to secure local government approvals if necessary.**

After these approvals unit advancement person or their designee 10 days prior to the next Advancement Committee meeting should email or call the Council Advancement Chairperson to initiate the council review of the project. This review will take place at a meeting scheduled by the Council Advancement Chairperson. It is recommended that you make a copy of all of the paperwork before sending it to the Council. The review will be conducted by not less than three members of the Council Advancement Committee, each member of the committee who reviews a project is asked to sign for future reference. Simple photocopies should be prepared to allow for a faster review process. It is NOT recommended nor required that these copies be bound, or in color, or costly to the Scout to produce.

The project plan is reviewed for appropriateness, clarity, completeness, and scope (not too large or too small) to ensure that the project meets the guidelines. Obviously, no scout wants his project to be rejected. This is why it is important to contact the Council early in the project planning process. This can remove any doubt about the project's acceptability.

The actual project may not begin until the council approves the plan. Prior to Council approval of the project no solicitation of funds, donations of materials or physical work may occur. Research, planning and inquires are allowed. If you begin before approval, you do so at your own risk. If you need to begin before you have the official signature on your workbook, you can do so by email or a phone call. However, beware of phone calls because misunderstandings can occur. To be safe, plan ahead. Write your plan early. Allow plenty of time for approvals. Schedule realistically. Demonstrate your ability to organize. Remember, for an Eagle candidacy, the plan is as important as the actual project.

When the council review is complete, regardless of the outcome, the workbook and accompanying documents are returned to the scout. It is recommended that you make a copy of all of the paperwork before sending it to the Council.

### **Plan Disapproval and Appeal**

If there is a problem with the project, the Council Advancement Committee Members will meet with the scout to discuss the problem or general weakness. Depending upon the nature of the problem, this may be either verbal or in writing – generally as comments or markups on the project plan write-up. Typically, the comments will be general observations, such as “safety is not adequately addressed”, “insufficient construction details”, or “too little involvement of youth or non-family personnel”. Most commonly a rejection will be based on in-completeness of a facet of the project and the Scout will be advised to fix, modify, or correct that specific item and contact the Council Advancement Chairperson for final approval.

If a project is rejected, the person who rejected the project must write an explanation for the rejection. The scout may appeal. The appeal process is as follows.

An appeal must be in writing to the Council Advancement Chairperson stating the reason(s) for the appeal. A minimum of three members of the council selected by the Advancement Committee will review the appeal letter and the original explanation for the rejection. If the appeal committee approves the project, they will sign the workbook and project can begin. The Council Advancement chair will handle the appeal process. The Council Advancement Chair will not sit on project reviews in order to maintain objectivity in cases where there is an appeal.

### ***Carrying out the Project***

Once the project plan has been approved the scout can proceed with the project. It is assumed that the project will be carried out within the framework of the plan. Minor changes in scheduling, materials, personnel, or work assignments that do not materially affect the project scope or outcome do not require further approval. However, if a major change is needed the scout should contact the Council Advancement Chairperson immediately for guidance. If practical, write-up the proposed change and the reason for the change and send this to the Council Advancement Chairperson for approval. Occasionally, some unforeseen circumstance occurs on a project workday that necessitates a major change. If so, try to secure an immediate approval for the change. If unsuccessful, you may continue with the workday but get the change approved as soon as possible. If you give the Council Advancement Chairperson your work schedule, and ask

for instructions on how to deal with major change, you can avoid many potential pitfalls. If the project location is outside of the council boundaries then a tour permit must be secured.

Take pictures. Keep a log of events and workers. Invite people from the organization benefiting to see your progress. Tell the local newspaper or media about your project.

### ***Final Report***

When the project work is complete the scout completes the write up in the workbook including any deviations from the original plan. Be sure to include all of those items in “Carrying out the Project” section of workbook. Where appropriate, photographs of the project being carried out, of your workers, and of the completed project should be included. Include a tabulation of the hours worked, materials used, work accomplished, money spent and any other data to document the project

Remember to thank those who helped or contributed to the project.

### ***Final Approval***

After completing the final write-up submit the workbook to your Scoutmaster/Coach/Advisor and the **representative from the benefitting institution (religious organization, school or community establishment, etc)** for their approval.. The Eagle Board of Review has the right to reject the service project if it was not fully completed, was drastically changed without approval, or was not lead by the scout. If you have any doubts about the final acceptability of your project, submit it to the council advancement chair for review.

## **Eagle Scout Application**

The *Eagle Scout Application (Form No58-728)* (also called an unverified Eagle Application) is available from the Council Service Center. Please allow two (2) weeks processing time to receive your unverified Eagle Application. It is recommended that a Scout request their personal profile upon making Life. Again please allow two (2) weeks processing time to receive your personal profile.

Fill it out carefully and completely. Type or print legibly. Follow the instructions.

### ***Requirement 1 – Active participation***

If you actively participated in more than one unit since becoming a Life Scout such as both a troop and a venture crew, then list these unit(s) and indicate which one is primary. The Unit Approval on page 2 of this application is your primary unit. You must be active to the satisfaction of your unit leader.

### ***Requirement 2 – References***

The Eagle Application requires that you list the names of people in the following categories who will recommend you:

Parents/Guardians

Religious

Educational

Employer (if any)

### Two Other References

When you ask for a written recommendation, please ask that the letter is placed in a sealed envelope with the writer's signature across the seal. Reference letters should be on the suggested form available on the council website [www.housatonicbsa.org](http://www.housatonicbsa.org) and should remain sealed until opened by the Council staff. Written recommendations are a private communication and should not be read by the Eagle candidate. Remember the easiest person to approach isn't always the one that will give you the best reference.

### Religious Reference

The religious reference can be from a pastor, minister, priest, rabbi, prominent lay person, of any religious organization, or any adult that can speak for the scout's spiritual commitment. The religious reference does not have to be affiliated with the scout's religion.

### Educational Reference

The educational reference should be a teacher or school administrator who has known and worked with the scout for a year or more. A coach or athletic director is not a good choice unless that person is very familiar with your educational performance. Letters of recommendation should not be school transcripts or copies of letters sent to colleges.

### Employer Reference

List only if you have worked for this person for a significant period of time. If you do volunteer work, you may list a person familiar with the work you do. If you do neither, then leave blank.

### Additional References

List two additional references. These are at the discretion of the scout. They can be neighbors, family friends or other adults that have known you for a significant period of time. These references must not be family members, Scout leaders, young friends or classmates.

### **Requirement 3 – Complete 21 merit badges**

The completion date of the merit badge is the counselor's signature date. The best source of this information is the Application or Applicant's Record section of the *Merit Badge Application* (blue card). Other sources are a council copy of the blue card, the unit's Advancement Report (see Reporting Section above) or the Council's record of the individual scout's advancement.. If one or more blue cards are missing, or the records are inaccurate or contradictory, contact your troop's Advancement Chairperson to determine how to handle the situation. If, because of disability, an alternate merit badge was substituted for a required merit badge, then cross out the required badge and write in the alternate. Attach a copy of the approved *Alternate Eagle Scout Rank Merit Badges* form to your eagle application.

Scouts should retain the applicant record section of their completed merit badge Blue Card for their records. The Blue Card can be used to clarify any discrepancy with Council's advancement records.

### ***Requirement 4 – Position of Responsibility***

You must serve in one or more of the positions listed on the Eagle Application. No substitute positions are allowed except as specifically granted by National BSA by reason of disability. You must be active in the position to the satisfaction of your unit leader.

### ***Requirement 5 – Service Project***

Attach the completed *Eagle Scout Service Project Leadership Workbook* and supporting photos and documents to the application. Be sure to keep a personal copy of all the materials.

### ***Requirement 6 – Ambitions Statement***

Attach a statement of your ambitions and life purpose as described on the application.

### ***Completing the Application***

When you have completed the application, sign the applicant line and give the application to your unit leader for Unit Approval. The unit leader and unit committee chair must sign the application. Their signatures are a confirmation that all the requirements have been met to the satisfaction of the unit and that they personally recommend this candidate for the Eagle Award.

It is always a good idea for the Scout to make and keep a copy of the application before submitting it to Council.

### ***Eagle Checklist***

An Eagle checklist, available from Council, must be completed by the Eagle applicant and an adult member from the troop, typically the troop's Advancement Chairman. The Eagle checklist must be submitted along with the completed Eagle Scout rank application and project workbook, to the Council Office at least 10 business days prior to the scheduled Advancement Committee meeting in order for the scout to have his Board of Review within that same month. Please refer to the Council calendar on our website [www.housatonicbsa.org](http://www.housatonicbsa.org) for the meeting schedule. (The completed form must also be returned to the Council office after the Board of Review). The council requires that the hours spent on the Eagle Service Project be logged into the Good Turn for America database (website <http://www.goodturnforamerica.org>). You can ask your Troop Good Turn for America representative or the Council Advancement Chairperson for instructions on how to log in. The information required includes: Full Name of Applicant, Member ID# (From unit charter), Name of Project, Eagle Project completion date, Number of scouts participating in project, Number of other youths participating in project, Number of Scout leaders participating in project, Number of other adults participating in project, Total number of hours, and Total Cost.

### ***Time Extensions***

All the requirements including the Unit Leaders Conference must be completed before the candidate's 18th birthday. Time extensions may be granted by National upon the recommendation of the Council Advancement Committee. An extension request must be in writing and must be for a reason beyond the scout's control, such as a death in the

family, serious illness or temporary disability, family relocation or similar event. Submit the request to the Council Advancement Chairperson. Do not delay. As soon as it becomes apparent that an extension may be needed, contact the district for advice and instructions.

## **Eagle Boards of Review**

### ***Setting up a Board***

Following Unit Approval, the Eagle Application, workbook and supporting materials should be assembled into a binder with a cover sheet as shown in Appendix III. This becomes the Eagle Scout Information Book. It keeps all the materials together to avoid loss and will be used by the Eagle Board of Review. The book is not submitted to National BSA.

Give one copy of the book to the Council Registrar. The registrar will verify that the book is correct and complete. The registrar is also responsible for the BSA Certification signature line and must ensure that the candidate's individual BSA record agrees with the Eagle Application. Once verification is complete the registrar contacts the Council Advancement Chairperson who will authorize an Eagle Board of Review.

An incomplete or incorrect application will be returned for correction. Common reasons for returning an application are:

- Signatures are missing.

- No Boy Scout joining date or the date is wrong.

- Duplicate merit badges on the application.

- Proper badges are not indicated in merit badges numbers 6 and 9.

- Leadership position dates between Life Scout and Board of Review total less than six months.

- An invalid position of responsibility between Life and the Board of Review

- Requirement 6 is missing or incomplete.

Give the Eagle Information Book to the council as soon as possible. The Eagle Board of Review should be scheduled within three months following the candidate's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. If the book is not received in time or other reasons delay the board of review beyond three months then a letter must be written and attached to the application explaining the reasons for delay. If the board of review is not held within six months of the candidate's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday then National must approve the delay before the review is held. Your council advancement chairperson can provide advice on these procedures. The delays must be reasonable and justified. Typically, a board of review might be delayed because the candidate is away at college or on a student exchange program. Each request for a delay stands on its own merit.

### ***Eagle Boards of Review***

The unit is responsible for providing three people to be members of the board. None of these members may be a unit leader, assistant unit leader, parent or guardian. The members are normally unit committee people but this is not a requirement. A member does not have to be a registered Scouter. For more information you can contact the Council Advancement Chairperson.

The Council Advancement Chair, or his designee, will provide an additional one to three members for a minimum of four and a maximum of a six members.

Once the board membership has been determined the unit leader will arrange a date that is suitable for the candidate and the board members. He will notify the scout, the members and other interested leaders at least five days in advance. Commonly this date will be the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of every month. Board members who have not participated in a previous board should familiarize themselves with the Eagle requirements and should read the Eagle Board of Review section of the publication *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures* available from the Service Center. Members should dress appropriately, Class A leader's uniform or business attire.

The scout should present himself to the Board of Review in full uniform even though the unit may not normally require it. Missing uniform parts can always be borrowed.

For Boy Scouts the complete uniform consists of the scout shirt (with the patches and pins in the correct locations (please see your handbook or insignia guide book)), scout pants or shorts, a scout belt, scout socks, a unit approved hat and neckwear, and his merit badge sash (with the Merit Badges sewed in the correct locations and worn right to left).

In unusual circumstances, the scout may wear suit and tie. If you have no uniform and have been unable to borrow one, notify the Council Advancement Chairperson or District Executive prior to the date of the Board of Review to discuss the issue. This will avoid any embarrassment at the Board of Review.

For Venturers the complete uniform consists of the spruce green Venturing shirt with green epaulette tabs and gray pants or shorts, the scout uniform above or business attire.

Bring your Scout Handbook and a record of your advancement dates. You or your unit leader must bring the original of the Eagle Application and copies of the Eagle Information Book, one for each member of the board of review. The unit should bring an *Advancement Report* form to be signed by the Board following a successful review.

Except for the candidate's family members, any interested adult may attend the Board of Review. Attendees do not participate in the review.

Normally the unit leader or assistant will introduce the candidate to the Board of Review. Following a successful board of review the unit delivers the Eagle Scout Application, any letters explaining delays, and the Advancement Report to the Service Center. The council processes the original application and forwards it to the National Eagle Scout Service for approval. The Eagle Service Project Leadership Workbook is returned to the unit. It is not sent to National.

The candidate's Eagle Award date is the date of the Board of Review but he does not become an Eagle Scout until the application is approved by National. Therefore, an Eagle Court of Honor may not be conducted until National has approved and returned the Eagle Award materials.

### ***Rejection by the Board of Review***

Occasionally a candidate's application is rejected by the Board of Review. When this happens the board will provide the candidate with a written explanation of the reason(s) for rejection and the specific requirement(s) that were not met. If the candidate is under 18 years of age he may correct the deficiency and reapply. If the candidate, his parent or his unit leader feels that the rejection is unjust then he may appeal.

## ***Eagle Appeals***

If a scout's eagle application is rejected for any reason, he may appeal. The application is rejected when the scout is unable to obtain any one or more of the required signatures, i.e. unit leader, unit committee chair, council certification or board of review. The appeal process is outlined in the publication *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures*. The appeal is handled by the next "level"- national. Once an appeal has been received the principals are contacted, the issues investigated, and a determination made-normally by an Appeal Board of Review. Each appeal is unique and treated individually. The District Executive is responsible for the appeal process.

## **Appendix I – Advancement Chairs**

The procedures and practices in the document above have been established by the council to assist you with your unit's advancement. Our Council Advancement Committee follows the *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures guide (#33088)* published by National. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any member of the council Advancement Committee.

## **Appendix II – Eagle Scout Information Book**

The Eagle Scout Information Book is a binder that contains all the necessary information and documents for the Board of Review. It provides consistency, avoids loss of materials, and helps board members conduct a timely and quality review. It is helpful if the Scout has a few copies to hand out. This is not a requirement and should NOT be bound, produced in color, or done professionally. This should be done at the lowest cost to the Scout and his family and is purely for speed and convenience.

The book should contain the following information in the order below:

### ***Header Page***

A header page that contains the scouts name and phone number, town, troop number, unit leader and their phone number, unit advancement chair, or Eagle Coordinator, and their phone number. See the sample page below.

### ***Eagle Scout Application***

The completed Eagle Scout Application, with all of the required signatures and dates.

### ***Ambitions statement***

The letter from the applicant stating his ambitions (Requirement 6).

### ***References***

Envelopes with reference letters. Additional letters supporting his advancement to the Eagle Scout Rank can follow the required references.

## ***Service Project***

The completed Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project Workbook (No. 18-927). Before, during and after pictures may be digital or standard prints or photocopies. In addition to the signature line in the packet, a completion letter from the organization where the project was done is recommended which allows the organization to highlight specific points of the project that they feel are worthy of additional mention.

## ***Justification for Delay or Extension***

If the Board of Review is more than 3-months and less than 6-months after the applicant's 18th birthday, include the letter of justification. If the Board of Review is more than 6-months after the applicant's 18th birthday or an extension was approved, include the National approval letter.

## ***Additional Information***

Any additional information the applicant feels may be useful to the board of review. For example, if his unit uses TroopMaster, include reports of camping trips, service projects and scouting events in which he participated.

## **Appendix III – Sample Header Page**

Joe Boy Scout  
Address  
Town, State Zip  
555-1212  
John Leader, Scoutmaster  
555-1214  
Jim Leader, Advancement Chair  
555-9876  
Don Leader, Eagle Coordinator  
555-7676

## **Appendix IV –Awards and Recognition**

There are many forms of award and recognition for both youth and adults. Each award recognizes an individual achievement. Achievements for skills learned, for service to community, for religious dedication, for scholarship, for service to Scouting, or for many other areas of human endeavor. There is no single publication that lists all of the awards and recognitions available. The Council Advancement Committee is responsible for promoting and disseminating information about all these awards. Information can be found in the following sources:

### ***Youth***

*Scout Insignia Guide*  
Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Venturing and Sea Scout *Handbooks*  
*Scouting* magazine

*Boy's Life* magazine  
Council Advancement committee – Rank advancement and Meritorious Awards  
*Housatonic Scouter* newspaper  
Council Training committee – Youth leader awards  
.... For religious awards  
Council Service Center

## **Adults**

*Scout Insignia Guide*  
*Scouting* magazine  
Council Advancement committee – Meritorious/Lifesaving Awards  
*Housatonic Scouter* newspaper  
Council Training committee- Adult training leader awards  
Silver Beaver committee for council and national awards  
.... For religious awards  
Council Committee-for community and scouting service awards  
Council Service Center

Applications for awards generally may be found at the Council Service Center and/or on-line. If you are unable to find sufficient information about a specific award contact either your unit commissioner or council advancement chairperson.

Baden Powell said, "Every Scout deserves a trained leader." Awards and recognition for leader training are of particular importance. Units need to ensure that their adults not only attend leader training but are properly rewarded with appropriate recognition. Through recognition, both parents and boys will know that their leaders are properly trained and qualified to lead. Adults who avoid the training, service and education that leads to adult awards set a poor example for the youth in their units. Scouts interpret this as disinterest in them and disdain for the ideals of Scouting. "Do as I say, not as I do." It is safe to say that more boys leave Scouting because of untrained leadership than any other cause.

Timely public recognition for both youth and adults pays great dividends. It brings personal satisfaction, a sense of belonging, and highlights role models for other youth and adults to emulate. It is important to make recognition happen in a tasteful and respectful ceremony as soon as an award is earned. When awards are presented in a setting outside the unit, such as at a training event or an adult gathering, it is important to repeat the recognition within the unit so that both the youth and the parents are aware of the achievement.