

TOPIC: Crew Sustainability Service Project

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

- What is a crew sustainability service project?
- What makes a crew sustainability service project successful?

Presentation Method

In planning the presentation, you should review the latest materials posted at <http://www.venturing.org/> The most recent program information is posted there and is 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 Service is intended to meet the needs of many entities, including a Venturing crew. The nature of a crew sustainability service project is profiled in this session.

INTRODUCTION Requirement 8 for the Venturing Pathfinder Award:

“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.”

ENGAGEMENT Introduce the session by asking – and having participants - discuss the following questions:

- Why would someone want to join a Venturing Crew?
- How do you create an opportunity to show others that your crew does the things that would make them want to join up?

EXPLANATION **What is a crew sustainability service project?**

The purpose of the crew sustainability service project is evident: to ensure that the crew continues on after members of the crew grow older and age out of the crew.

Make these points via discussion:

- Something we have learned over the years is that most Venturing crews disband when one or both of these take place:
 - When the original group of crew members either turn 21 or have a major life event (e.g., leaving for college)

- When a long-term crew advisor leaves.

Scouting as a movement would not have endured for over 100 years if the first group of young people left after they became too old to participate as members; and by the same reasoning, Scout units also endured after leaders moved on after having rendered their service.

Crews with long lives are not accidents; their tenure for generations of young people and a succession of leaders is intentional.

What makes these types of service projects successful?

The most obvious measure of success is that new members join the crew. As with all types of service, the crew sustainability project serves as both an outcome (sustaining the crew) and a process (identifying a need and acting on it, leadership development, etc.). It serves as an excellent opportunity to practice the sort of leadership skills that are of value for leading an adventure at the Pathfinder Award level as well as preparing for the community service project required for the Summit Award.

As an Advisor, there are a few points to consider as you counsel a crew member in the design and delivery of this service project.

- **Fun.** As with anything the crew does, it should be fun: fun in planning, fun in delivering the experience, and fun in looking back at what was done.
- **Challenging.** The project should challenge and test the crew member designing and leading it.
- **Impact.** The project should have an impact. It should make the crew stronger and should meet a need to help the crew find long-term success. For many sustainability projects, it will be a chance to create a positive first impression for the crew, for Venturing, and for the larger Scouting program.

What counts as a sustainability service project? The main assessment comes from the three points above: Does it have an impact, does it challenge the crew member, and is the project and its outcome fun? Creating a flyer to publicize the crew might be helpful, but as marketing experts remind us, “paper informs, people inspire.” A flyer would be part of a larger and more challenging project to help sustain and grow the crew. Several examples in the *Handbook for Venturers* offer a reasonable standard to aspire to.

It’s important for the advisor (or an associate advisor with responsibility in this area) to ensure that the project is likely to help the crew grow.

**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 things your crew does to help sustain and grow the crew?
- What prevents your crew from taking on the challenge of a successful sustainability project?
- What needs to change in the crew you work with to have a better record of bringing in new members?

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

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

- What is a crew sustainability service project?
- What makes a crew sustainability service project successful?