

What is the Order of the Arrow?

The Order of the Arrow (OA) is Scouting's National Honor Society. According to the Official National Order of the Arrow Website "The purpose of the Order of the Arrow is fourfold: to recognize those Scout campers who best exemplify the Scout Oath and Law in their daily lives; to develop and maintain camping traditions and spirit; to promote Scout camping; [and] to crystallize the Scout habit of helpfulness into a life purpose of leadership in cheerful service to others"

Dr. E. Urner Goodman and Caroll A. Edson founded the OA during the summer of 1915 at the Treasure Island Camp of the Philadelphia Council. It was not until 1934 that the OA was approved as a part of the Scouting Program. 14 Years later, in 1948, the Boy Scouts of America's National Brotherhood of Honor Campers, became an official part of the national camping program of the Boy Scouts of America.

Currently, the Order of the Arrow boasts 176,000 members organized in lodges associated with approximately 327 local BSA councils.

Scouts are elected to the Order by their fellow unit members, following approval by the Scoutmaster or Varsity team Coach. To become a member, a youth must be a registered member of a Boy Scout troop or Varsity Scout team and hold the First Class rank. The youth must have experienced fifteen days and nights of Boy Scout camping during the two-year period prior to the election. The fifteen days and nights must include one, but no more than one, long-term camp consisting of six consecutive days and five nights of resident camping, approved and under the auspices and standards of the Boy Scouts of America. The balance of the camping must be overnight, weekend, or other short-term camps. Adult selection is based on their ability to perform the necessary functions to help the Order fulfill its purpose, and is not for recognition. Selected adult Scouters must be an asset to the Order because of demonstrated abilities, and provide a positive role model for the youth members of the lodge.

The Order of the Arrow strives to teach leadership skills that Scouts can then use to serve their units. While an Arrowman's first duty is to his unit, the Order of the Arrow offers some highly time-intensive leadership roles. It is the responsibility of these youth to explain these situations to their units, and to share their Chapter, Lodge, and or Section schedule. With that in mind Lodge events are designed to *supplement*, not replace troop activities. Learn more at the National OA Website: www.oa-bsa.org.

