



Venturing Awards and Requirements



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

From the Chief Scout Executive

Dear Venturers and Advisors,

Inspired by a passion for serving the youth of America through Venturing, a team of dedicated volunteers launched into a two-year labor of love to review, revise, and write new program materials. What resulted was a fresh and exciting program that will lead Venturers to new heights. On behalf of the Boy Scouts of America, I extend my utmost appreciation to the volunteer leaders and Venturers who accepted this challenge. The program materials included in the new Venturing resource series will be a wonderful guide through the program to help Venturers and Advisors alike experience exciting and ongoing adventure and fun.

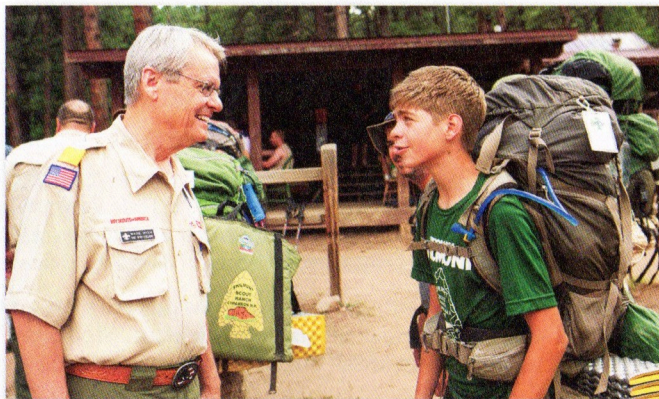
Thanks go as well to those who quietly leave a legacy by serving as crew Advisors. Their dedication to serving the youth of America is integral in their growth as leaders.

To both the Advisors who will guide the crew and the Venturers who will soon find themselves planning their next big adventure, I know you will find inspiration to grow, lead, and seek adventure as you absorb the information on these pages. What excitement awaits you along that path!

Good luck and Godspeed as you live and Lead the Adventure.

Wayne Brock

Wayne Brock
Chief Scout Executive
Boy Scouts of America



Preface

The Venturing recognition system is designed to help Venturers grow in the areas of adventure, leadership, personal development, and service. Awards serve as benchmarks that give Venturers a structure for developing their own personal vision into manageable goals that lead to recognition by their peers, mentors, and the larger Scouting community.

Venturing's Core Awards

The Venturing recognition system has four levels. All Venturers should earn the **Venturing Award** soon after formally joining the program. Venturers then proceed by earning the **Discovery** and **Pathfinder** awards. Lastly, Venturers earn the **Summit Award**, in which a young person formally serves as a mentor to other Venturers in his or her crew and completes a project of significant service to their community. Venturing is a flexible program, and the recognition system is designed to help all Venturers, no matter what their crew specialty, to grow and develop.

Venturing's Special-Interest Awards

Additionally, there are awards for Venturers who wish to develop a specific set of skills related to a focus area. These awards are separate from the Venturing, Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit awards.

- The **TRUST Award** is earned by developing a deep understanding about the role of faith in one's life and in a diverse society.
- The **Ranger Award** is earned by mastering outdoor skills.
- The **Quest Award** is earned by setting and meeting challenging goals related to sports and lifetime fitness.

Other Scouting Awards

Beyond Venturing are also many other recognitions a Venturer can aspire to earn or receive.

- **Religious emblems** can be earned by working with a church, synagogue, mosque, temple, or other faith-based organization. These awards are bestowed by these organizations and are recognized in Venturing. Venturers can also earn the **Messengers of Peace Award**.
- Venturers interested in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM disciplines) should consider earning **Nova Awards** or the prestigious **Supernova Awards** for Venturers: the **Sally Ride** and **Albert Einstein** awards.
- Venturers with a strong dedication to conserving natural resources could pursue the **William T. Hornaday Awards**.
- Other opportunities are listed in the back of this book.

This book is designed to be a comprehensive source for the requirements of the Venturing awards programs. Information is also provided on many of the other awards and recognitions to alert Venturers to these opportunities, but because these awards are often bestowed by other agencies, the Venturer is encouraged to find the most current requirements from those organizations.

All Venturers should be coached and mentored to begin the awards path. Venturing is a game with a purpose. It should be fun, social, and engaging, but its purpose is to guide Venturers toward their vision of themselves as leaders, adventurers, and faithful stewards of their own resources as well as those we all share.



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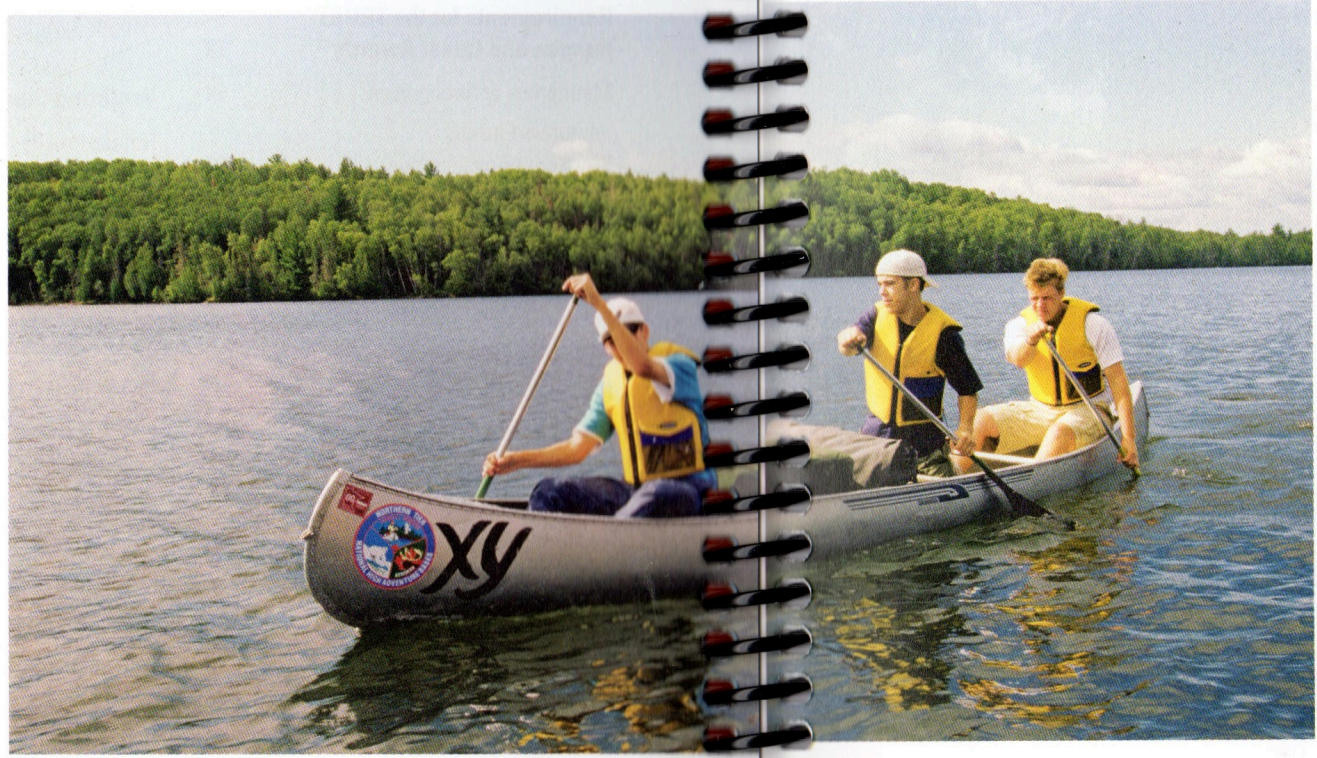
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The Trail to the Summit

Venturing is about personal growth through adventure. One of the tools used in Venturing is recognizing Venturers for taking on a personal challenge and meeting that challenge. Venturing uses several approaches to recognition. The recognition system described in the *Handbook for Venturers* is the key recognition system in the Venturing program. It provides a flexible framework for crew members to use when designing adventures and is a helpful tool for planning crew activities. The Venturing, Discovery, Pathfinder, and Summit awards provide benchmarks of progress as Venturers grow as leaders.

The trail to the Summit is designed to meet the needs of all crews as an adventure planning tool. The nature of the adventure varies from crew to crew, but the skills needed to deliver those adventures are the same.

This handbook is focused on another part of your growth as a leader: the need to develop skills that provide the setting for adventure. Whether your interests lie in the outdoors, in developing faith and cultural awareness, or in meeting the challenge of increasing your personal fitness, the Ranger, TRUST, and Quest awards give you program content ideas upon which to build your program. Use the content from these awards as partners with the Summit system to build your crew's adventures and to recognize your accomplishments along the way.



Requirements for the Core Venturing Awards

The Venturing awards program is designed around adventure. Adventure is not limited to extended expeditions involving challenging forms of climbing, canoeing, hiking, sailing, or the like. Adventure is a vision for how to live one's life. Adventure is seen as a desire to engage in activities that take us beyond our typical routine and into meeting other people, growing personally, and having the opportunity to gain new perspectives.

Venturing Award

The first step in any journey is having the courage to begin. At this level, the new crew member makes his or her commitment to join and move forward into the experience of Venturing.

Discovery Award

The adventure of participating with the crew unfolds, and each Venturer begins to discover his or her interests and talents. As the Discovery Award recipients develop new skills and competencies, their eyes are opened and the world expands for them.

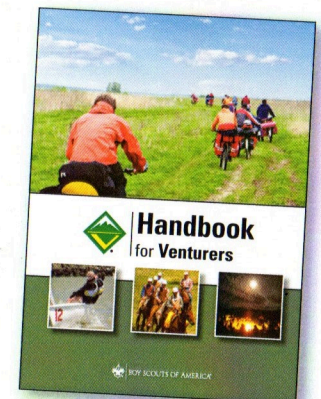
Pathfinder Award

The Venturers' capabilities and skills expand, and with that comes increased responsibility for defining their own way forward in life, service to others, and formal planning and leadership of the crew toward its goals.

Summit Award

The highest award of Venturing, the Summit Award, goes to Venturers who have matured in their personal direction, skills, and life competencies and who have accepted the responsibility to mentor others and serve their communities in a lasting way.

The requirements for each of the four Venturing awards are outlined here; the best reference for a Venturer who is seeking these awards is the Handbook for Venturers.



Venturing Award Requirements



1. Participate in a crew activity outside of a crew meeting.
2. Participate in an interview conducted by your crew president and your Advisor.
3. Complete Personal Safety Awareness training.
4. State your intention to join the crew by participating in an induction ceremony during which you repeat and commit to live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law and the Venturing motto: Lead the Adventure.



Discovery Award Requirements



Adventure

1. Participate in at least two Tier II or Tier III adventures at the crew, district, council, area, regional, or national level.
2. Complete the following:
 - a. A standard CPR course, such as American Red Cross—First Aid/CPR/AED for Schools and the Community or the American Heart Association—Heartsaver Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED, or an equivalent course.
 - b. A standard first-aid course such as the American Red Cross—Standard First Aid or equivalent course.

Leadership

3. Complete the Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews course (or an equivalent).
4. Complete the Goal-Setting and Time Management training courses.
5. Complete Crew Officers Orientation.

Personal Growth

6. Complete a structured personal reflection, and use this reflection and what you learned from the process to prepare for goal-setting and as part of your Discovery Award Advisor conference. Explore one of the following areas: Development of Faith,¹ Development of Self, Development of Others.

¹Venturers may, but are not required to, share the personal reflection associated with Development of Faith with their Advisor, during the Advisor conference, or during a board of review.

7. In consultation with your Advisor, establish at least one personal goal, and achieve it. The goal should be grounded in the area you explored in Discovery Award Personal Growth requirement 6.

Service

8. Participate in service activities totaling at least 24 hours. Up to half of the service may be delivered personally; the rest must be delivered through crew service activities.

Advisor Conference and Board of Review

Upon completion of the Adventure, Leadership, Personal Growth, and Service requirements, complete the following.

9. Since earning the Venturing Award, participate in a conference with your Advisor.² As a part of this conference, discuss with your Advisor the challenges you faced and what you learned in fulfilling Personal Growth requirements 6 and 7.

²Venturers may, but are not required to, share the personal reflection associated with Development of Faith with their Advisor, during the Advisor conference, or during a board of review.

10. After your Advisor conference, successfully complete a crew board of review.



Pathfinder Award Requirements



Adventure

1. Participate in at least two additional (for a total of at least four) Tier II or Tier III adventures at the crew, district, council, area, regional, or national level. Serve as a leader for one of the adventures.

Leadership

2. Complete Project Management training.
3. Since earning the Discovery Award, plan and give leadership to a Tier II or Tier III adventure. Work with a youth mentor to ensure that you have organized the adventure in advance, that you are prepared for contingencies, and that you have prepared the members of your crew to take part. In some cases, you may need to confer with an external consultant to assure the adventure is feasible for your crew. The adventure must take place over at least two consecutive nights. If an event lasts more than four nights, an additional Venturer may share in planning and leading the adventure. If two Venturers plan the adventure, they should work with their mentor to ensure that the workload is divided fairly between the two leaders. At the close of the adventure, lead a reflection with the participants in the activity to determine what was learned and how it helped them to work together as a more effective team. An experienced Venturer should serve as your mentor for the adventure.³
³ Venturers may, but are not required to, share the personal reflection associated with Development of Faith with their Advisor, during the Advisor conference, or during a board of review.
4. Complete one of the following.
 - a. Since earning the Discovery Award, serve actively as crew president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, guide, historian, den chief, or quartermaster for a period of at least six months.⁴ At the beginning of your term, work with your crew president (or Advisor, if you are the president) to set performance goals for the position. Any number of

different positions may be held as long as the total length of service equals at least six months. Holding simultaneous positions does not shorten the required number of months. Positions need not flow from one to the other; there may be gaps in time. Once during your term of office, discuss your successes and challenges with your crew president (or Advisor, if you are the president).

⁴ Venturers may substitute district, council, area, regional, or national Venturing officer or cabinet positions for the positions listed in this requirement.

OR

- b. Participate in or serve on staff for leadership training such as National Youth Leadership Training, Kodiak Challenge, National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience, Order of the Arrow National Leadership Seminar, Sea Scout SEAL Training, or Wood Badge (for Venturers 18 or older). You may also participate in non-BSA leadership training courses such as those delivered by the National Outdoor Leadership School, if approved by your Advisor.

Personal Growth

5. Since earning the Discovery Award, explore the two areas (Development of Faith,⁵ Development of Self, or Development of Others) that you did not explore previously. Based on what you discover, prepare a set of personal reflections or thoughts on the subjects. Use your reflections and what you learned from the process to prepare for fulfilling Personal Growth requirement 7 and for your Pathfinder Award Advisor conference.

⁵ Venturers may, but are not required to, share the personal reflection associated with Development of Faith with their Advisor, during the Advisor conference, or during a board of review.

6. Participate in an ethical controversy discussion activity that includes an extension into conflict resolution.
7. In consultation with your Advisor, establish at least two personal goals, and achieve them. The goals should be grounded in the areas you explored in Pathfinder Personal Growth requirement 5.

Service

8. Plan, organize, and give leadership to a project designed to sustain and grow your crew. Submit the plan to your crew president (or Advisor, if you are president), and explain how you think it will encourage more young people to join Venturing.
9. Participate in service activities totaling at least 36 hours. This in addition to the 24 hours of service required to earn the Discovery Award. Up to half of the service may be delivered personally; the rest must be delivered through crew activities.

Advisor Conference and Board of Review

Upon completion of the Adventure, Leadership, Personal Growth, and Service requirements, compete the following.

10. Participate in an Advisor conference. As a part of this conference, discuss with your Advisor the challenges you faced and what you learned in fulfilling Pathfinder Personal Growth requirements 5 and 7.
11. After your Advisor conference, successfully complete a crew board of review.

Summit Award Requirements



Adventure

1. Participate in at least three additional (for a total of seven) Tier II or Tier III adventures at the crew, district, council, area, regional, or national level. To earn the Summit Award, a Venturer must have participated in at least one Tier III adventure and served as a leader during one adventure.

Leadership

2. Complete Mentoring training prior to initiating mentoring relationships.
3. Since earning the Pathfinder Award, mentor another Venturer in the planning and implementation of a crew, council, area, regional, or national Venturing activity (see Summit Adventure requirement 1). Work with the youth enough to ensure he or she is ready to lead and has organized the appropriate resources, is prepared for contingencies, and has developed an itinerary, conducted training to support the adventure, and mitigated risk before and during the adventure. Participate in the adventure and provide feedback on how the adventure was conducted.
4. Complete two of the following.
 - a. Since earning the Pathfinder Award, serve actively as crew president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, guide, historian, den chief, or quartermaster for a period of at least six months.⁶ At the beginning of your term, work with your crew president (or Advisor, if you are the president) to set performance goals for the position. Any number of different positions may be held as long as the total length of service equals at least six months. Holding simultaneous positions does not shorten the

⁶ Venturers may substitute district, council, area, regional, or national Venturing officer or cabinet positions for the positions listed in this requirement.

required number of months. Positions need not flow from one to the other; there may be gaps in time. Once during your term of office, discuss your successes and challenges with your crew president (or Advisor, if you are the president).

- b. Participate in or serve on staff for leadership training such as National Youth Leadership Training, Kodiak Challenge, National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience, Order of the Arrow National Leadership Seminar, Sea Scout SEAL Training, or Wood Badge (for Venturers 18 or older). You may also participate in non-BSA leadership training courses such as those delivered by the National Outdoor Leadership School, if approved by your Advisor. This must be a different training course than you completed for Pathfinder Award requirement 4(b) or Summit Award requirement 4(c).
- c. Lead the delivery of Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews for members of your Venturing crew or another local Venturing crew or for a local district or council training event. After leading the training course, discuss with your crew Advisor how you believe you helped build the skill set of your crew and what you learned by organizing the training course.

Personal Growth

5. Since earning the Pathfinder Award, complete a structured personal reflection. Use this reflection to prepare for goal-setting and as part of your Advisor conference. Explore two of the following areas: Development of Faith,⁷ Development of Self, or Development of Others. You may explore two different areas or explore one area twice.

⁷ Venturers may, but are not required to, share the personal reflection associated with Development of Faith with their Advisor, during the Advisor conference, or during a board of review.

6. Create a personal code of conduct. This code of conduct should be guided by your explorations in the areas of faith, self, and others.
7. Since earning the Pathfinder Award, lead an ethical controversy and conflict resolution scenario with members of your Venturing crew.

Service

8. Since earning the Pathfinder award, plan and conduct a service project as described in the Venturing Summit Award Service Project Workbook. Before you start, have the project proposal form from the workbook completed and approved by those benefiting from the effort, your Advisor, and designated crew or ship youth leadership. This project must be a different service project than one carried out for the Eagle Scout Award, the Sea Scout Quartermaster Award, or the Girl Scout Gold Award.

Advisor Conference and Board of Review

Upon completion of the Adventure, Leadership, Personal Growth, and Service requirements, complete the following.

9. Participate in an Advisor conference. As a part of this conference, share your code of conduct with your Advisor, and explain how your explorations of faith, self, and others and your goal-setting exercises influenced the development of your code.
10. After your Advisor conference, successfully complete a crew board of review.

Summit Board of Review

For the Summit Award, the board of review will be conducted according to the *BSA Guide to Advancement*.

The board of review must consist of at least five, but no more than six, members. At least half of the board of review members, excluding the chair, must be Venturers currently participating in the program.

The candidate's crew president (or vice president of administration, if the candidate is the crew president) and the chair of the board of review must agree upon the board's final membership makeup. If the chair and the crew president (or vice president of administration) cannot agree, the candidate's Advisor will make the final determination of board membership, including members previously considered by the crew president and chair.

Board of Review Chair. The adult chair of the board of review shall be a Venturing-certified member of the district or local council advancement committee or a designated Venturing-certified representative. "Venturing-certified" means that the person has completed Venturing Awards and Recognition training.

Venturer Representatives. The board of review should include at least two active Venturers, at least one of whom must be from the candidate's crew. Other Venturing members of the board of review should be selected from the following list.

- A current holder of the Summit Award or Silver Award
- A member of the council, area, or region Venturing Officers Association or equivalent
- A Venturer who currently holds an elected office in a crew
- An Eagle Scout, Quartermaster, or Girl Scout Gold award recipient who is an active Venturer

In the event the chair determines that no Venturer is available who meets one of these qualifications, the crew president may nominate another Venturer from the candidate's crew to serve on the board of review.

Adult Representatives. Other than the chair, the board of review should include at least one adult who is registered with the BSA and who participates regularly with the Venturing program at any level.

Community Representatives. It is recommended that the board of review involve at least one well-respected adult representative of the community.



Requirements for the TRUST, Ranger, and Quest Awards

Venturing offers three awards for Venturers who seek to excel in specific areas of emphasis: religious and spiritual life, the outdoors, physical fitness, and leadership.

- The **TRUST Award** encourages a Venturer to deepen his or her own religious faith, to learn about the cultures and faiths of others, and to apply principles of conflict resolution in his or her own life.
- The **Ranger Award** challenges a Venturer to achieve a high level of outdoor skills proficiency that can be used to serve other Scouts and Venturers.
- The **Quest Award** challenges a Venturer to learn about new sports disciplines, achieve a degree of proficiency in them, and then teach others about them.



Mechanics of Recognition

For the TRUST, Ranger, and Quest awards, crew Advisors or consultants must sign for the requirements that a Venturer completes. For the TRUST Award, Venturers need to work with a leader of their own religious community; this can be a lay leader. These awards are completed once all requirements and necessary electives have been signed off by a crew Advisor, qualified consultant, or religious leader. There is no crew board of review.

Consultants

At times, Venturers will need to consult adult experts other than their crew Advisor or religious leader. These consultants need to be chosen carefully and should be experts in the area of interest. For example, a teacher whose field of study is cultural diversity or community government may provide insight and help with electives in those areas. Religious leaders from different faiths may be helpful in studying religious perspectives for the TRUST Award. A naturalist or environmental science teacher could help with electives such as Plants and Wildlife for the Ranger Award. For the Quest Award, appropriate examples of consultants could include a fencing coach, a sports doctor, or an Olympic athlete. Consultants need to be knowledgeable and proficient in the discipline related to the Ranger or Quest requirement—in other words, a specialist. It is desirable that if available the consultant be licensed or certified in his or her field of expertise.

All consultants should be approved in advance by the crew Advisor. The Advisor may also recommend potential consultants or suggest whom to contact in a particular area of interest.

Presentations

Many requirements ask Venturers to share their knowledge with others—their crew, youth group, school group, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc. What is shared, and how it is shared, will depend on the audience. Both the method of presentation and the information presented need to be appropriate to the age of the audience. A Venturer may want to use displays; pictures are invaluable in communicating with others. If speaking to a Cub Scout den, a Venturer should consider the shorter attention span of young children and their greater need for active learning, especially when presenting an outdoor skill. An audience of senior citizens might not be interested in training for a marathon, but a Venturer might encourage them to try walking around the block three times a week. Venturers should seek the crew Advisor's guidance in putting together a presentation to be the best possible. Sharing knowledge with others is a great way to be sure of one's own understanding.

Multiple Credit

Unless specified in the requirements, a Venturer may receive multiple credit for similar requirements within the Venturing program. For instance, if a Venturer becomes certified as a Red Cross First Aid instructor for the TRUST Award, the certification will carry over to the Ranger and Quest award requirements as well. Similarly, if a Venturer uses an American Red Cross Emergency Medical Response course to meet the first-aid core requirement for the Ranger Award, the credit also applies to the award's First Aid and Lifesaver electives. The only time a Venturer cannot receive multiple credit is when required to do a presentation (tabletop, sports clinic, or other). Each presentation must be done individually, not two or three at a time.

Past Credit

All core requirements and electives require that the work be done as a Venturer. A youth may have earned the Backpacking merit badge as a Boy Scout, but he must complete all requirements for the Ranger Award Backpacking elective as a Venturer. A youth may have previously earned the Physical Fitness merit badge as a Boy Scout, but for the Quest Award he must do all that is required in the Quest Fitness for Life core requirement while he is a Venturer. However, a youth who is working on the Boy Scout Physical Fitness merit badge and the Quest Fitness for Life core requirement at the same time can get dual credit for those requirements that overlap. As an example, for the TRUST Award, a youth may have previously researched another religion for a high school history class or attended a cultural event in the community with his or her family. While valuable experiences, these cannot be counted toward the TRUST Award unless the youth was a Venturer at the time.

An exception to this policy is made for certifications. As long as a certification needed to fulfill a requirement or an elective is still valid (unexpired), the certification may be used regardless of when it was received. It does not matter if it was obtained prior to the candidate becoming a Venturer. Examples include scuba Open Water Diver certification for the Ranger Award or the American Red Cross Sports Medicine Training Program for the Quest Award.

Venturers Earning Boy Scout Advancement

A Venturer who has achieved First Class rank as a Boy Scout in a troop or as a Varsity Scout in a team may continue working toward the Star, Life, and Eagle Scout ranks as a Venturer until his 18th birthday. Any work done while a Venturer can count toward both Boy Scout advancement and Venturing recognition at the same time. For instance, a conservation project required in Boy Scouting can also count in Venturing.

The Venturer must meet the requirements in the *Boy Scout Handbook* and the current *Boy Scout Requirements*. Leadership requirements may be met by serving as president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, webmaster, or Leave No Trace trainer in a Venturing crew, or Quartermaster, boatswain, boatswain's mate, yeoman, purser, storekeeper, webmaster, or Leave No Trace trainer in a Sea Scout ship. The unit leader conference will be conducted by the crew Advisor or ship Skipper. As the Venturer meets the requirements for the Star and Life ranks, a board of review is conducted by the crew or ship committee. The Eagle Scout board of review follows the procedures established by the BSA local council.

Venturers working on Boy Scout advancement do not have to be registered in a Boy Scout troop, but may do so at no additional charge. A Venturer may pay the yearly membership registration fee in the troop, team,



Eagle Scout Award

crew, or ship and be a member of the other unit without paying another fee. For example, a youth who pays to register in his Boy Scout troop can also be a member of his crew at no additional charge. This is called multiple (dual) registration. It is the youth's responsibility to be sure his membership does not lapse. Wherever the youth is registered, his Scoutmaster and crew Advisor or Skipper decide with him which one of them will oversee the youth member's advancement. For more information, see the *Guide to Advancement*, No. 33088, section 4.3.1.4.

Venturers who are active in a Boy Scout troop or who are working on Boy Scout advancement may wear Boy Scout rank badges on their Venturing uniform. Venturers who have earned the Eagle Scout Award may continue to wear the Eagle Scout badge until their 21st birthday.

Searching for Information

Many of the requirements for the TRUST, Ranger, and Quest awards call for the Venturer to search independently for further information. The Internet is a wonderful source of information about religions, cultures, governments, governing associations for sports, outdoors knowledge, and countless other subjects. However, a researcher needs to be a smart Internet user. Not all of the information online is reliable or accurate. This can be especially true of religious, cultural, and ethnic information. It is important to use only reliable information to avoid being misled when learning about someone else's religion or culture.

For each requirement and elective for the TRUST, Ranger, and Quest awards, authoritative Internet resources are available through the Venturing portal at www.scouting.org/venturing. These are mostly the official sites for religious, community, sporting, and outdoors skills organizations. Some of these refer to other sites that are equally helpful and authoritative. A Venturer must be careful not to rely on personal sites or sites that seek to promote one person's way of thinking by degrading someone else's. Such sites do not promote the Venturing way.

Internet Safety Tips

A Venturer should:

- Review Venturing's *Personal Safety Awareness* video.
- Make sure your parents always know if you're online.
- Never give personal information (name, address, email address, phone number, parents' names, photographs of you or your house, your school's name or location) to someone you meet online.
- Never agree to call on the phone or meet in person anyone you've met online.
- Navigate away from anything that makes you uncomfortable (or would make your mom or dad uncomfortable). Use the back arrow.
- Tell the adult who knows you're online if someone does something bad or you get into a bad site.
- Keep your password secure.
- Use your own words when including information from the Internet in any reports you write. Give credit to Internet authors if you do use their words or ideas.
- Language that you use online must be clean and polite. Ask yourself, "Would my parents mind reading what I'm writing?"
- E-buying is not OK unless you have your parents' approval.
- Searches and sites must be safely surfed. Don't go looking for trouble!

Research Tips

To begin looking for information on the Internet, a Venturer will likely use a search engine. Some of the most helpful are:

- www.google.com
- www.bing.com
- www.yahoo.com
- www.ask.com

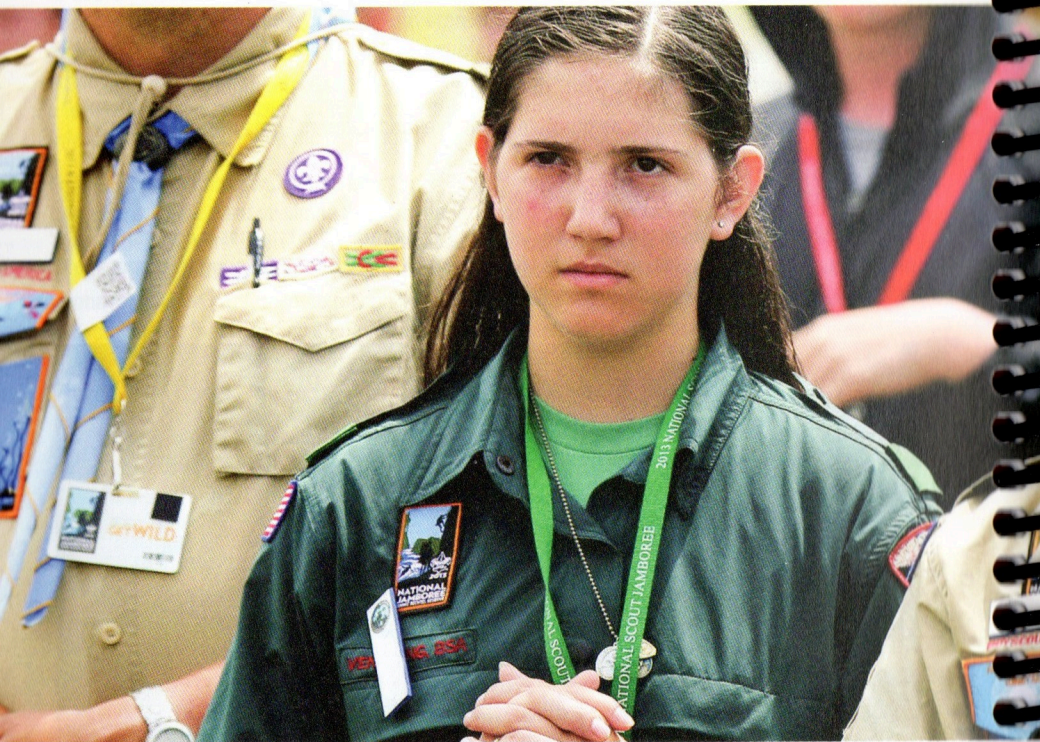
Most search engines have help pages that answer questions about how to use the sites. An important consideration when searching for information is choosing the right keywords. Keywords are the words to type in the search box. Choosing the right keywords will save time by accurately leading the user to the information needed.

These tips will help produce the best search results:

- Try the obvious first. When looking for information on Picasso, enter "Picasso" rather than "painters."
- Use words that are likely to appear on a site with the information wanted. "Luxury hotel Dubuque" gets better results than "really nice places to spend the night in Dubuque."
- Make keywords as specific as possible. "Antique lead soldiers" gets more relevant results than "old metal toys."
- Try different search engines and compare the results.

The best way to improve Internet skills is to practice. Because the Internet is constantly changing, users may run into dead ends along the way. The information sought is most likely out there, needing only a persistent searcher to find it.





Venturing TRUST Award

Tending

Respecting

Understanding

Serving

Transforming

The Scout Law is the basic ethical guideline of the Scouting program in the United States. It is familiar to millions of people who have been part of the program throughout the years, as well as many people who have not. The Scout Law begins “A Scout is trustworthy.” One of the earliest codes of ethics in the Scouting program, this concept comes from the founding of Scouting by Lord Baden-Powell. In the Scout laws of other countries, we see similar words: a Scout is trustworthy; a Scout is to be trusted; a Scout is faithful and reliable; a Scout’s honor is to be trusted.

Trust is an essential aspect of our relationships with others, both personally and corporately. Do I trust you, and if so, how much? Does your country trust mine? Does my country trust yours? Do others trust my religion? Do I trust another’s religion? Do I trust my community leaders to make good decisions—for our children, our youth, our elders?

As members of the Scouting movement, Venturers are often looked upon by the community to be trusted leaders in matters of morality, maturity, and service. But we live in an increasingly pluralistic society, and it is a challenging task to discover how these concepts are interpreted by people of different nationalities, cultures, and religions. How does a Venturer discover what these issues mean to different people? One way is by listening to and studying different viewpoints that people hold—in other words, by learning about the things that have a daily impact on people’s lives. As Scouts and Venturers, it is imperative that we lead our communities in building trust and well-being.

Earning the TRUST Award will help a Venturer build trust with others in our increasingly complex and diverse world. This award begins that journey with the Venturer gaining a deeper understanding of his or her own beliefs. Then the Venturer learns about the beliefs of others and in doing so becomes increasingly able to exemplify the role of a servant leader.



TRUST Award

Purpose and Goals of the TRUST Award

Throughout this section, the term God is used to represent the creator or divine spirit, just as it is used in the Scout Oath. It is not intended to be a limiting term. When studying a religion that uses a different term than God, please substitute as needed.

For many people, God is a source of strength in daily life, and often the center of activity and thought throughout the day. Many think of God as a supreme being and creator, while others think of God as a set of attributes present in every living being. Regardless of one's religious upbringing, and by whatever name God is called, people around the world seek guidance from God in good times and bad. In our diverse world, we increasingly encounter people who have grown up in different traditions than we have and therefore see both the world and God in ways that are sometimes quite foreign to us. Getting along with such people (especially in times of unrest and uncertainty) requires that we know something about them and their religious and cultural traditions.

Often it is young people who lead us all in a quest for answers and understanding. You can teach the world around you a great deal about being nonjudgmental, curious, and open-minded. You can demonstrate patience, tolerance, and understanding to a world in need of harmony. You can be the source of strength and leadership for an entire community.

To the Venturer:

The purpose of this award program is to help you learn more about your relationship with God and how your religious and cultural heritage can strengthen you for daily living. You will discover much about the community in which you live and the people who are a vital part of your community. You will also discover how the Scout Oath and Scout Law can be applied more specifically to your daily life. Throughout this program you will study your own understanding of God and your religious beliefs. You will look at why you hold those beliefs and why they are important to you. You will also look at the religious beliefs of others, the community in which you reside, how to deal with conflicts of various types, and how as a member of a community you are able to better serve your fellow human beings. You will contribute to the transformation of your community into a better place to live for all.

In the end, as you qualify for and are presented the TRUST Award, you will become a resource for other youth (and adults) in your community, helping them to be open-minded and curious, and helping them to become better citizens of the diverse nation in which we live.

The goals are for you to:

- Learn about your religious faith in greater detail.
- Learn about other religious faiths and how they are similar to and different from your own.
- Examine cultures other than your own and learn how culture helps define who we are.
- Explore your community, seek to understand its rich diversity, and find ways to serve it better.
- Learn about conflict resolution, peace, and reconciliation and how to apply them in your own life.

Religious/Community Leadership

To earn the TRUST Award, you will need to work with a leader of your religious community. This may be a pastor, priest, rabbi, imam, etc., or it may be a lay leader of your religious community, including your youth group leader. To get the most out of this course of study, it is important that this religious leader be:

- Approved by your religious community
- Knowledgeable in the ways of your faith
- Open-minded enough to help you on this journey
- Someone who is comfortable having discussions with youth
- Someone you are comfortable talking to
- Someone who cares about your personal growth

If you have difficulty finding such a person, consult your crew Advisor.

Completing the TRUST Award Requirements

The TRUST Award is divided into five sections:

1. Tending your beliefs
2. Respecting the beliefs of others
3. Understanding other cultures
4. Serving your community
5. Transforming our society



The TRUST essentials seek to be exactly that: They provide a foundation for the other requirements for the TRUST Award. You might find it helpful to complete the TRUST essentials first, but that is only a suggestion. The remaining five sections of the TRUST Award are set up in a systematic format and build upon what you learned while completing the TRUST essentials. Each section has a set of core requirements, plus four or five electives from which you must choose and complete at least one. This freedom of choice gives you flexibility while ensuring that all Venturers follow the same process on their way to earning this award.

As with all aspects of Venturing, it is just as important to pass on the information you learn as it is to actually learn it. Not only do you increase the general knowledge of other Venturers, family, and friends, but by communicating with others, you help cement a better understanding of the material within yourself.

Note: If a requirement in this guide cannot be met in your community or by your faith, your Advisor may modify the requirement to fit the available resources. Any substitution should be no less of a challenge than what is written here. When relevant, your religious and/or community leaders' input should be sought for any modifications. If, however, the resources are available to you, you should meet all requirements as written.

The requirements are:

- Complete the Venturing TRUST essentials.
- Complete the remaining five projects for the TRUST Award.

Tending Your Beliefs

Tend: To have the care of; to apply one's attention toward.

All religions have certain elements in common. Religions seek to answer, or provide answers to, the deepest questions people ask about life and death. Religious answers provide not only the power of ancient wisdom, but also the weight of truth. Questions such as "Why are we here?" "Did we exist before this life, and if so, where did we come from?" "How should we live?" "What happens after we die?" "Can we get truth from God, and if so, how do we do it?" "Does God have a plan for me?" and "Why does evil exist?" are answered by religions around the globe, each with its own truth and wisdom.

The paths that seekers take to find answers to these and other questions can be quite varied. Some paths are solitary; others are communal. Some paths are rich with ritualistic meaning; others are stripped bare. Some paths lead us to a personal encounter with God; others lead us to a heightened awareness of our own spirituality. The paths are individual, but they are bound together by ages upon ages of religious tradition. For all religions, the religious journey that gives meaning to our lives—by whatever path we choose—is a journey from a place of need and fear to a place of freedom and fulfillment.

It is essential that you understand your own religious path before you can properly understand and compare the traditions of others. What is the history of your religion? What are the truths that your religious tradition emphasizes? By what path do you seek God, and by what name do you know God?

Because you need to first know yourself, the following requirements must be completed before the other requirements can be started. In addition, it is important to work with your religious leader (and other resource people within your faith community) while completing these requirements.

What Does It Mean to Be Religious?

Being religious has many different meanings to many different people, sometimes even within the same culture. These definitions often end up in conflict with each other. At their heart, most definitions have to do with listening to God and trying to follow what God has in store for us. However, being religious may include practices as diverse as:*

- Loving one's neighbor as oneself, or excommunicating him or her to a fate worse than death
- Having a soul, or not having a soul
- Withdrawing into silence, or speaking aloud in tongues
- Shaving one's head, or never cutting one's hair
- Going to mosque on Friday, temple on Saturday, church on Sunday, or a personal shrine every day
- Praying, sacrificing, meditating, levitating, prostrating, worshipping, or entering into trance and ecstasy
- Obeying the command to multiply, or taking a lifelong vow of celibacy
- Building a great cathedral or temple or pyramid, or giving away all that one has
- Being an intimate part of the world, or living in seclusion away from the world
- Fighting crusades or holy wars, or advocating for worldwide peace and disarmament
- Being inspired to create music, art, and poetry that is rich in symbolism and mysticism, or living a life of simplicity stripped of symbols that distract from attention to God

**This list was adapted from World Religions: The Great Faiths Explored and Explained.*

For the purpose of this Venturing program, we have adopted the following definition of religious life: "Living your life not only in accordance with your personal religious beliefs, but also in connection with them." As you seek to gain knowledge of your religious beliefs and customs, seek also the strength to live by those beliefs each and every day.

Respecting the Beliefs of Others

Respect: To feel or show deferential regard for; to avoid violation of or interference with.

Respect is the virtue of accepting the legitimacy of other belief systems even though you may hold your own belief system to be true. Respect requires acknowledging that, although you may think your religion is the true faith, you recognize that people of other faith traditions have the same right you do to explore for themselves the difficult questions of life and spirituality. This requires spiritual humility. Most religious traditions have teachings about respect and humility.

Humility does not mean you must deny your faith. It just means you should affirm your faith gently and lovingly and without judgment of others who are also seekers on a spiritual journey. You do not need to agree with the beliefs of others to understand them and to respect their right to hold their own beliefs and seek truth in their own way. Understanding a religion other than your own means more than just knowing some of the main ideas and statements; it means seeking to genuinely understand why seekers believe in their path and how that path may be both similar to and different from your own path.

The United States has long upheld the principle of freedom of religion. As a pluralistic society where most of the world's religions are practiced, it is important that we guarantee each person the freedom to practice his or her religion without interference from the community, the government, or other religious groups. This is quite different from what we see in many other countries of the world, where citizens are required to support (through taxes or other means) the official state religion, even if they do not belong to, or believe in, that particular religion.



Why Study Other Religions?

Perhaps the most important reason to study cultures and religions other than your own is that it helps you replace fear with experience and insight. It is hard to be afraid of something you really understand. Religious intolerance is generally based in fear, in both the emotional and physical senses of the word, and fear kills.

Our world is rapidly moving toward a global community and economy. As we depend more and more upon cooperation and understanding among different groups of people, the role and effect of religion becomes increasingly important on the international scene. Both religious tolerance and intolerance have played important roles in the world throughout human history and continue to do so today. Religion is among humanity's major driving forces and often has been used as the rationale for wars, massacres, and feuds, some of which have lasted for centuries.

Religion is a defining force. The beliefs instilled by family and religious leaders define such things as one's ideas of right and wrong and who has the right to punish those who do wrong, what happens when one dies, and so much more. To many people, religions are either-or: either a given religion is completely right, or it is completely wrong. Unless tempered with understanding, this common and pervasive attitude often inflames and separates people and groups, causing further misunderstanding rather than drawing people together.

Religion is linked closely to the group of its practitioners, its community. Like religion, a community can both positively and negatively affect our lives. Unfortunately, over the centuries, some communities have been mobilized as instruments of destruction and death. By understanding the ties that create a community, and how those ties correlate with religion, you can find ways to make a positive difference in the world. It is a challenge to tell the difference between using the power of community for good and the use of community to power one's own ambitions. The ability to make these distinctions, however, is what being a good citizen of the United States and the greater world is all about.

When we know little or nothing about the religious practices of our neighbors, it can be easy to classify them as "the other," the misguided, the immoral. Once we define another tradition or practice as "the other," it's a short step to devaluing our neighbors unfairly. If we are to build workable bridges within the community, between one believer and another, between one religion and another, then we must be willing to listen to what our neighbor has to say, and how our neighbor understands his or her relationship to God. That is the goal of the TRUST Award program.

Religions and the TRUST Award

While working on this section of the TRUST Award, you may elect to study another religion. For the purposes of this award, the following list offers a selection of worldwide religions and some of their major subdivisions. While this list is by no means complete, it attempts to include many of the major religions throughout the world, both in respect to the number of contemporary followers and in the effects they have on the modern world.

Baha'i	Islam
Buddhism	<i>Shiite</i> <i>Sunni</i>
<i>Mahayana</i> <i>Theravada</i> <i>Vajrayana (Tibetan)</i>	Jainism
Christianity	Judaism
<i>Catholic</i> <i>The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)</i> <i>Evangelical/</i> <i>Nondenominational/"Mere Christians"</i> <i>Orthodox</i> <i>Pentecostal</i> <i>Protestant</i>	<i>Conservative</i> <i>Orthodox</i> <i>Reform</i>
Hinduism	Native American/First Nations
	Shintoism
	Sikhism
	Taoism (Daoism) and Confucianism
	Zoroastrianism
	Other Religions

Understanding Other Cultures

Understand: To perceive and comprehend the nature and significance of.

The United States has been referred to as a great stew, where a variety of vegetables and meat are placed in the pot and are cooked together to create one meal. All contribute to the overall flavor and texture of the stew, yet each also retains its own unique characteristics and identity.

In the United States, people of many diverse cultures come together to live and work side by side. For those whose families have been in the United States for many generations, a distinct culture may play little part in daily life or holidays. Yet some who have been here for a long time are rediscovering the culture of their ancestors and reviving festivals to teach new generations about their roots.

For more recent arrivals, culture may be a way to maintain ties to something familiar and important. Cultural traditions tie similar people together, binding them in ways that strengthen the community and the individuals within it. Culture protects us and is a picture of who we are.

Sometimes a religion becomes so tightly or deeply woven into the culture of a country that separating the culture from the faith is impossible. This type of intertwining may be seen, for example, in the relationship of Hinduism to India, or Christianity to Italy, or Islam to Saudi Arabia. In these instances, the culture and the dominant religion are not just superficially connected; they are intertwined at the deepest level. As a result, people who are not of the majority faith may have a hard time feeling accepted or comfortable within the culture. Sometimes such intertwining of culture and faith can lead to such conflict that a pluralistic society cannot exist.

The United States is different. A majority of Americans are Christians, and a majority have European ancestry. However, the first amendment to our Constitution prohibits Congress from establishing a religion or inhibiting the free practice of religion. We are legally committed to cultural and religious diversity. During our nation's history, our cultural diversity has increased tremendously as immigrants from all corners of the world have settled within our borders. You may be a first-generation American or have friends who are.

Today we are probably the most culturally diverse nation on Earth. Still, people descended from non-European cultures often complain that their culture is not accepted or is suppressed in favor of the majority. This is not the ideal we value for the future. Culture plays a vital part in all of our daily lives. Understanding the interaction of cultures in an unbiased way, however, is not easy. It requires careful thought and trust among people in the world and the community. The future of our society depends, in part, upon people of different cultures being able to walk the fine line between being an integral part of modern culture and loving observance of old and honored traditions.

Finding One's Cultural Identity

In this great stewpot we call home, it is often difficult to find and maintain a cultural identity. If our family arrived in this country recently, older family members likely maintain distinct cultural traditions that are important reminders of who they are and where they came from. For those whose families have been in the United States for many generations, however, the cultural traditions and identity prevalent in the past may well have disappeared or been blended with local traditions. In this case, some research may be necessary to establish or re-establish a cultural identity.

The best place to start is with older family members. Find out what they know and can remember. Some families have extensive genealogical records, but most do not. Tracing one's family roots can be a fun and enlightening project. If you are aware of a culture that your family identifies with, there may be organizations that keep that culture alive in the United States (and perhaps in your community or state). Search library and Internet databases to find these groups, and see what information they can provide to help you learn about your ancestors. You may be surprised at how easy it is.

Finally, share what you discover with your family and with others who relate to the same culture. Be proud of your heritage and how your cultural group contributes to making your community and our nation strong.

For a list of resources to help you begin your research, visit the Venturing portal at www.scouting.org/venturing.

Serving Your Community

Serve: To be of assistance to or promote the interests of; to give homage and obedience to.

Humans are social beings. As such, we depend upon each other for protection, teaching, care, and love. In return, it is our duty as humans to serve our community whenever possible. Our communities are a part of who we are. As individuals we are vulnerable; when we stick together, we find strength and purpose. The ideas and viewpoints we learn from our community, even at a young age, can stay with us lifelong.

A tenet of every major religion is that people are meant to be a part of a community of faith and good deeds. Cultures around the world have grouped together in communities to share resources. Governments have established boundaries of communities and organized to serve those within. Some religious communities separate themselves from the world. Groups such as Hasidic Jews, Amish Christians, and some Buddhist and Catholic monks and nuns choose to construct religious communities that separate them from the temptations and distractions of modern society. Most religious communities, however, try to integrate into, and influence, the general society. The challenge religious communities face is to not lose their religious identity when surrounded by the distractions of the larger community. As you serve your community (both your faith community and the physical community you live in), you also serve yourself by making it a better place in which to live.

Remember that “community” doesn’t mean just the few houses or apartment buildings around you. Rather, the word also refers to larger groups such as a religious community, a cultural community, a community of friends, and the Scouting community (including the specialized community known as Venturing).

Community Organizations

Several requirements for the TRUST Award help you learn about your physical and social communities and the ways people in these communities work with each other for the common good. This Venturing award program defines community life as: “Living your life not only with the people of the community, but also for the betterment of those people.” Venturing is a program of the Boy Scouts of America, and the BSA is not an island in the community. We are an interdependent piece of the community, and we work with many other youth organizations, community service organizations, conservation organizations, fraternal organizations, and veterans organizations (many of which sponsor Venturing crews).

The lists on the facing page will help you find organizations in your community that can serve as valuable resources for the TRUST program and for Venturing in general. Do not hesitate to call upon these organizations for guidance and help. Many of the fraternal organizations have scholarships and other programs for the benefit of Scouting. Many also sponsor high school or college service clubs that you might consider being involved with. Religious organizations also have service-oriented groups.

The organizations listed here are only some of the thousands that exist. Besides these large, national groups are many smaller, local organizations.

Youth-Serving Agencies

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, www.bbbsa.org
- Boy Scouts of America, www.scouting.org
- Boys & Girls Clubs, www.bgca.org
- Camp Fire USA, www.campfire.org
- 4-H, www.4-H.org
- Girl Scouts of the USA, www.girlscouts.org

Community Service Organizations

- Alpha Phi Omega, www.apo.org
- American Red Cross, www.redcross.org
- Animal-care organizations, including The Humane Society, ASPCA, rescue organizations, etc.
- Habitat for Humanity, www.habitat.org
- Jewish community centers, www.jcca.org
- YMCA, www.ymca.com
- YWCA, www.ywca.org
- Refugee resettlement organizations in your area

Conservation Organizations

- Your state department of natural resources
- Audubon Society, www.audubon.org
- Izaak Walton League, www.iwla.org
- National Park Service, www.nps.gov
- National Wildlife Federation, www.nwf.org
- Natural Resources Conservation Service, www.nrcs.usda.gov
- Nature Conservancy, www.nature.org
- Student Environmental Action Coalition, www.seac.org
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management, www.blm.gov
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, www.epa.gov
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, www.fws.gov
- U.S. Forest Service, www.fs.fed.us
- World Wildlife Foundation, www.wwf.org

Fraternal Organizations

- Civitan, www.civitan.org
- Eagles (Fraternal Order of Eagles), www.foe.org
- Elks (Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks), www.elks.org
- Freemasonry, www.freemasonry.org
- National Grange, www.nationalgrange.org
- Kiwanis International, www.kiwanis.org
- Lions Clubs International, www.lionsclubs.org
- Moose International, www.moosintl.org
- Optimist International, www.optimist.org
- Rotary International, www.rotary.org
- Ruritan, www.ruritan.org
- Shriners, www.shrinershq.org

Veterans Service Organizations

- American Legion, www.legion.org
- Department of Veterans Affairs, www.va.gov
- Veterans of Foreign Wars, www.vfw.org

Transforming Our Society

Transform: To change markedly the appearance of; to change the nature, function, and condition of.

Working with others is an important skill to learn in life. Sometimes, for any number of reasons, communication breaks down, resulting in conflict between individuals. The ability to help others resolve these conflicts can be helpful to any community. Many people are amazed to learn how many different religions have some version of the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." The basic idea of the Golden Rule is respect and compassion for others. *Compassion* comes from the Latin, meaning "to suffer with." When we are able to feel the pain of others, we feel our own pain as well, and we cannot inflict pain on the other. When we learn to avoid inflicting pain, then we can learn to give and receive love, and conflict is kept to a minimum.

Working with others when there is a disagreement or conflict is not an easy, or inherently comfortable, thing to do. Yet in each of our lives—in our school, in our families, in our jobs, and in our communities—conflict will arise. Knowing how to deal with it in a positive and nonjudgmental way is a skill well worth having. Finding a peaceful solution to conflict, be it personal or societal, helps us put into concrete action the essence of the Golden Rule.

Peace and Reconciliation

Conflict may be found in every aspect of our lives, from our personal relationships to international affairs. War erupts between nations, but conflict can also spring up in our homes and communities. Even when the result does not entail the loss of human life, violence and conflict produce fear, anger, bitterness, and stress. In a society pervaded by violence, the need is obvious for people with greater peacemaking skills.

Peacemaking has the goal of bringing genuine reconciliation to relationships that have been torn apart by conflict. Peace does not just happen; it must be made. Peacemaking needs to address all types of human conflict, from wars between nations and conflicts between different ethnic groups, to disputes between schoolmates and family members.

We can take a wide variety of approaches to effective peacemaking. Peacemaking through the arts can move and inspire us with a directness and power that words alone cannot convey. Learning about and practicing different approaches to handling conflict can bring constructive alternatives to our schools, crews, and other groups. Becoming a part of a peacemaking group can help us get past merely talking about our concerns and into organized, effective action.

Rooting ourselves in spiritual disciplines can provide nourishment from deep sources within us, to sustain ourselves and our companions along the way. Travel can help us discover what we have in common with those whom we might otherwise consider our enemies, or express our support for others who find themselves in especially difficult situations. Advocacy brings the case for peace to government officials, and voting allows us to replace those who do not effectively represent our concerns.

Nonviolent direct action can exert additional pressure on government decision makers through public statements, silent vigils, boycotts, and protest marches. These can be among the more controversial forms of peacemaking, and to make sure that our actions remain nonviolent, training should be provided. And while all of us are victims of violence to some extent, peacemaking can also take the form of direct assistance to those who pay a disproportionate price for that violence.

Wherever we live, opportunities for peacemaking are all around us. We can all become peacemakers within our own communities and schools. Just as war is often the result of racial or ethnic prejudice or economic injustice, in our cities, towns, and rural communities some of the most volatile conflicts stem from racism or economic inequality. Though some of the toughest peacemaking is the peacemaking we do in our own hometown, peacemakers can be bearers of reconciliation where these forces divide us.

Reflect on the words of a 1955 song by Sy Miller and Jill Jackson: "Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with me. Let there be peace on Earth, the peace that was meant to be. With God as our father, brothers all are we. Let me walk with my brother in perfect harmony.

"Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now. With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow: To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally. Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with me."

The Golden Rule

When one looks at religions around the world, one can see both similarities and differences in thought and practice. Often we tend to focus on the differences. We can learn a lot about our neighbors, however, by focusing on the similarities. One illustration of the similarity in religious thought around the world is what most of us know as “**The Golden Rule**” (Do unto others . . .). Nearly all religions have some variation on this important theme, as seen in the following examples:

Baha’i Faith. Lay not on any soul a load that you would not wish to be laid upon you, and desire not for anyone the things you would not desire for yourself.

Baha’u’llah, Gleanings

Buddhism. Treat not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.

Tripitaka, Udana-Varga 5.18

Christianity. In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

Jesus, Bible, Matthew 7:12

Confucianism. One word which sums up the basis of all good conduct . . . loving kindness. Do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself.

Confucius, Analects 15.23

Greek (ancient philosophy). What you would avoid suffering yourself, seek not to impose on others.

Epictetus, The Discourses

Hinduism. This is the sum of duty (Dharma): do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.

Mahabharata 5:1517

Islam. Not one of you is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.

Fourth Hadith of an-Nawawi 13

Jainism. Being neutral to things worldly, one should live by treating all creatures in the universe as oneself would be treated.

Mahavira, Suttrakritanga Sutra 1:11:33

Judaism. What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. This is the whole Torah; all the rest is commentary.

Hillel, Talmud, Shabbat 31a

Kemetic (ancient Egyptian). Do not do to others what you would not like them to do to you.

The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant

Lakota (Native American). All things are our relatives; what we do to everything, we do to ourselves. All is really one.

Black Elk

Shinto. The heart of the person before you is a mirror. See there your own form.

Sikh Faith. I am a stranger to no one; and no one is a stranger to me. Indeed, I am a friend to all.

Guru Granth Sahib, page 1,299

Taoism. Regard your neighbor’s gain as your own gain, and your neighbor’s loss as your own loss.

T’ai Shang Kan Ying Pien

Yoruba (Nigerian). One going to take a pointed stick to pinch a baby bird should first try it on himself to feel how it hurts.

Zoroastrianism. Do not do unto others whatever is injurious to yourself.

Shayast-na-Shayast 13.29

Adapted primarily from *Scarboro Missions*, Ontario, Canada, 2000

Religion in the World Today

Our world is carved into nations. Sometimes nations are defined by religion; sometimes they are defined by culture, which may historically be connected to a singular religion. Sometimes nations are defined by others without respect to culture or religion. As nations have emerged and disappeared, as political ideologies have come and gone, the spread of religion (and the reappearance of religions long suppressed) has been an interesting study in the history of humankind.

Today, as throughout history, religion is a positive, defining force in the lives of human beings. Religious expression may be seen in all corners of our country and our world, and religious principles guide the vast majority of individuals in their daily lives. By building on common beliefs, ideals, or values, we can draw people together throughout the world to help their neighbors, to overcome the effects of natural disasters, to feed and clothe the less fortunate, and to educate the next generation. Often these efforts cross religious lines, so that people of many faiths are seen working together to make this world a better place for all. God’s gift of life is celebrated daily in these religious efforts throughout the world.

Yet, while religion is a positive force of humankind, it has not always been used in a positive manner. Many civil wars or regional conflicts have occurred around the world since the 19th century, many of which have had religious overtones. Some of the recent ones have been in Bosnia, Iraq, Iran, Sri Lanka, Algeria, Israel, Palestine, Armenia, Burma, Azerbaijan, southern Sudan, south Asia, the Philippines, East Timor, Northern Ireland, Chechnya, and Tibet. (Ethnic conflicts with less of a direct religious basis continue to occur in many other parts of the world.) This is not the first time religion has been the basis for war or conflict; the history of our world is filled with examples where greed for land or power has been fueled by religious fervor.

Clearly our world would not be better off without religion and its influence in our lives. However, religious conflicts such as those noted above raise questions that we all need to seriously address: Will we as humans use religion as a positive, uniting force, or will we use it as a justification for destroying others? Each generation needs to look again at how religion defines them and how religion can be a positive, life-improving process for all humankind.

In 2000, the following estimates were given for the number of people in the world who claimed to belong to the following religions:

RELIGION	ESTIMATE	RELIGION	ESTIMATE
Christian	1,970,000,000	Sikh	23,000,000
Muslim	1,185,000,000	Jewish	15,000,000
Hindu	770,000,000	Baha'i	6,000,000
<i>Non-religious</i>	<i>770,000,000</i>	Jain	4,000,000
Buddhist	360,000,000	Shinto	3,600,000
Tribal religions (combined)	245,000,000	Zoroastrian	480,000
Taoist and Confucianist	25,000,000	<i>All other religions</i>	<i>100,000,000</i>

Chart adapted from the *Oxford Atlas of the World's Religions*

In 2001, the following estimates were given for the number of people in the United States who claimed to belong to the following religions:

RELIGION	ESTIMATE	RELIGION	ESTIMATE
Christian	159,506,000	Tribal religions (combined)	169,000
<i>Non-religious</i>	<i>29,483,000</i>	Baha'i	84,000
Jewish	2,831,000	Sikh	57,000
Muslim	1,104,000	Taoist	40,000
Buddhist	1,082,000	All other religions*	1,603,000
Hindu	766,000		

* Includes Confucianist, Jain, Shinto, Zoroastrian, and other religions.
Chart adapted from the *American Religious Identification Survey, 2001*

Throughout the world, whether in areas of conflict or zones apparently living in harmony, a variety of religions exist and are celebrated daily by human beings. Many of these religions will be studied by Venturers working on the TRUST Award.

Information and Resources on World Religions

To help Venturers begin learning about other religions, a short summary and list of references has been included here. This information is intended to start you on the path of learning about other religions. *Do not rely solely on the short synopses included here.* To truly understand another culture or religion, you will need to read many books and/or articles, and talk with those who are a part of that tradition.

Be wary of books or articles written from a negative stance (i.e., why this religion is wrong). Choose books that are fairly written and nonjudgmental. Ask your librarian and/or religious professional for help in selecting appropriate study materials.

General Religious Resources

Note: Not all of these resources will have the religion(s) you are attempting to learn about. Be sure you consult several sources when attempting to get an unbiased view of any particular religion or culture.

A Dictionary of Non-Christian Religions, Geoffrey Parrinder. The Westminster Press—Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1971.

Encyclopedia of World Religions, Wendy Doniger, ed. Merriam-Webster, Inc.—Springfield, Massachusetts, 1999.

The HarperCollins Concise Guide to World Religions, Mircea Eliade and Ioan Couliano. Harper—New York, 1991.

How to Be a Perfect Stranger: A Guide to Etiquette in Other People's Religious Ceremonies, Arthur Magida, ed. Jewish Lights Publishing—Woodstock, Vermont, 1996.

How to Be a Perfect Stranger, Vol. 2., Arthur Magida and Stuart Matlins, eds. Jewish Lights Publishing—Woodstock, Vermont, 1997.

The Illustrated Encyclopedia of World Religions, Chris Richards, ed. Element Books, Inc.—Melbourne, Australia, 1997.

Larousse Dictionary of Beliefs and Religions, Rosemary Goring, ed. Larousse plc—New York, 1992.

A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation, Diana L. Eck. Harper—New York, 2001.

The New Penguin Handbook of Living Religions, John R. Hinnells, ed. Penguin Books—London, 1997.

Oxford Atlas of the World's Religions, Ninian Smart, ed. Oxford Press—New York, 1999.

Religions of Antiquity, Robert M. Seltzer, ed. MacMillan Publishing Company—New York, 1989.

Religions of the World, J. Gordon Melton and Martin Baumann, eds. ABC-CLIO—Santa Barbara, California, 2002.

Religions of the World: A Latter-day Saint View, Spencer J. Palmer, et al. Brigham Young University Press—Provo, Utah, 1977.

The Wilson Chronology of the World's Religions, David Levinson. H. W. Wilson Company—New York, 2000.

World Religions, John Bowker. DK Publishing, Inc.—New York, 1997.

World Religions: A Voyage of Discovery, Jeffrey Brodd. Saint Mary's Press—Winona, Minnesota, 1998.

Academic Info: Religion Gateway, www.academicinfo.net/relindex.html.

International Association for Religious Freedom, www.iarf-religiousfreedom.net.

The Pluralism Project, www.pluralism.org.

Teaching About Religion, www.teachingaboutreligion.org.

United Communities of Spirit, origin.org/ucs/home.cfm.

World Congress of Faiths, www.worldfaiths.org.

VENTURING TRUST AWARD

Complete requirements 1-6.

1. Venturing TRUST essentials.

	Date	Initials
Complete nine of the following:		
a. Earn your denomination's Venturing-age religious award. For information about the religious awards program, see the Duty to God brochure, No. 512-879.		
b. Complete either (i) and (ii) OR (iii) and (iv). i. Learn about cultural diversity. ii. Make a presentation or tabletop display using the information you learned in (i) above. OR iii. Invite someone from a different cultural background from yours and the majority of your crew's members to give a presentation on a subject of his or her choosing. Introduce your guest. iv. Participate in a discussion about cultural diversity with your crew, Sunday school class, or other group.		
c. Plan and lead a service project such as helping to build a Habitat for Humanity house, participating in a community cleanup project, or taking on a fix-up project for a nursing home or nursery.		
d. Complete the following: i. Serve as a volunteer in your place of worship or other nonprofit organization for at least three months. ii. Keep a personal journal of your experiences each time you worked as a volunteer. iii. After you have served as a volunteer for at least three months, share your experiences and how you feel about your service with others.		
e. Attend a religious retreat or religious trek lasting at least two days.		
f. Produce or be a cast member in some type of entertainment production with a religious or ethical theme, such as a play, puppet show, or concert for a group such as a children's group, retirement home, homeless shelter, or Cub Scout or Boy Scout unit.		
g. Serve as president, leader, or officer of your Sunday school class or youth group.		
h. Complete a standard first-aid course or higher course or its equivalent.		
i. Complete the following: i. Participate in at least two ethical controversy activities. ii. Be a facilitator for at least two ethical controversy activities for your crew, another crew, your school class, a Boy Scout troop, or another group. iii. Lead or be a staff member putting on an ethics forum for your crew, your place of worship, or your school class.		

Date Initials

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| j. Serve as a Sunday school teacher or assistant for a children's Sunday school class for at least three months, or as a volunteer for a church/synagogue children's activity such as vacation Bible school. (This volunteer service must be different from requirement (d) above.) | | |
| k. Meet with your place of worship's minister/rabbi/leader to find out what he or she does, what they had to do to become your leader, and what they think is the most important element of the job. | | |

2. Tending Your Beliefs.

Complete the following:

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| a. Visit with your religious leader and discuss your beliefs and why you accept those beliefs. Compare your personal beliefs with those formally accepted by your religion. Following this discussion, write an essay explaining your beliefs and review it with your religious leader and your crew Advisor. Make a 15- to 20-minute presentation (discussion, video, slideshow, etc.) to your crew or another youth group explaining your beliefs. | | |
| b. Explain the Scout Oath and Scout Law in your own words. Explain how they have an effect on your daily life, your life goals, and how you live your life as a part of your community. | | |

3. Respecting the Beliefs of Others.

Complete the following:

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| a. Talk with a history/social studies teacher, attorney or other legal professional, or other knowledgeable adult about the U.S. Bill of Rights, and especially about the concept of freedom of religion. What did this concept mean to our founding fathers? What does this concept mean today? What limitations have been imposed on this freedom? What happens when freedom of religion and freedom of speech clash with each other? Hold a discussion (not debate) about freedom of religion with members of your crew. | | |
| b. Find out what religious groups are worshipping in your community and whether they have been there for generations or whether they are relatively new to the community. Talk to at least five adults in your community about the impact various religions have on your community. Report your findings to your crew. | | |
| c. Complete one of the following:
i. Pick one of the religions listed in this chapter (other than your own). After extensive research on the selected religion, present a report to your crew or other youth group (such as a troop, crew, religious group, or school group). The report should detail the history of the religion, its modern application as a religion, and important historical events. Also include information about where and how the religion is commonly practiced.
ii. Attend a religious service/gathering/festival of one of the religions (other than your own religion). Attend with a parent, Advisor, or religious professional. Write about your experience and how it relates to the thoughts and practices of the religion. Compare the basic tenets expressed in the religious service/gathering/ festival with those of your own religion. | | |

	Date	Initials
<p>iii. Meet with two youth working on a religious emblem approved by the BSA (not your own religion). These young people can be members of the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, or any other youth organization. Discuss with them their current religious journey.</p> <p>iv. Contact an official in an inter-religious organization (interfaith coalition, council of churches, etc.). Discuss how religious tolerance is important in both local and global issues.</p> <p>v. Attend an inter-religious festival and talk with two people from another religion about the similarities and differences between your religion and theirs. Report your findings to your religious leader.</p>		
4. Understanding Other Cultures.		
Complete the following:		
a. Learn about the culture you most identify with. Talk to relatives or other knowledgeable individuals to learn about your family history, cultural identity, and family identity.		
b. Attend two cultural events (each of these events should represent a different culture and should highlight the history and uniqueness of that culture). Supplement the information you learned at the events with research on the culture in today's global society. Compare these two events and their cultures with your own culture. Report on your findings to your crew or another youth organization. Invite an adult and a youth from another culture to speak to your crew about their culture. Alternately, interview two people who were born outside the United States who have immigrated to your community or a nearby one (foreign exchange students may also fulfill this role). In either case, discuss with them why they decided to come to the United States and to your community. Discuss the differences in community between where they live now and where they lived before they emigrated. (For Venturers living outside the United States, modify this requirement for the country in which you reside. For example, a Venturer living in Japan would interview someone not of Japanese origins who immigrated to Japan.)		
c. Do one of the following:		
i. Take (and successfully pass) a course that includes study of cultural diversity.		
ii. Research and present your findings about an inter-religious/intercultural conflict affecting the world in historical or current times. Include how the conflict started and ended (if not an ongoing conflict). Explore both causes and effects of the conflict, including those in the current day. Include general information about all the cultures and religions involved in the conflict.		
iii. Research a cultural group (other than your own) that has had an impact on the U.S. melting pot. When did they begin to arrive? In what ways have they had an influence on the United States? On your community? Where have they settled (primarily); why? Report on your findings to your crew or youth group.		

	Date	Initials
iv. Meet with your council all-markets executive to learn which all-markets programs are being used in your area and why. Learn about BSA resources designed for specific cultural groups and how they may differ from the resources you are familiar with.		
5. Serving Your Community.		
Complete the following:		
a. Plan and carry out a service project to better your local community. This project should be carried out in conjunction with an established community service agency. Involve at least five other Venturers or youth in carrying out the project. The project should be well thought out and lasting in its effects. Use the Summit Award Service Project workbook as a guideline (available free from your local council office).		
b. Meet with a member of your local government. Discuss how the community governs itself on matters such as zoning, taxes, education, religion, and acceptable behavior. Report your findings to your crew or another youth group. Lead or participate in a discussion on ideas to change your community for the better.		
c. Do one of the following:		
i. Organize a community safety program. Options include a community watch program, a latchkey program, or other program to encourage safety in your community. This cannot be the same project used for requirement (a) above.		
ii. Work with your local chapter of the Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity. Participate in a significant percentage of service opportunities for one semester. Discuss with the fraternity adviser how to increase cooperation between the group and the BSA local council, and between the group and other student organizations at your college.		
iii. Serve as an active member in a high school or college community service organization. Participate in a significant percentage of service projects for a six-month period. Explore ways to increase the participation of your organization in service opportunities, as well as ways to increase the membership of the organization. Report on how the group benefits the community.		
iv. Become a volunteer first-aid or swimming instructor or swimming aide with the American Red Cross or a similar organization. Teach first aid or swimming at least four times in a six-month period. Explore other volunteer opportunities with that organization. Report on your experiences at the end of this time, especially how the community benefits from the organization and from your volunteerism.		
v. Participate for six months as an active volunteer with any other community service agency approved by your Advisor. Examples are therapy or guide dogs, food pantries, hospital aides, etc. Report on your experiences at the end of this time, especially how the community benefits from the organization and from your volunteerism.		

	Date	Initials
6. Transforming Our Society.		
Complete the following:		
a. Take part in a counseling skills training session of at least eight total hours. Examples include peer counseling, suicide or abuse hotlines, and first-contact training programs, and may be provided by local service agencies/hotlines or by local government divisions. Tell your crew what you learned and how you plan to put your knowledge into action.		
b. Discover (through research, discussions with teachers or community leaders) what additions are having a negative effect on your local community (such as alcohol, drugs, tobacco, gambling, pornography, etc.). Pick one of these and find out what local resources are available to deal with the problem. Talk to a counselor who deals with this issue, and tell your crew how this issue is affecting the community in which you live.		
c. Lead or actively participate in at least four ethical controversies within a six-month period. These may be at the unit, district, or council level within Venturing, or at a youth event attended by members of several churches or religious institutions.		
d. Do one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Attend a meeting of your local board of education or city/community council or a session of court (any level open to public observation). Find one issue that has generated dissent or conflict, and observe how this conflict is dealt with. Follow the issue to its resolution, even if this means attending more meetings. Give a presentation to your crew or other youth group on how conflict was resolved in this case. ii. Visit and tour a correctional facility. Talk to a correctional facility chaplain about his or her responsibilities and experiences. Ask the chaplain for stories of success/transformation that have helped former inmates become contributing members of society. iii. Compare counseling degree programs at four different colleges or universities. Include one large public university and one small religiously based college. Look at both the types of degrees offered and the course work required for those degrees. Compare especially the religious components of such degrees. iv. Study the document "Scouts and Peace" prepared by the World Organization of the Scout Movement. Lead a discussion with your crew about the document and how Scouts can be involved in world peace. Then prepare a 10-minute presentation on the document and give it to a Boy Scout or Girl Scout troop. 		

