

## **FAQs – New Venturing Program**

### **Q. What is a quick overview of the new vision for the program?**

A. The new vision for Venturing uses youth-led adventures and a simplified program model to provide a means of developing leadership skills, reinforcing the value of service to others, and creating opportunities for personal growth in line with the Scout Oath and Law

### **Q. What are “adventures?”**

A. Adventures are any Venturer designed and lead experience that interests Venturers and help carry youth out of their comfort zones. In Venturing, adventures can be based on STEM exploration, outdoor adventure, faith journeys, arts and hobbies, or anything that appeals to the members of a crew.

### **Q. Will this still work with existing crews?**

A. Yes. The new program model enhances Venturing’s current strengths while allowing crews flexibility in terms of the program “vehicle” used—outdoor adventure, STEM, faith-based experiences, arts and hobbies, among others. The new vision for Venturing is adaptable to any activity or interest that allows for opportunities for continuous, youth-led adventure. The continuous process of reflection and goal-setting built into the new model helps youth better appreciate the deeper purpose behind the activities in which they already participate as well as encourage them to explore new growth opportunities.

### **Q. Relatively few Venturers take advantage of the current awards program in Venturing. Will advancement become more central in the new program?**

A. In the new program model, goals and objectives take center stage, providing a structure for crew-organized adventures. The new structure offers core elements that can guide all crews and that will give each Venturer an opportunity for learning and growth. The changes made to the Venturing awards will better align Venturing recognition with what crews do. As Venturers achieve the goals they set under the new structure, they will also advance up through the several award levels. Each element of the award program also provides a benchmark for a successful crew. An overall goal of the new system is to recognize more Venturers for doing what Venturers do best: having fun as they pursue adventure, leadership, service, and personal growth.

### **Q. Will the current bronze awards remain?**

A. No. All five of the current bronze awards will be retired. The Bronze requirements for Outdoor, Sports and Religious Life will continue to be required for Ranger, Quest and Trust respectively.

**Q. Will the medals continue to be used as the main recognition devices?**

A. It has been recommended, but not finalized, that only the highest award be signified with a medal, while the others will be represented using a patch and/or a pin. This will also align Venturing with current practices in Sea Scouting and Boy Scouting as well as the traditions established from Exploring.

**Q. Will the Ranger, Quest, and TRUST awards be retained?**

A. Yes. All three expert awards will remain under the new Venturing model. However, because the separate, specialty Bronze awards will be retired, all of the current requirements for these awards will need to be satisfied while working specifically on the Ranger, Quest of TRUST award.

**Q. How is the new model structured?**

A. Venturing will be organized around four “pillars”: adventure, leadership, service, and personal development. These pillars are informed by the work of the BSA’s 411 Task Force and research on the wants and needs of this age group, helping to ensure that Scouting is a continuous program for youth from ages 7 – 21 that uses age-appropriate program models to achieve a common set of youth development outcomes. Under each pillar, youth will be encouraged to set and meet goals in order to earn Venturing awards.

**Q. What is the vision for the new top-level award in Venturing?**

A. The aim of the new model will be to ensure that recipients of the capstone Venturing award (whose name is not yet final) have achieved and demonstrated skills that identify themselves as effective leaders and valued community members. Through a balanced program that involves serving others throughout their Venturing tenure, a capstone project, organizing adventures, exercising leadership, and setting and achieving challenging personal goals, Venturers will be recognized for distinguished character and leadership.

**Q. What is the difference between advancement and recognition in the new Venturing model?**

A. Advancement takes place within the progressive program system described in the program matrix. Levels of performance and achievement are provided within the four pillars of adventure, leadership, service, and personal growth. Recognition comes thru the development of skills and experiences throughout the Venturing program including the specialty awards of Ranger, TRUST, and Quest.

**Q. What handbooks and resources will support the new Venturing model?**

A. The BSA will issue a new, youth-focused Venturer Handbook that will include all of the basics about the Venturing program, guidance for effectively participating in and leading a crew, and setting goals and earning awards. In addition, a new adult guide will help advisors and other volunteers work effectively with youth. There will be an additional book that will serve as a resource document for Venturing program opportunities.

**Q. Will there be on-line resources available?**

A. Yes. The plan is to make many “how-to” materials available on-line for easy reference.

**Q. Phone apps for Venturing have been talked about. Will they be produced?**

A. Perhaps. This is something that can be pursued after the program is completely defined and ready to use. Our first task is to generate the content.

**Q. Is it true that Venturers will now use the Scout sign and salute? What about the Scout Oath and Law?**

A. Yes, Venturers will adopt the Scout sign and salute, used worldwide by older youth in our programs. Venturers will also begin using Scout Oath and Law. These changes are effective May 2014 although we hear units are already adopting these practices.

**Q. Who was involved with this project?**

A. The vision for this approach to Venturing was based on both general and BSA-conducted research in youth development – as well as grounded in the practices of current Venturing Crews. The members of the task force that developed this program model came from all over the country. There were youth as well as adults in the process, led by volunteers and supported by professionals. All of the adults have experience with Venturing (and Exploring) and work regularly with local crews.

**Q. What is the timeline for roll-out of the new program?**

A. The plan is for new materials and award requirements to be released starting in May 2014, with a phase-in period for youth who are currently working to complete Venturing awards under the current requirements.

If working on current awards:

- May continue working on current awards until 12/31/2014
- May convert to new awards after 5/2014, beginning with the Level II Award [Award names are still under study/]
- Must utilize the new awards requirements after 12/31/2014

New awards

- May convert to new awards after 5/2014
  - beginning with the Level II Award for current Venturers
  - Beginning with Level I Award for new Venturers
- Must utilize the new awards requirements after 12/31/2014
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**Q. What changes are anticipated to provide stronger leadership to the Venturing program??**

A. The National Key Three has endorsed the re-establishment of a National Venturing Committee (NVC) to rollout and realize the recommendations of the National Venturing Task Force. The NVC will report to the Council Operations Group Committee. The NVC will be headed by a National Venturing Key Three – the national chair, National Venturing President (youth) and the National Venturing Staff Advisor and will include a Venturing Chair of Venturing from each region and at large members.

**Q. What changes are anticipated for the area, regional, support structures?**

Support at these levels will be maintained and will be connected to the National Venturing Committee in the method described above.

**Q. What is the status of the college age Venturing proposal?**

A. The expansion of program ages is still under review but will not be part of the changes being announced for implementation in 2014.

**Q. Can new awards be worked on simultaneously, i.e., can one do something for the new Level IV Award while still working on new Level III Award?**

A. In some cases, yes. These opportunities will be detailed when the advancement guide is updated to reflect the new Venturing advancement system. While some specific requirements can be “frontloaded,” such as taking advantage of a training opportunity, most of the advancement will take place at each level while seeking to achieve that level.

**Q. Venturing has, since its inception made use only of recognition. How is the new system different?**

A. Advancement takes place within the progressive program system described in the program matrix. Levels of performance and achievement are provided within the four pillars of adventure, service, personal growth, and leadership. Recognition is present through the use of the expert awards of Ranger, TRUST, and Quest.

**Q. What changes are coming in youth training?**

A. Training of our Venturing youth will be enhanced in a number of ways. Existing syllabi are being updated, but more than that, five new courses are being created to support the new program matrix. Each of these new courses is designed to give Venturers a more competitive advantage in the world. Skills such as project management, goal setting and mentoring are just some of the things to look forward to. These courses are being created with the understanding

that true learning is not a passive experience. Both the existing courses and our new ones will be updated and created with hands on experiential learning at their core. Our Venturers will be growing by doing.

**Q. Will Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews (ILSC) be changed?**

A. Although it won't be a major overhaul, there will be some modifications made to the current syllabus which will enhance individual learning and give youth leaders the tools they need to fulfill their roles more effectively and readily. You will see more practical application and less theory.

**Q. Over the past several years there have been changes to Venturing training which lessened the uniqueness of the Venturing program and made it more like Boy Scouts. What adjustments are being made to recapture Venturing's unique spirit?**

A. The program neutral aspects of our training materials are being replaced with situational learning which is specific to the Crew structure and program. Terms which now seem to need translation and skills which are broad in their delivery will be targeted to this unique program and the youth who are drawn to it. Giving Venturers age appropriate challenges and leadership tools will serve to take their Scouting experience to the next level.

**Q. Will there be any changes to the training for adults?**

A. Yes. Leaders need to know how to do their jobs and a clear definition of what it takes to become successful. As such, training for Advisors is being separated from training for committee members. In addition to the new syllabus for Crew Advisor Position Specific Training, The Crew Committee Challenge, is being created to help those adults working at the committee level know how best to work with crew members and how they fit into the Crew structure. Learning by doing will be the mantra in our adult training updates.

**Q. What will be the definition of a trained leader with this new program?**

A. For the adult leader, the definition won't change much. They will be required to complete Venturing Youth Protection Training, and the leader specific training for their position (i.e. Venturing Leader Specific Training or Crew Committee Challenge).

Youth who complete both the Crew Officer's Orientation and The Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews (ILSC) will also be eligible to wear the 'Trained' patch.

**Q. Will an adult who is currently considered "trained" be required to take any additional training with the new program?**

A. Like all of Scouting's programs, a leader who has completed the basic training courses for their position, is considered trained from that point forward. Keep in mind, however, that previous trainings will not have included the features and enhancements of the new program.

Leaders are strongly encouraged to update their training in order to delivery a vibrant, relevant and quality program to their Venturers.

**Q. Will there be any training for current adults that help explain the changes in the program and how to utilize the new program?**

A. The new Venturing Leader Specific Training will be the quickest and most comprehensive method of getting our leaders up to speed on all of the changes. Its content will be specifically designed around the new program.

**Q. How does the new Venturing program differ from the current program?**

A. There are three primary differences between the current and the new programs.

- First, the new program is built on the concept of a progressive development of skills, concepts and experiences. While four of the Bronze awards can lead to the higher, specialty awards (Ranger, Trust, Quest, Quartermaster), there is not a progression of development between the Bronze, Gold, and Silver Awards. This concept of progressive development is considered a best practice in most educational and youth development contexts.
- Second, there has been considerable change in the pressures that today's youth face now in contrast to 14 years ago when the Venturing program was designed. As such the new program sets its goal to not only engage Venturers in fun, meaningful experiences while they explore new things, but also to help prepare them for their future with skills in demand by employers and higher education, while at the same time supporting their desires to serve, lead and grow as individuals.
- The new program is specifically designed such that the award requirements are accessible to and supportive of the broad range of charter organization objectives and crew interests that exist within the Venturing community. Whether the charter organization is a faith-based institution or a hobby group; whether the crew is outdoor or fine arts oriented; the task force has specifically tested the award requirements to assure that they "work" with great diversity that is Scouting.

**Q. What are the advantages of the new program compared to the current one?**

A. The new program's advantages include:

- The new program is simplified. One set of core awards with a logical progression and clear requirements.
- The program is flexible. While the award requirements are clear and specific, they have also been designed to be adaptable to charter organization objectives and crew interests. Vignettes describing this flexibility have been developed and will be available upon rollout.

- Built around the most recent research on what 14-20 year olds both want and need, the new program supports meeting their desires and addressing their future concerns.
- Progressive development of skills, experiences, and concepts.
- The new program challenges the youth involved to set personal goals and work to obtain them using a process of personal reflection, adult mentorship and personal development skills (time and project management, goal setting, etc.)
- The program contains components to support the skills and experiences that future educational institutions or prospective employers are looking for – leadership, service to others and goal orientation.
- The model, if successful, will provide Venturing leadership – volunteer and professional—with a measurement of program quality, setting the stage for greater Venturing inclusion in district and council Journey to Excellence.