



Lifesaving and Meritorious Action Awards

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The Boy Scouts of America launched its medals recognition program in 1911 to recognize Scouts and commissioned leaders who had saved a life. The first Honor Medal recipient was Charles Scruggs of Cuero, Texas, who received a bronze medal in 1911.

From 1911 to 1923, 23 Gold Medals, 140 Silver Medals, and 431 Bronze Medals were awarded. In 1923, the awards were redesigned and renamed.

Lifesaving Awards

Honor Medal with Crossed Palms



The Honor Medal with Crossed Palms may be awarded in exceptional cases to a youth member or adult leader who has demonstrated unusual heroism and extraordinary skills or resourcefulness in saving or attempting to save a life at extreme risk to self.

Awarded in 2018: 3

Cumulative awards since 1923: 311

Honor Medal



The Honor Medal may be awarded to a youth member or adult leader who has demonstrated unusual heroism and skill in saving or attempting to save a life at considerable risk to self.

Awarded in 2018: 13

Cumulative awards since 1923: 2653



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Heroism Award



The Heroism Award may be awarded to a youth member or adult leader who has demonstrated heroism and skill in saving or attempting to save life at minimal personal risk. The Heroism award was discontinued for several years but was reinstated in 2018.

Awarded in 2018: 16

Cumulative awards since 1924: 3529

Meritorious Action Awards

Medal of Merit



The Medal of Merit may be awarded to a youth member or adult leader who has performed some outstanding action of service of a rare or exceptional character that reflects an uncommon degree of concern for the well-being of others.

Awarded in 2018: 92

Cumulative awards since 1945: 6917

National Certificate of Merit

The National Certificate of Merit may be awarded to a youth member or adult leader who has performed a significant act of service that is deserving of special national recognition.

Awarded in 2018: 47

Cumulative awards since 1989: 2000