

**TOPIC: Recognition – Trail to the Summit**

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

- What is the purpose behind the Venturing recognition system?
- How does the recognition system differ from “ranks” in Cub Scouting and Boy Scouting?
- How can a crew use the recognition system as a planning and program development 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 explores the use of leadership and mentoring as an area of program emphasis.

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

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

It may be helpful to project this image on a screen to use when discussing Venturing’s recognition system.

## RECOGNITION IN VENTURING

Most Venturers appreciate recognition and the sense of accomplishment made possible through an external system that acknowledges their achievements and mastery. The Venturing recognition awards are designed to be natural outcomes of an active crew program.

The Venturing recognition program is a tool to help give structure to a Venturer's experiences and learning. While recognition is one of the methods of Venturing, this method is best approached as an outcome of a balanced annual program plan developed by the members of the crew.

### Program Planning Leads to Recognition

- A good crew program has the following characteristics
- Demonstrates a good match between the Program Capability Inventory forms and the Venturing Activity Interest Surveys.
- Addresses the needs and interests of the crew members.
- Reflects a balanced program.
- Involves as many crew members as possible through the course of the year in (1) suggesting ideas for activities, (2) planning the activities, and (3) participating in the activities.
- Is a dynamic and action-oriented program, changing and adjusting through the year to the growth and development of crew members.
- Is based on careful, consistent planning by the Venturers.
- Emphasizes new skills, new ideas, new experiences, and new challenges.

Venturing's recognition system is designed to provide benchmarks of progress toward delivering a high quality crew program. For youth of Boy Scout age, seeking the awards may serve as an outcome by itself. For Venturers, the recognition that is received comes about as a result of an active and fun crew program, with the levels of recognition serving as guidepost along the way.

Thinking of A-L-P-S as a planning tool helps put recognition in perspective: recognition results from an engaging, youth-planned program of fun, adventure, and service.

### Stealth Recognition

Stealth recognition is a technique used in Venturing. Venturers are and Sea Scouts where the youth are given credit for their participation in crew activities, community service, training, and other participation which is not stressed as advancement – but as taking part in the activities of the crew.

Using this approach allows Venturers to be pleasantly surprised when they find out that their participation in crew activities has allowed them to complete all or part of a recognition for a given award. They may need only to complete a little paperwork (not that Venturing has much paperwork) or take part in an advisor conference to complete the process. Venturers who have previous experience as a Boy Scout may find this approach to recognition to work well for them, especially if they have

previously earned the Eagle Scout award and are “burned out” from Boy Scout advancement.

To use this method effectively, it helps to have a Venturer and/or advisor keep track of crew activities to see how they map onto recognition requirements.

## VENTURING

The Venturing Award is an opportunity to use the crew’s program planning to create a good first impression as prospective members interact with the crew.

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.

As a planning tool, the crew should offer regular “low threshold” events to welcome prospective members. Not only are these experiences fun for current members of the crew, but they help the current members of the crew to be vigilant about the need to consistently grow and sustain their crew.

One expectation for a prospective new member is to meet with the Advisor and crew president as part of the orientation process. As the Advisor, make sure that this conversation is led by the new Venturer. If the majority of the questions seem aimed at the Advisor rather than the president, politely point out that the president actually is the crew’s leader, so questions should be directed to him or her.

At the next crew activity, the candidate is welcomed as a member of the crew. The prospective member is asked to formally and publicly state her or her interest in joining and participating fully in the adventures of the crew and to commit to living by the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

**You will note that the requirement does not direct a prospective Venturer to memorize the Scout Oath, Scout Law, and Venturing motto. This was intentional.**

The focus is to emphasize living by these values and to declare their intention to do so. While many Venturers will be former Boy Scouts or Varsity Scouts and will be intimately familiar with the Scout Oath and Scout Law, many prospective Venturers will be new to the movement. For those who have come up through the traditional Scouting programs, memorization of the Scout Oath and Scout Law occurred at an age when advancement was fairly high on their list of desired outcomes. For those who are new to the program, memorization may just be enough to keep them from achieving even this first level of recognition and becoming engaged with the crew. As Advisors, it is our desire to ensure that new members find the onboarding process to be straightforward and without obstacles. For some, investing the intellectual energy in memorizing those words may present a wedge between their interest in Venturing and joining the Scouting movement.

Memorization will quickly come as the crew regularly recites it at the opening of

meetings and during award ceremonies and uses it in conjunction with ethical controversies and other teachable moments.

**DISCOVERY** As a planning tool, the **Discovery Award** offers excellent opportunities to document a crew’s program. Key activities at the Discovery level include:

- Participating in Tier II or Tier III adventures at the crew, district, council, area, regional, or national level.
- Completion of standard first aid and CPR courses
- Organizing training courses for crew members (LSC, Goal setting/time management)
- Service projects

**PATHFINDER** At the **Pathfinder Award** level, additional program opportunities are present for members of the crew that can be documented via the Venturing recognition system

- Participating in Tier II or Tier III adventures at the crew, district, council, area, regional, or national level.
- Organizing training courses for crew members (Project Management Training)
- Delivering a crew sustainability service project
- Ethical controversy activities
- Service projects

**SUMMIT** **Summit Award** activities include:

- Participating in Tier II or Tier III adventures at the crew, district, council, area, regional, or national level.
- Organizing training courses for crew members (Mentoring Training)
- Ethical controversy activities

**PLANNING TOOL** Whatever the level, the emphasis of the recognition system is the emphasis of Venturing: opportunities for youth-designed and youth-led adventures.

These activities are further supported by providing training and support to help members of the crew deliver these activities successfully, via training in areas such as project management, time management, mentoring and first aid.

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.

Use the requirements for each award level as tools to help your crew leadership set some program goals for each year. Having an annual program in place helps you guide the members of the crew in setting aside the time to be active participants preparing for an annual adventure. It also helps you support the content of the meetings and weekend adventures that lead to success in the crew’s annual adventure.

The Venturing recognition system provides benchmarks of progress for the opportunities that your balanced program offers. An active program, grounded in all four areas of program emphasis, makes it easy to track your progress via the recognitions that culminate in the Summit Award.

**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?”

- How does the A-L-P-S model serve as a planning tool?
- What does it mean to say that recognition comes from an active program?
- How can formal training courses (e.g., LSC, mentoring training, time management training, etc. provide both support and content for a crew’s annual program?
- What is meant by “stealth recognition?”

**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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