

Teen relishes new challenges that Scouting offers

Summer camp at Lost Valley is a highlight for the Garden Grove youth.

BY MATT HANLON
STAFF WRITER

GARDEN GROVE • David Maldonado still remembers when the Scout leader walked into his classroom and passed out brochures for Boy Scouts of America.

He was in sixth grade and had just moved back to Orange County from Mexico. He glanced over the fliers filled with images of the mountains, trees and Scouting activities.

Nearly four years later, Maldonado, 15, is driven by the activities that Scouting offers – the same ones he read about in that classroom. He will be making his third annual summer trip to Schoepe Scout Reservation at Lost Valley in July through the Register Campership Fund.

“You get a lot of experience with different kinds of things,” he said. “There are cabins set up for us and you just bring your stuff and the food is provided for you and it’s a really nice place.”

It’s an experience that Maldonado – who just finished his freshman year at Garden Grove High with a



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David Maldonado lives in Garden Grove and attends Garden Grove High School. He'll be a sophomore this fall.

3.1 grade point average – had never had before joining the Boy Scouts. He was born in Santa Ana and lived in Garden Grove for two years before he moved back to his family’s home state of Nayarit, Mexico.

His dad was a United States citizen and contin-

ued to work at a factory in Orange County. His mom had to wait 10 years before she could reapply for citizenship after having to leave the country.

Before the start of sixth grade, Maldonado and his family moved back to Garden Grove. He was attend-

ing Faylane Elementary School when he first came across Scouting.

It only took one Scout meeting and he was hooked.

“It was actually pretty nice because I didn’t experience anything like that until sixth grade,” he said.

When he went to Lost Valley for the first time in 2012, fires in San Diego County threatened the isolated high-elevation valley.

“They didn’t want to endanger anyone so they just told us we had to leave,” Maldonado said. “It was an unforgettable experience. After we left it was all burnt in the street. And the road, when we went down you could see all the trees were black. It was (a little) scary.”

That experience – like many Maldonado has had through Scouting – was eye opening. But it’s encouraged him to continue challenging himself.

Last year at Lost Valley, Maldonado’s favorite activity of the week was the shotgun range. Before that he had never fired a shotgun.

His parents work three jobs to help support him and his brother. He recognizes the Campership program is a big reason he gets to take part in trips such as Lost Valley.

Maldonado hopes to eventually earn his Eagle Scout badge.

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