

TOPIC: The ALPS Program Model

Participants will answer the following questions by the end of the session:

- What is meant by ALPS in Venturing?
- What are the areas of emphasis in ALPS?
- What are the levels of performance in ALPS?
- How does ALPS provide a program planning tool?

Presentation Method

In planning the presentation, you should review the latest materials posted at <http://www.venturing.org/>. The most recent program updates are posted there are ready for your use.

Use the discussion outline below to help you prepare your remarks. PowerPoint presentation slides were not prepared for use during this session. If you wish to use one, the content below will be helpful in constructing your presentation.

Resources

Boy Scouts of America (2014). *Handbook for Venturers*. Irving, TX: Boy Scouts of America (BSA No. 619088)

Boy Scouts of America (2014). *Venturing Advisors Guide*. Irving, TX: Boy Scouts of America (BSA No. 618768)

Boy Scouts of America (2014). *Venturing Awards and Requirements*. Irving, TX: Boy Scouts of America (BSA No. 618767)

OVERVIEW

The Venturing program is structured around four areas of program emphasis: Adventure, Leadership, Personal Growth, and Service – ALPS. This session helps advisors to understand the relationship between the areas of program emphasis and levels of performance and how this can serve as a program planning tool for Venturers.

INTRODUCTION

The ALPS model was developed during the 2012-2014 program review process by the National Venturing Task Force.

	ADVENTURE	LEADERSHIP	PERSONAL GROWTH	SERVICE
SUMMIT 	<i>Mentoring and participation</i>	<i>Ongoing leadership development</i>	<i>Goal-setting and personal growth</i>	<i>Leading others in service</i>
PATHFINDER 	<i>Leading and participation</i>	<i>Leading others</i>	<i>Goal-setting and personal growth</i>	<i>Participating in service</i>
DISCOVERY 	<i>Participation</i>	<i>Preparing to lead</i>	<i>Goal-setting and personal growth</i>	<i>Participating in service</i>
VENTURER 	<i>Initial participation, orientation to the crew, Personal Safety Awareness training, induction into the crew</i>			

The model was influenced by the following considerations:

- To reflect the aims, methods, and desired outcomes of the Boy Scouts of America
- To incorporate what had been learned during the first fifteen years of operating the Venturing program
- To make the Venturing program stronger by making it simpler
- To create a framework for planning and leading adventure
- To provide a framework for a program of continuous, youth-led adventure
- To provide a recognition system that was aligned with the activities of Venturers, but was also independent of an area of interest

PROGRAM TOOL

From the perspective of the crew, the ALPS model provides a tool to help plan adventures and recognize accomplishments along the way.

As a planning and program development tool.

The Venturing areas of program emphasis should serve as a helpful point of reference for your crew's planning. They should be used to identify things that crews might wish to take part in—service projects, adventures, building leadership, and setting goals—to help members of the crew set and achieve goals that will support their personal growth. They should serve as tools for year-round program planning for the members of the crew.

Areas of program emphasis.

Adventure, Leadership, Personal Growth, and Service provide the content for the delivery of Venturing.

- **Adventure.** Participation in adventures is at the heart of the Venturing experience. As the crew plans its annual program, you will certainly pay attention to what the crew's interests are. Use these interests to guide the crew officers as they set a program goal for a significant annual adventure. Many of the activities the crew will organize will serve to implement the annual superactivity. If the crew is planning a 10-day canoe trip in the Canadian wilderness, it will be important to prepare for that adventure by building up endurance as a canoeist, mastering low-impact and lightweight camping skills, and possibly even raising some funds as a crew to help support that adventure
- **Leadership.** Leadership in Venturing takes place in a variety of settings. There are members of the crew who have been selected as leaders. There are members of the crew who will be serving as leaders for various adventures. These are two important ways to learn and apply skills of leadership. There are also training courses available to help youth officers learn the skills in a structured setting. Planning dates for training should be a priority for the crew, and giving crew members and crew officers the opportunity to take part in BSA and other adventure-based leadership training should also find its way into the crew's annual program.
- **Personal Growth.** Crew member goals in personal growth will influence both the crew's annual program and what crew members gain as they participate in crew activities. Look at the opportunities present during the crew's annual program planning meeting to help plant some seeds for the ways in which youth will reflect on their skills, abilities, and interests and take charge of their own destiny

as they set personal challenges to meet and learn from.

- Service. Service is a commitment to others and so forms an important part of Venturing. As the youth plan the annual program, there are opportunities to deliver service to others as a part of the crew program. Service, especially as youth take on the challenge of leading service projects as a Venturer, provides additional opportunities to build leadership skills

Levels of performance.

The levels of performance provide benchmarks of progress as skills and knowledge are acquired within the areas of program emphasis.

- Venturer. The Venturing Award is designed to be earned within a month of a Venturer joining the crew. Its requirements are based upon learning about Venturing and its values, learning about personal safety, and forming a commitment to further participate. A crew's leadership should seek to make this a natural process for all new members.
- Discovery. The Discovery Award is designed to help a new Venturer benefit from full and active participation in crew activities and to learn skills and basic competencies that will prepare him or her to assume leadership roles in the crew as he or she progresses on the Trail to the Summit. The purpose of the Discovery Award is to move past the orientation provided by the Venturing Award and shift the Venturer into action.
- Pathfinder. The Pathfinder Award is designed to solidify basic and intermediate leadership skills by providing the Venturer with opportunities to lead crew activities, adventures, and service projects and to focus on personal leadership development. The four areas of program emphasis continue to form the foundation of the program, with the Venturer now taking a more active part in the leadership of the crew and the crew's activities.
- Summit. The Summit Award, as the highest Venturing award, is designed to provide advanced leadership skills and experience and to help focus the Venturer on working diligently to make a difference in the lives of others, including those in the crew and in the community, through a significant service project and advanced leadership opportunities. The Summit Award moves the experience of Venturing to become more "others-directed." The experiences grounded in the four areas of program emphasis focus more on the Venturer's impact on other people.

Special content-area recognitions.

For Venturers seeking additional challenges in outdoor adventure, sports and physical fitness, or spiritual life, there are three optional awards available. The TRUST Award (religious experiences) has five categories of requirements that involve learning more about one's own faith and that of others. The Ranger Award (outdoor adventures) has eight core requirements and a wide variety of electives from which a Venturer chooses four to excel in to help them become a master of the outdoors. The Quest Award (sports and physical fitness) requires 12 projects, four core requirements, and an elective that all promote excellence in sporting and physical fitness.

For crews with an active program interest in these areas, the Ranger, Quest, and

TRUST awards can provide a means of structuring program activities and skill development.

Levels of program x areas of emphasis.

What is hopefully clear by now is that the areas of program emphasis provide the things for Venturers to do – the content they desire. The levels of program (i.e., program recognition require greater involvement and investment by the Venturers. Each level provides greater opportunities for leadership and service. A key feature of the program is that the experiences are designed and led by the Venturers in the crew. As their skills increase in sophistication, so do their responsibilities for program delivery.

Venturing's pedagogy.

Venturing is built around an approach to hands-on learning known as experiential education. Another way to say this is that adventure education focuses on experiences that allow the participant to take part in a challenging activity and then reflect on what was learned and how to apply it to new situations.

While some skills (how to use a stove, how to stage a play, how to plan a trip, etc.) are taught by a knowledgeable teacher or peer, the learning that comes from adventure education tends to be more subtle and is brought to the attention of the learner by a process of evaluation often referred to as “reflection” at the close, helping the learner to extract the greatest meaning from the experience.

A great introduction to experiential education and its role in Venturing is described in the *Venturing Advisor Guidebook*. A roundtable session on this topic is also available.

**DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS**

Use the discussion questions to provide advisors an opportunity to process and analyze the information presented during this session. As a general suggestion, keep the discussion positive and constructive, in keeping with the values of Scouting and of Venturing as a youth development program.

A helpful comment to use to keep the discussion moving in a positive direction might be, “how does [comment] promote a youth-designed and youth-led program?”

- What are some ways that you can use the ALPS model to help advise crew members as they develop an active annual program?
- Young adults who have been previously active in Boy Scouting may not be motivated by earning awards. How can an advisor use the recognition system as a means of encouraging success, rather than as a goal?
- What might adventure look like for a crew interested in STEM activities? What might adventure look like for a crew interested in bicycling? How does the ALPS model work for both crews?

CLOSURE

Wrap up conversation. Close by asking participants how they will use what they learned during this evening's roundtable to support their crew's program.

ASSESSMENT

Look for participant answers to the following questions by the end of the session:

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