

## Boy Scouts of America

While visiting London in 1909, Chicago publisher W. D. Boyce had become lost in foggy London when he met the “Unknown Scout” and assisted Boyce, guiding him to his destination. Boyce was so impressed with the Scout that having met with the Staff at Boy Scouts Headquarters and Lord Baden-Powell. Upon his return to America he incorporated Boy Scouts of America on February 8, 1910. Leaders within the organization realized the importance of BSA and June 15, 1916 President Woodrow Wilson signed the BSA’s Federal Charter.

The current mission statement of the BSA is “to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law”. When one reads the Scout Oath and Law, is it any wonder that at the first Convention of The American Legion adopted Boy Scouts of America as their first children and youth program to support? The Scout Oath and Law, and the Preamble to The American Legion have many similar mission statements which have continued to promote the alliance of Boy Scouts of America and The American Legion.

Today 2,451 Scouting Units are chartered by The American Legion Family. 61,765 youth are supported by 24,297 Adult Leaders. With those numbers The American Legion Family makes up the largest civic organization charters Scout Units and are in the top ten Chartered Organization Partners.

Traditional Scouting has four main programs. They are:

- [Cub Scouting](#) is available to boys from first to fifth-grade or 7 to 11 years.
- [Boy Scouting](#) is the [flagship](#) program of the BSA generally for boys ages 11 to 18.
- [Venturing](#) is the program for young men and women ages 14 through 21.
- [Sea Scouting](#) is the program for young men and women ages 14 through 21 focused on nautical activities.

The Boy Scouts of America offers several other programs and subprograms beyond the traditional membership:

- [Varsity Scouting](#) is a sub-division of Boy Scouting available to boys ages 14 to 18; it adds a program of [high adventure](#) and sporting activities.
- The [Order of the Arrow](#) is the Boy Scouting national honor society for experienced campers, based on [American Indian](#) traditions and is dedicated to the ideals of brotherhood and cheerful service.
- [Lone Scouting](#) is a program designed to allow those who would otherwise not be able to become Boy Scouts or Cub Scouts—usually due to residence in an overseas, isolated, or unsafe community—to participate in the Scouting experience.
- [STEM Scouts](#) is a [pilot program](#) of the BSA that focuses on STEM learning and career development for boy and girls in elementary, middle, and high school.

[Learning for Life](#) is a school and work-site based program that is a subsidiary of the BSA. It utilizes programs designed for schools and community-based organizations that are designed to prepare youth for the complexities of contemporary society and to enhance their self-confidence, motivation, and self-esteem. [Exploring](#) is the worksite-based program of Learning for Life with programs based on five areas of emphasis: career opportunities, life skills, citizenship, character education, and leadership experience.

As The American Legion prepares to celebrate its 100 year Anniversary, our commitment to “Foster and perpetuate a true spirit of Americanism” in supporting The Scouting Movement is just as important in 2017 as it was at that first National Convention of The American Legion.

For God and Country,

Richard C. Pond, Jr.  
Alternate National Executive Committeeman  
Detachment Membership Chairman  
Detachment of New Hampshire