



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

VOYAGEURS AREA COUNCIL

Strategic Plan

Updated June 21, 2011

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the Voyageurs Area Council to make available to all youth the opportunity to participate in a program of Character Building, Citizenship Training, Leadership Development, and Physical Fitness Training.

It is the mission of the Boy Scouts of America to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

VISION STATEMENT

To be the premier youth organization providing character development opportunities to a diverse and inclusive membership.

CORE VALUES

The Scout Oath

On my honor, I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.

The Scout Law

A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent.

Designed Future Statement

In Scouting's second century, we are building the leaders of tomorrow. Scouting's dynamic and engaging journey beckons to America's young people. Our exciting programs and outdoor adventures inspire lives of leadership, character, and service. Relevant and adaptive, we are a trusted advocate for youth. Our adult volunteers and employees are widely admired for their leadership excellence. The Boy Scouts of America is strong and financially secure. True to our mission, Scouting reflects our nation in its ethnic diversity, and shapes our nation by developing responsible citizens.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

1. One hundred years of history
2. Teaching life-long skills
3. Trusted organization
4. Low cost membership
5. Alliances with community organization

1. Impact and Participation Pillar

Scouting's programs reach and make a life-changing difference with kids of all backgrounds and communities.

- 1.1. *Increase market share (CS, BS, Venturers & Explorers) (2011 JTE#3)*
- 1.2. *Increase number of registered youth (CS, BS, Venturers & Explorers) (2011 JTE#4)*
- 1.3. *Improve retention rate of traditional members (2011 JTE#5)*
- 1.4. *The council measures its success by the increase in the positive, difference-making impact it has in the lives of youth.*
 - 1.4.1. Implement new metrics (Scouting's Journey to Excellence) for measuring the outcomes of Scouting in youth, families, and communities.
 - 1.4.2. Articulate our new focus on Scouting outcomes to our membership, employees, and the public.
 - 1.4.3. Revise recognition and reward programs to reflect our new focus on Scouting outcomes.
 - 1.4.4. We have developed and introduced a communication structure for both gathering and disseminating to our membership insightful and useful feedback and information from our chartered organizations and key community institutions (e.g., schools and churches) about how and where Scouting can best support the needs of the youth and communities it serves.
- 1.5. *Increase market share through a robust and comprehensive approach to diversity and inclusion of minorities, women, and other underserved groups.*
 - 1.5.1. Incorporate ethnic diversification of our membership into the definition of success.
 - 1.5.2. Ensure that the Executive Board and district committees reflect the ethnic diversity of the geographical areas they serve.
 - 1.5.3. Clearly identify our ethnic market share in all communities and seek to increase that market share.
- 1.6. *The BSA has increased its net membership by retaining youth in the Scouting program longer.*
 - 1.6.1. The retention rate of BSA youth membership has increased to 75 percent from 69.5 percent in 2008.
 - 1.6.2. We have increased total density by 2%/ year on average until Gold status achieved on JTE

2. Resources & Finances Strategic Pillar

The Boy Scouts of America is financially sound at all levels of the organization through a balanced funding model. Funding is not a barrier to providing programs that fulfill our mission.

- 2.1. *Maintain positive unrestricted net assets in the Operating Fund to support annual operating expenses (2011 JTE #1)*
- 2.2. *Increase council-generated net contributions in the Operating Fund over prior year. (2010 JTE#2)*
- 2.3. *Add new permanently restricted gifts to the Endowment Fund. (2011 JTE #3)*
- 2.4. *The Voyageurs Area Council is financially secure at all levels due to a robust and sustainable funding model that is focused on addressing the current and future needs of all operating, capital, and endowment funds.*
 - 2.4.1. Identify and build sustainable and diverse sources of operating funds to avoid an over reliance on any particular source.
 - 2.4.2. Establish sustainable funding sources for current and future capital needs of the council.
 - 2.4.3. Seek and secure the necessary resources to fund the growth of the council endowment so it can meet identified income need.
- 2.5. *The Voyageurs Area Council effectively manages and leverages its resources (e.g. property, finances, members, community supporters, and human) to provide improved or new avenues for revenue growth.*
 - 2.5.1. Establish a strategic plan for current council assets (e.g. camps, council service center, Scout shop) that fulfills the vision of the council.
 - 2.5.2. Leverage the Scouting brand and our relationships with community supporters for new avenues of revenue and collaborations.
 - 2.5.3. Explore our existing human resources required for revenue generation with a goal to maximize growth in revenue and revenue sources.
- 2.6. *The Voyageurs Area Council is committed to the highest ethical standards of stewardship, governance and transparency.*
 - 2.6.1. Ensure that the council leadership has the personal capacity and commitment to help our council succeed.
 - 2.6.2. Ensure that our council leadership embraces their fiduciary responsibility to a risk management methodology.
 - 2.6.3. Enhance the understanding of good governance, fiscal stewardship and financial management throughout the leadership of the council.

3. Building Our Brand Strategic Pillar

The Boy Scouts of America is known and valued by the people of our nation. Our brand is so recognized and respected that it empowers our members and enables our success.

- 3.1. *(Internal Communication) The BSA measures its success by the increase in the positive, difference-making impact it has in the lives of youth.*
 - 3.1.1. Seek out new measurements to identify a completely trained/untrained leader report at all levels.
 - 3.1.2. Emphasize on-going Cub Scout training as a Unit.
 - 3.1.3. Develop communication strategies to promote local scouting Good Turns while promoting Cub Scout's fun and service components.
 - 3.1.4. Support instant recognition at all Scouting levels while focusing on the positive correlation of instant Cub Scout recognition and retention.
 - 3.1.5. The BSA has increased its net membership by retaining youth in the Scouting Program longer.
 - 3.1.6. Emphasize adult leader training and create an environment of fun for the youth. Encourage flexibility and creativity.
 - 3.1.7. Develop communication of program satisfaction at the Unit level to the Council level.
 - 3.1.8. Encourage positive parent/unit leader communication (two-way street communication) to encourage retention of parents in Scouts. (Specific goal to include a mentorship program).
 - 3.1.9. Market the value of Scouting to parents that are not involved at a consistent level, Cub Scout focus. Develop parental awareness and encourage involvement.
- 3.2. *(External Communication) The BSA has increased its market share at all levels (unit, district, council, and national) through a robust and comprehensive approach to diversity and inclusion of minorities, women and other underserved groups.*
 - 3.2.1. Design recruiting programs that will result in a membership that reflects our diverse communities.
 - 3.2.2. Focus on Cub Scout age ethnic diversification in all service areas.
 - 3.2.3. Strive to diversify the Council Executive Board so that it accurately reflects our diverse community.
 - 3.2.4. Emphasize and encourage Units to be 100% Boy's Life Units and recognize its influence as a positive reflection of increased retention.
 - 3.2.5. Identify talking points annually for District operations and Commissioners.
 - 3.2.6. Communicate and reach out to other youth organizations and develop partnerships.
 - 3.2.7. Introduced more comprehensive recruiting strategies, bringing in an increased number of youth to participate in the dynamic and exciting programs of Scouting.
 - 3.2.8. Encourage Cub Scout age promotion by older Boy Scout/Venturers that are recognizable and role models to younger boys.
 - 3.2.9. Promote/market full uniform Cub Scout/Scout participation at public events.
 - 3.2.10. Promote the Scouting fitness program.

ORGANIZATION-WIDE STRATEGIES

- 3.2.11. Demonstrate the relationship between Scouting involvement and scholastic, athletic and civic achievement.
- 3.2.12. Open dialogue with local community fitness organizations and initiatives.
- 3.3. *(Measurements) Council, districts and unit have tools and metrics to effectively assess their performance against BSA's commitment to positively impact youth and adults and to deliver tangible outcomes as a result of their being in Scouting programs.*
 - 3.3.1. Encourage MyCouncil participation and support MyCouncil training and direction.
 - 3.3.2. Develop Youth Protection awareness at the unit level.
 - 3.3.3. Encourage two way communications and 360 degree feedback between council and units.
 - 3.3.4. Develop communication strategies, Commissioners Corner's, blogs, chat options.
 - 3.3.5. Customer/volunteer focused operations and communications. Create an environment of understanding what the volunteer truly wants, needs, and/or expects.

4. Dynamic & Relevant Program Strategic Pillar

Scouting's programs are exciting culturally relevant, and appealing to today's youth, attracting them at an extraordinary rate and retaining them longer.

- 4.1. *Increase the percentage of Cub Scouts earning rank advancements (2011 JTE #7)*
- 4.2. *Increase the percentage of Boy Scouts earning rank advancements, (2011 JTE #8)*
- 4.3. *Increase the percentage of Cub Scouts attending day camp and/or resident camp. (2011 JTE#9)*
- 4.4. *Increase the percentage of total Boy Scouts attending long term camp and high-adventure programs. (2011 JTE#10)*
- 4.5. *Increase the amount of community service provided by Scouts, leaders and other participants. (2011 JTE #11)*
- 4.6. *The BSA's programs match what today's youth both want and need.*
 - 4.6.1. Review existing programs and materials and have committed to new plans that enhance support of our youth advocacy themes.
 - 4.6.2. Evaluate youth organizations in our area to identify indicators of success and opportunities for application to our Council program planning and operations. Organizations to evaluate include but are not limited to: Boys and Girls Clubs, Girl Scouts of America, 4H, hockey sports programs .
 - 4.6.3. VAC will commit a professional level staff member for the development of non traditional and culturally diverse units.
 - 4.6.4. Dialogue with culturally diverse communities within our Council to increase our understanding of their needs and how we may best plan programs to meet them. Communities include Native American and, African American.
 - 4.6.5. We will develop and implement a sustainable outreach program that will enable the Council to increase its market share of all youth in underserved or non-served populations.
 - 4.6.6. We will host a youth leadership development conference in conjunction with our Scouting Conference extending invitations to all youth organizations in our region.
- 4.7. *The BSA is known as the premier outdoor program provider and educator.*
 - 4.7.1. Convene experts in the field of outdoor programming from both inside and outside of Scouting and replicate best practices from around the country.
 - 4.7.2. Develop Advanced Outdoor Leader Training Program that will promote trained unit leaders that will increase youth and adult participation in the outdoor experience.
 - 4.7.3. Reach beyond Scouting's membership to ensure that no child is left inside.
 - 4.7.4. VAC will be committed to the principles of Leave No Trace and the Outdoor Code in all Council activities.
 - 4.7.5. Support an all council "Extreme Day of Services"
- 4.8. Encourage Eagle Scout projects that will support educational efforts
- 4.9. *Support and incorporate into our programs the national multi-year health and wellness campaign, "Scouting's gift to America," to promote active lifestyles, healthy eating, and appropriate weight for youth and adult volunteers.*

ORGANIZATION-WIDE STRATEGIES

- 4.9.1. Create events that are based around fitness activities. Add elements to existing programs that focus on HWF
- 4.9.2. Create service opportunities that will get us recognized locally as a service organization in the eyes of the population.
- 4.9.3. Create community “EXPO” that has focus on community education surrounding our skills: HWF initiatives, leadership training, etc.

5. Innovation and Technology Pillar

Scouting uses innovation and technology to support the strategic pillars and to increase the impact and potency of the Scouting movement. All members are connect with the right information and technology tools anywhere, anytime.

- 5.1. *Maintain or improve ratio of youth-serving executives to total available youth. (2011 JTE # 12)*
- 5.2. *Increase the number of registered commissioners over prior year (2011 JTE #13)*
- 5.3. *Improve the rate of visitations to units by commissioners (2011 JTE #14)*
- 5.4. *We will sufficiently develop our technology to provide Council, District and Unit level resources that reflect current technological developments.*
 - 5.4.1. *We will commit a support level staff to achieve and maintain these developments. Ie. Webmaster, Facebook, video conferencing.*
 - 5.4.2. *The VAC website will be listed within the top 5 responses for internet search responses for: outdoors, youth programming, youth development, camping.*
 - 5.4.3. *Invest in technological tools to harness and capitalize on information and resources.*
 - 5.4.4. *We will acknowledge and plan for lack of technology access in our service areas that may impact program communications and delivery.*
 - 5.4.5. *Identify and track the technologies being used by today's youth. *
 - 5.4.6. *Enable volunteers, employees, and youth to communicate, collaborate, and share best practices and innovative ideas to enhance Scouting and its services.*
 - 5.4.7. *Make resources and tools accessible and easy to use by focusing on usability and the business needs of the Scouting community.*
 - 5.4.8. *Partner with local volunteers who have current and innovative technological expertise.*
- 5.5. *The BSA uses innovation to ensure that it stays market-focused and relevant to today's youth, and to continuously improve the ways in which it delivers programs, manages the organization, and serves as an advocate for youth.*
 - 5.5.1. *Identify and keep foremost the interests, needs, and concerns of contemporary youth.*
 - 5.5.2. • *Use innovation to simplify and streamline processes and programs.*
 - 5.5.3. • *Encourage new thinking and risk-taking.*

6. Youth Advocacy & Strategic Relationships Pillar

The BSA is recognized as an advocate for youth and youth issues. We are known by our members and America's families and communities as a resource for leadership, encouragement, and programs that benefit the country's youth. The strategic relationships of the BSA extend far beyond those with our traditional chartered organizations and keep Scouting relevant and adaptive.

- 6.1. *By expanding its role as a leading advocate for youth issues, the VAC creates an environment in which districts and units can succeed.*
 - 6.1.1. Develop a council staff and /or volunteer organizational structure to give leadership to Scouting's youth advocacy initiatives.
 - 6.1.2. Focus our advocacy efforts on these youth issues:
 - 6.1.2.1. Health, wellness, and fitness
 - 6.1.2.2. Environmental responsibility
 - 6.1.2.3. Education, leadership, and service
 - 6.1.2.4. Strengthening families
 - 6.1.3. Develop council wide alliances and events to address specific youth issues.
 - 6.1.4. On every organizational level within the VAC, work with private, community, and government organizations to advocate for youth.
- 6.2. *The VAC is recognized as an advocate for health and fitness for all youth and adults.*
 - 6.2.1. Incorporate a focus on nutrition, exercise, mental health, youth protection, and safety into existing program content.
 - 6.2.2. Support contemporary, quantifiable health and fitness requirements for advancement and recognition for both youth and adult volunteers.
 - 6.2.3. Provide vision, programs, resources, and incentives for each unit to become an advocate for health and fitness in the communities it serves.
- 6.3. *The BSA takes a leadership position as an advocate for education, youth leadership, community service, environmental stewardship, and strengthening families.*
 - 6.3.1. Strengthen our position as a leading practitioner of informal education and a pivotal partner with formal education.
 - 6.3.2. Help youth contribute to the success of their families and communities by focusing on leadership skills, citizenship, community service, financial accountability, and career development.
 - 6.3.3. Showcase and expand existing programs, such as Leave No Trace, as we grow our environmental awareness.
 - 6.3.4. Establish alliances with other leading organizations in these focus areas (child development, health care, fitness and nutrition) and take the lead in advocating Scouting's positions as we support youth.
 - 6.3.5. Through the BSA Adopt a School program, encourage units to provide regular Good turns to local schools thus renewing and refreshing our relationship with our schools and demonstrating our commitment to supporting them, rather than merely our use of their facilities and access to youth.

ORGANIZATION-WIDE STRATEGIES

- 6.3.6. Through established alliances with 2 regional organizations, promote Scouting's strengths in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math)
- 6.4. *VAC will position itself to strengthen current relationships with traditional chartered organizations and build relationships with new partners through innovative alliances and youth advocacy.*
 - 6.4.1. Support/encourage current advancement requirements, and with unit performance recognitions, to include an ongoing commitment to health and fitness within each rank advancement.
 - 6.4.2. Utilize the full family of Scouting's offerings and provide districts with guidelines and tools for reaching out beyond traditional chartered organizations to establish new partnerships.
 - 6.4.3. Review and, if required, revamp local council volunteer recognition and rewards programs related to chartered partner and other relationships.
 - 6.4.4. Study possible new organization, relationship, and sponsorship models to grow the number of Scouting units and youth members.
- 6.5. *The VAC will establish strategic relationships with federal, state, and local government agencies focusing on outdoor adventure, workforce preparedness, and health and wellness.*
 - 6.5.1. Position the VAC as the premier organization in the service area to positively impact America's youth in the areas of outdoor adventure, workforce preparedness and health and wellness.
 - 6.5.2. Support nationally establish collaborative relationships to provide a structure and framework for units to take advantage of service opportunities in their local areas.
 - 6.5.3. Target key agencies that align well with our aims.
 - 6.5.4. Leverage the experience of ArrowCorp5, the Order of the Arrow national service project, to create partnerships.

7. Leadership Excellence and Culture Strategic Pillar

Scouting's volunteer leaders and employees exemplify leadership excellence across all aspects of the movement.

7.1. *Have a trained and engaged executive board*

7.2. *Increase the number of volunteers serving on district committees.*

7.3. *Increase the number of direct contact leaders who are trained.*

7.4. *The Council Executive Board, the District Committees and the Council Operating Committee Chairs each model leadership excellence in their active, hands-on governance, resourceful commitment and community representation, providing visionary guidance and thorough accountability to oversee the effective management of the council.*

7.4.1. Use the designed future statement for Scouting's Second Century as a guide to develop leadership standards and processes that strive for leadership excellence.

7.4.2. All members of the Executive Board, District Committees and Council Committees have the resources necessary to fulfill their appointed roles.

7.4.3. Reconnect and re-establish a relationship with the BSA's and the local council alumni and past donors.

7.4.4. Implement *Leave No Trace* education and outreach program that promotes VAC as 'experts/authority' in this area.

7.4.5. Have a council resolution to support healthy eating habits and serve only menus that fit HWF guidelines – don't sell or serve pop, candy bars, etc.

7.4.6. A council representative will present charter to institutional head in an educational, informational, supportive and thankful approach within one month of charter renewal.

7.4.7. Develop diversity committee on Council Executive Board.

7.5. *Scouting, through the council's leadership, recruits, develops and rewards, and retains talented individuals who provide professional leadership and management to the council, its chartered partners and their youth and adult leadership.*

7.5.1. The council's management systems emphasize the building and maintaining of an organizational infrastructure and capacity to continually improve our programs for an ever-increasing number of youth and adult members.

7.5.2. Utilize the current compensation and benefits policies for all employees and reward performance with compensation comparable to those available in the local community.

7.5.3. Clearly communicate to applicants the realities of the job, in terms of the tangible and intangible rewards and performance expectations.

7.5.4. Ensure that all employees of the council are provided with the necessary training and mentoring for their assigned positions.

7.5.5. Create a council staff position and/or volunteer structure to support our youth advocacy efforts

7.5.6. Include a Health, Wellness, & Fitness (HWS) training segment into all position specific and supplemental trainings. Bring in outside experts to create syllabi.

ORGANIZATION-WIDE STRATEGIES

- 7.6. *VAC will position itself to strengthen current relationships with traditional chartered organizations and build relationships with new partners through innovative alliances and youth advocacy.*
- 7.6.1. Create and implement a Council wide training and tracking system that includes responsible individuals at the Unit, District, Professional and Council levels.
 - 7.6.2. Create a budget for training needs that includes round table financial support and the purchase of up-to-date training materials.
 - 7.6.3. Ensure that Council and District level training committee members and professional level staff are trained in current training programs. We will promote and facilitate regular training at Council, District and Unit levels.
 - 7.6.4. Training leadership will become a board level position.
 - 7.6.5. Interact and support chartered organization's youth programs by offering them participation in youth leadership training.
- 7.7. *The EDGE training model will be the focus of all our training programs. We will create an advanced youth leader training course for a diverse group of youth to grow as leaders.*
- 7.7.1. Commit to providing annual NYLT within our Council.
 - 7.7.2. Commit to the extension of trained youth leaders to the farthest reach within our Council by creating a scholarship program for support of sending at least two youth annually to NAYL training at Philmont Scout Ranch.
 - 7.7.3. Provide a syllabus and offer semi-annual youth and adult Troop leadership training at the Council and/or District level. And, develop an innovative and adaptable template for local council awards and recognitions for those volunteers who positively influence participation by and impact on, youth in our programs through relationships with our chartered partners, local schools, parent organizations, adult service clubs, and other groups.
- 7.8. *The BSA builds tomorrow's leaders through comprehensive youth leadership development curricula.*
- 7.8.1. Establish the BSA as the best leadership development program for youth.
 - 7.8.2. Leverage the Order of the Arrow and National Youth Leader Training as models of youth empowerment.