

A PILLAR SUPPORTING THE PRIESTHOOD

*The Aaronic Priesthood has been
blessed by its relationship with Scouting.
The same can be true for you.*

By Jourdan Strain and Richard M. Romney



Editor's Note: The partnership of the Aaronic Priesthood and Scouting stretches back nearly a century, since Scouting started in the U.S. in 1910 and in the Church in 1913. Aaronic Priesthood bearers can use Scouting as an activity program to apply the values and put into practice the principles they learn in their quorums. In the following stories, we hope you'll see how Scouting serves as a pillar of support to young men as they fulfill priesthood purposes.



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HE'S GOT GAME

On a warm August morning in Aurora, Colorado, 30 children armed with brand new soccer balls and kickballs gathered in the local park to play sports and have a good time. But when the game ended, the children and their parents left 150 unused balls behind.

That may sound strange, but 14-year-old Brandon Campbell had planned it that way. Brandon, a teacher in the Fox Hollow Ward, Arapahoe Colorado Stake, knew that his Eagle project would provide the Aaronic Priesthood holders in the ward with an opportunity to bless the lives of children locally and all over the world.

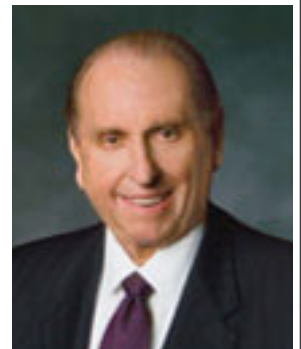
An avid sports fan, Brandon found a way to use his love of athletics to create a project that would benefit children in developing nations. Brandon organized a sports day in his area, and the participants at the event donated balls to a charitable organization that helps communities all over the world establish stable political and social environments. With the help of his family and the youth in his ward and Scout troop, Brandon was able to provide struggling children with a little bit of fun and relief.

Brandon says he's learned the importance of serving others through his Church membership. He notes that giving meaningful service is one of the purposes of the Aaronic Priesthood. "Scouting is the activity arm of the priesthood," he says. "Because of the activity we organized, now kids are going to have things to play with. Helping children is a way of respecting them."

As he progresses in the Aaronic Priesthood and other areas of his life, Brandon recognizes the benefits of Scouting. "I came up with the idea for my Eagle project and organized it," he says. "Learning to be a leader is a big part of Scouting and Church. Learning to be a leader now prepares you to be a leader in your Church callings later. That's why we do it." Brandon and his fellow quorum members were leaders on the field, acting as referees of the games and ensuring the safety and enjoyment of the participants.

So now that he has finished his Eagle project, what's next?

"I've finished my Duty to God requirements as a deacon," Brandon says. "But I'm now a teacher, so I've started working on my Duty to God requirements as a teacher."



NEEDED NOW

If ever there were a time when the principles of Scouting were vitally needed—that time is now. If ever there were a generation who would benefit by keeping physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight—that generation is the present generation."

President Thomas S. Monson, "Called to Serve," Ensign, Nov. 1991, 47.

HOW THE PRIESTHOOD AND SCOUTING WORK TOGETHER

If you think Scouting is just about tying knots and earning merit badges, think again. Here's what eight young men from the Salt Lake Granite Stake who just earned their Eagle award have to say about how Scouting can help them accomplish Aaronic Priesthood purposes.

Be Prepared



“The Church encourages us to be prepared for any emergency that may arise, and ‘Be Prepared’ is the Scout motto. Just like we have to be prepared for physical emergencies, we have to be prepared for spiritual ones as well.”

Kanichi A., 15

It's Up to Us



“We're responsible for bringing people to the gospel. Scouting gives us opportunities to invite nonmembers or inactive members to start participating in Church activities.”

Sam S., 18

Be a Missionary



“Attitude is important in Scouting and in the Church. You have to have the right attitude. You have to do the right things for the right reasons. Being a Scout is like being a missionary. You have to teach, prepare lessons, and get to the point where you're not scared to talk to people about things.”

Jacob P., 15

Honesty is the Best Policy



“Members of the Church have to be trustworthy, and a Scout is trustworthy, too. It's not nice to lie to your parents, your bishop, or your family members. We're supposed to be honest in our dealings with our fellow man.”

Jacob S., 15

Service Lasts a Lifetime



“Service doesn't stop with your Eagle Scout project. When you're showing active kindness to someone, you're showing active kindness to the Savior. As priesthood holders, we're responsible for people's physical and spiritual needs.”

Kazuki T., 15

There's Strength in Numbers



“You can't do your Eagle Scout project by yourself, and you can't really exercise the priesthood by yourself. The priesthood is about helping other people, and so is Scouting. They both help you do good works more effectively.”

Naoya B., 19

Act as Christ Would



“As you learn to help others, you grow spiritually and your testimony increases. You're acting like Christ would when you help those in need.”

Brian C., 13

Knowledge is Gained through Experience



“Scouting is all about gaining knowledge through experience. And that's what the plan of salvation is about, too—we're here to gain experience by doing good things for others, which will lead us back to Christ.”

Chris S., 13

HIGH FLYING

When Juan Hernández of Salt Lake City, Utah, looks back on his first visit to church, one word sums up his attitude: apprehension.

“My mom was the first to be baptized in the family. At the time, I didn’t know why. One day she asked me if I wanted to go to church with her to see what it was like. I decided to go with her just so she wouldn’t feel bad.” But thanks to the ward’s Aaronic Priesthood, Juan learned that there was something special about the Church.

One of the young men invited Juan to come to a Scout activity flying planes. Though he had no interest in attending religious meetings, flying planes with the Scouts sounded like too much fun to resist. On the day of the activity, Juan was surprised by how friendly and enthusiastic the young men were. “When we went up in the planes, I forgot that I barely knew these young men. Somehow I knew that they would be good friends to me,” Juan says.

Though Juan didn’t expect to be invited again, the young men surprised him by immediately treating him as a member of their troop. And the more he participated, the more he noticed how happy members of the Church were. Over time, he realized that it wasn’t Scouting that made them so happy—it was the gospel. Juan knew he wanted to be happy like they were, too.

Soon Juan, his father, and his sister took the missionary discussions and decided to be baptized. “All of the Aaronic Priesthood kids were there when my family and I were confirmed. Then my dad and I were ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood,” Juan says. “And when I passed the sacrament for the first time, they were all excited for us.” Because members of the Aaronic Priesthood saw an opportunity to reach out to Juan during his first visit to Church, they were able to better introduce Juan to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Scouting provided the activity that helped Juan to feel comfortable around members of the Church.

“I can see all that the Aaronic Priesthood has done for me,” Juan says. “It has helped me to love God and see the love He has for each one of us. I have learned to listen to the Holy Ghost. And I have learned about one of the biggest blessings of all—that if we live worthily we can be with our families for all eternity.

“Thanks to the leaders, my mom, and the Scouts, I could open the door to our Heavenly Father. That’s how my family and I found that piece that was missing in our life.”



HISTORY OF SCOUTING IN THE CHURCH

1875—The

Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association (YMMIA) is organized to provide spiritual and cultural activities for the young men of the Church.

1911—Church leaders decide that Scouting, with its spiritual background and cultural ideals, has great appeal. The MIA Scouts are officially organized.

1913—The Church formally affiliates with Scouting in the United States as its first institutional sponsor.

2010—The Church sponsors more Scouts and Scouting units in the U.S. than any other organization. Hundreds of thousands of young men are enrolled in groups or units sponsored by the Church.

NEmore

Have you had a great experience with the Aaronic Priesthood and Scouting? Share it with us at newera.lds.org.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BSA!

February 2010 is the 100th birthday for the Boy Scouts of America. The organization got started because someone helped a stranger. An American named W.D. Boyce was in London, England, on his way to Africa, when an unknown Scout helped him cross a street to a hotel and refused a tip. The Scout explained he was merely doing his duty and gave Boyce the address of the local Scout headquarters.

On his way back from Africa, Boyce stopped in London and gathered information later used in organizing the Boy Scouts of America. The BSA was incorporated on February 8, 1910.

The same spirit of service shown by that unknown Scout who helped W.D. Boyce is still at the heart of Scouting today.



SCOUTING IN THE PHILIPPINES

The United States isn't the only country with a rich history of Scouting. The Scouting program was introduced to the Philippines in 1914 and has been growing steadily ever since. In fact, the Philippines has one of the largest Scouting organizations in the world. And just like Scouts in the U.S., Scouts in the Philippines are using their experiences to help them become worthy priesthood holders and better citizens in their communities.

The young men of the Dagupan Philippines stake are determined to utilize what they have learned in Scouting as part of their preparation for their future missions. Their eagerness to help others has manifested itself through selfless service for the City Government of Dagupan. According to their stake president, Jose Andaya, the Scout troop is the only religious organization actively volunteering its services to the city government during major community events. The Aaronic Priesthood holders provide crowd control, offer first aid, and even clean the streets during and after the events.

NEmore

For additional information, including an explanation of Duty to God and Scouting, look for links at newera.lds.org.

DUTY TO GOD AND SCOUTING

I promise you that your achievement of the Duty to God Award will provide you with a living testimony that will sustain you throughout your life.

"Where available, Scouting can also help you in this effort. We encourage you to participate in Scouting. Many of the Scouting requirements can fill goals and requirements of the Duty to God certificates. . . .

"Some of the great blessings of these programs . . . are that as the youth of the Church, you will have a clear understanding of who you are, you will be accountable for your actions, you will take responsibility for the conduct of your life, and you will be able to set goals so that you might achieve what you were sent to earth to achieve. Our plea is that you strive to do your very best."

Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Fulfilling Our Duty to God," *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 39.