



Order of the Arrow Unit of Excellence Award

I. Background & Purpose of the Award

As the primary platform where the Scouting program is delivered to youth, the unit is the most vital and important level of the BSA for the Order to support.

The Order of the Arrow Unit of Excellence Award seeks to identify those units, and the leaders within them, who excel at incorporating the OA into their annual planning. This award is intended to provide a tool for lodges to recognize, incentivize, and operationalize unit-level participation in Order of the Arrow programs.

The OA Unit of Excellence Award criteria recognize units that invite the lodge to conduct quality unit elections, participate in lodge events and meetings, and operate a complete OA Troop/Team Representative program. Our hope is that units that complete these criteria will benefit from the support programs that the Order of the Arrow has implemented to strengthen unit-delivered program. This recognition program, along with other tools for unit support, should be distributed and promoted to Scoutmaster/Coach, OA Troop/Team Representatives and Advisers, and chapter election teams to include in communication to units.

II. Award Requirements

Units must complete all of the requirements listed below in order to be eligible as an Order of the Arrow Unit of Excellence. If all requirements are completed, the unit receives a ribbon for their troop/team flag, per annum. In addition to the ribbon, the award system has built in recognitions for the key players in each unit responsible for creating a strong Order of the Arrow culture in the unit. These awards are available for the following three positions:

- Scoutmaster/Coach
- Troop/Team Representative (TTR)
- Troop/ Team Representative Adviser (Assistant Scoutmaster or Assistant Coach Designee)

Order of the Arrow Unit of Excellence Award Requirements:

1. Leadership: *Implement the Troop/Team OA Representative and Troop/Team OA Representative Adviser (Assistant Scoutmaster or Assistant Coach Designee) programs in your unit.*

- Every six months, ensure that the senior patrol leader (Troop) or Team Captain (Team) appoints or reappoints one Scout or Team Member to serve as Troop/Team OA Representative and the Scoutmaster/Coach appoints one adult to serve as Troop/Team OA Representative Adviser.
- Feature an annual presentation at a Court of Honor by the Troop/Team OA Representative on the Order of the Arrow with a focus on the accomplishments of unit members.

2. Participation: *Promote lodge events and provide transportation to all Arrowmen wishing to participate.*

- At least 50% of unit OA members attend at least one lodge event in addition to their Ordeal.

3. Elections: *Schedule a unit election with the chapter election team annually.*

- Hold an election and have 70% of elected Scouts or Team Members complete their Ordeal.

4. Planning: *Maintain an active planning process that prevents overlap between lodge and chapter events with unit events.*

- Review the local OA calendar with the Patrol Leader's Council or Team Leadership during annual troop/team program planning and schedule unit events so that 100% of troop/team programs do not overlap with any full-lodge events.

5. Conversion: *Demonstrate the depth of your unit's OA program through Brotherhood conversion.*

- At least 30% of eligible troop/team members seal their membership in the Order by converting to Brotherhood.

Additional Recognition:

Order of the Arrow Scoutmaster/Coach of Excellence:

- Lead your unit in earning the **OA Unit of Excellence Award** three times during your tenure as Scoutmaster/Coach.

Order of the Arrow Troop/Team Representative of Excellence:

- Lead your unit in earning the **OA Unit of Excellence Award** during your tenure as a Troop/Team Representative (six months of service minimum).

Order of the Arrow Troop/Team Representative Adviser of Excellence:

- Advise at least two Troop/Team Representatives towards earning the **OA Unit of Excellence Award** during your tenure as Troop/Team Representative Adviser.

Note: The OA Troop/Team Representative Adviser (Assistant Scoutmaster or Assistant Coach Designee) is a new, official BSA adult position of responsibility that has been created in conjunction with this award. Its purpose is to create the role for an adult to guide the youth TTR and be a 'voice of the Order' at the adult level in the troop/team structure. Patches for these positions can be purchased through the BSA Supply Division at your local Scout Shop.

III. Award Design/Format

Units and unit leaders selected to receive the **Order of the Arrow Unit of Excellence**

Award will be recognized as follows:

- **OA Unit of Excellence**
 - o National: Troop/Team flag ribbon, per annum
 - o Local: Lodge and council recognition
- **OA Scoutmaster/Coach of Excellence**
 - o National: Certificate
 - o Local: Lodge and council recognition
- **OA Troop/Team Representative of Excellence**
 - o National: Unit of Excellence recognition patch
 - o Local: Lodge recognition

- OA Troop/Team Representative Adviser of Excellence
 - National: Unit of Excellence recognition patch
 - Local: Lodge recognition

IV. Awarding Process:

Order of the Arrow Unit of Excellence Awards can be bestowed by any chartered lodge of the Order of the Arrow upon units in their council that meet the requirements of the Award. The lodge should track these requirements, and **Units of Excellence** should be identified and recognized annually.

Ribbons, recognition patches, and certificates can be ordered for your lodge's **Units of Excellence** by filling out the order form and mailing it in to the national office at the following address: Order of the Arrow, Boy Scouts of America, 1325 West Walnut Hill Lane, P.O. Box 152079, Irving, TX 75015-2079. The order form is available on the national website. Assistant Scoutmaster and Assistant Coach position patches are available from the supply division in your local Scout Shop.

In addition to national recognition items, lodges should actively work to recognize **Units of Excellence** annually, because **Units of Excellence** provide the base of support that will build a strong chapter and lodge program. Active recognition will increase the strength of your troops'/teams' OA programs, and through that, your chapters and lodge. Here are some suggested recognitions:

- Present ribbons, patches, and certificates annually at troop/team meetings or Courts of Honor
- List Troop/Team Numbers, Scoutmasters/Coaches, and Charter Partners in lodge and council publications, banquet programs, and on the OA and/or council website
- Invite all recognized Troop/Team Reps, Troop/Team Rep Advisers, and Scoutmasters/Coaches to an annual "thank-you" dinner, hosted by the lodge
- Create a special event at district or council camporees to recognize *Units of Excellence*

