



Prepared. For Life.™

Eagle Scout Fact Sheet

The Boy Scouts of America® helps its 2.7 million youth members to be Prepared. For Life.™ The value of that preparation lives in the heart of every person involved in Scouting who has ever overcome one of life's challenges, and it helps inspire a lifetime of character and service.

Nowhere is this better exemplified than in the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest attainable rank in Boy Scouting. Scouts must demonstrate proficiency in leadership, service, and outdoor skills at multiple levels before achieving the Eagle Scout rank; fewer than 4 percent of Boy Scouts earn the coveted rank. Over the past century, the hard-earned rank has become widely recognized—both in and outside of Scouting—as a mark of distinction.

History

The Eagle Scout badge was first given in 1912 to Arthur Eldred, a Scout from Brooklyn, New York. By 1982, more than 1 million young men had reached the rank, and the 2 millionth Eagle Scout was recognized in 2009. In 2011, the BSA welcomed more than 51,000 new Eagle Scouts. The organization has averaged more than 50,000 new Eagle Scouts per year over the past six years.

Requirements

Scouts must complete two primary components to earn the Eagle Scout rank:

1. *Service and responsibility.* The Scout must plan, organize, lead, manage, and complete an extensive service project that benefits an organization outside the BSA, all before his 18th birthday. In 2011, Eagle Scout projects alone represented more than 6.7 million hours of community service.
2. *Merit badges.* Of the 128 merit badges available, 21 must be earned to qualify for Eagle Scout. Required badges include First Aid, Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Citizenship in the World, Communication, Environmental Science, Personal Fitness, Personal Management, Camping, and Family Life.

Character and Contributions

A 2012 independent research study conducted by Baylor University found that Eagle Scouts are more likely to volunteer, donate money to charity, vote, and work with others to improve their neighborhood than men who have never been in Scouting. They were also found to be more goal-oriented, have higher levels of planning and preparation skills, and be more likely to take a leadership position at work or in their local communities. On a personal level, Eagle Scouts report closer relationships with family and friends and are more likely to regularly participate in recreational activities in their free time.

Notable Eagles

Throughout the past century, Eagle Scouts have gone on to become Olympians, surgeons, civil rights leaders, Pulitzer Prize winners, and paragons of business. Some notable Eagle Scouts include:

- Mike Rowe, television personality and host of the Discovery Channel's "Dirty Jobs"
- Shane Victorino, Major League Baseball all-star
- Gerald Ford, former president of the United States
- James Lovell, former astronaut and commander of Apollo 13
- Robert Gates, former secretary of defense
- William Gates Sr., co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Sam Walton, founder of Wal-Mart and Sam's Club
- Jon Heder, *Napoleon Dynamite* actor
- Rex Tillerson, ExxonMobil CEO and current BSA president

More Information

For more information about the Baylor University Institute for Studies of Religion, Program on Prosocial Behavior, please visit www.baylorisr.org. To review the Eagle Scout research, please visit www.scouting.org/About/Research/EagleScouts.aspx.

To learn more about Eagle Scouts, contact Deron Smith at 972-580-7848 or deron.smith@scouting.org.