The Boy Scouts of America is one of the nation’s largest and most prominent values-based youth development organizations. It provides a program for young people that builds character and leadership skills, trains them in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and develops personal fitness.

The Atlanta Area Council has provided the Scouting program to 13 metro-Atlanta counties for more than 100 years. This time-honored organization, known to have a positive impact on youth, also makes sure that every child has the opportunity to get involved. That’s where Scoutreach comes in.

Scoutreach is the Atlanta Area Council’s commitment to remove any barriers that might keep a young person from joining Scouting regardless of their circumstances. Scoutreach can provide anything from camp scholarships, uniforms, handbooks, transportation, and even leadership of a Scout unit. The Hispanic Emphasis helps to break down ethnic and language barriers through bilingual leadership and program materials to better serve the Hispanic community.
Through community partnerships and dedicated volunteers, Scoutreach helps to eliminate barriers that might keep a young person from joining Scouting. By emphasizing ethics and moral values, Scouting addresses many of the concerns of parents in our community. Scouting prepares youth to be leaders, to accept responsibility, and to care about principles and causes beyond their own self-interest.

Making a Difference in the Lives of Youth

Scoutreach makes it possible for youth to become Scouts regardless of their circumstances. “We serve youth who may not have the opportunity to experience Scouting without the resources that we offer,” says Scoutreach Director Faye Hammonds.

“The registration fee may not be much for some families, for others it could mean sacrificing necessities that many take for granted. In an effort to insure that the fee is never a barrier, payment assistance can be provided through Scoutreach.

“We do not know which boys will attain the Eagle Scout rank. What we do know is that Scouting will make a positive impact on their lives and make them better people, employees and citizens no matter how long they stay in the program. Scouting reinforces the values and morals that young people learn at home. For those youth who do not have positive role models, Scouting helps to instill these traits that will ultimately help to shape them into people who care about others and their community,” Faye says passionately.

Faye has a long history with Scouting. Both of her sons attained the coveted Eagle Scout rank. She knows that Scouting can make a lasting impression and mold young boys into great men.

“I frequently meet people who are excited to share their Scouting experience with me,” she says with a smile. “Many of them will recite the Scout Oath and Law and all of them smile as they relive their experience. These moments encourage me to continue our mission of insuring that every boy has the opportunity to be a part of the greatest youth-serving organization in the world. Our desire is to expose them to an environment beyond the one that they know and to inspire them to be different and a catalyst for change wherever they are. When you show youth their possibilities, the opportunities are huge.”

“When you show youth their possibilities, the opportunities are huge.”
Becoming a Leader

It’s not all about camping and outdoor skills that youth learn in Boy Scouts. They’re also learning valuable life skills that will take them through school, college and beyond. **Deaven Beavers of Austell, GA**, is living proof.

“Scouting has taught me to be a leader, how to do the right thing and how to have the discipline to accomplish whatever I want,” Deaven says with a beaming smile. Of course, like most boys, he loves the activities, too. His favorites are camping, shooting BB guns and earning merit badges. And as happy as Deaven is, his mother is ecstatic!

“For a single mother,” Carol says, “Boy Scouts adds so much value. It strengthens Deaven to be around positive male role models, gives him a strong moral code and a vision for the future. “Scouting enhances and supports what I’m trying to teach him at home: dignity, integrity and the ability to make good choices,” she says with conviction. “It also lets me know that I’m on track, too. You see other boys making other choices and you don’t want that for your son. Scoutreach is truly a gift from God.”

Deaven, his mother and his sister live in Walton Communities, an affordable housing community. “Walton Communities started the Troop,” explains Carol. “It’s something positive that redirects young boys to do something positive. We single moms are just trying to keep our kids on course, you know? Scouting provides a safe environment, good leadership and opportunities I wouldn’t otherwise be able to give Deaven. Scoutreach is a tremendous blessing.”

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Passing on the Gifts of Scouting

Deaven Beaver’s Pack Leader and **Scoutreach Program Specialist Peter Okema**, is no stranger to Scouting. “I went to school in the town of Gulu in northern Uganda in East Africa where I was a Scout,” he recounts. “Scouting helped instill discipline in me that made it possible for me to finish high school and eventually go to college. Without Scouting discipline and with living in a war zone in Uganda, I could’ve dropped out of school and I would never have become who I am today.”

“I have worked with Scoutreach for about six years now,” Peter says. “The program resonates with me. Growing up in poverty and an unstable family situation myself, I truly understand that Scoutreach provides an opportunity for young boys facing economic and other challenges to access opportunities that they would otherwise not be able to. Scoutreach gives youth in economically disadvantaged families and neighborhoods the ability to participate in Scouting.”

Peter continues, “I am proud to be a Scout leader with the Atlanta Area Council because it has provided the opportunity to help the youth in our community learn and grow to become responsible members of society. To me, Scouting is a lifelong benefit and the skills you learn stay with you even into your adulthood. It’s kind of like a gift that keeps on giving and is passed from generation to generation.”
Eight-year-old Logan Lee of Douglasville, GA, is a prime example of a young boy in Scoutreach being shown new opportunities and possibilities.

Three years ago, Logan’s mother, Kasandra, signed him up for Scouting. Her brother was an Eagle Scout and she knew what a positive impact it made on him. She also wanted a male figure in her son’s life, something that was missing at the time.

“With Scouts, he gets to do things that he didn’t get to do before,” Kasandra beams. “He loves to go camping, practice his archery and go climbing. He’s started to take a leadership role with the newer and younger boys. He’s really grown.”

“I’d love it if he became an Eagle Scout one day,” she enthuses. “I want him to get the full experience. I want him to have the opportunity to do as much as he can. Our neighborhood isn’t the greatest as far as parental involvement and the ability to pay for activities, but Scoutreach helps make Scouting possible.”
Building Confidence

Jesus Matias of Norcross, GA, isn’t your average 14-year-old. Despite having a condition known as osteogenesis imperfecta (a congenital condition which causes fragile bones), he’s teaching a master class in how to be awesome.

The wheelchair-assisted youth has met every activity and challenge that his Boy Scout Troop has issued head-on, with enthusiasm and a “can-do” attitude. He passed his swim test on the first try. He hiked Stone Mountain. He’s done it all … with determination and a winsome smile.

Scouting has had a huge impact on Jesus. “He is more confident in his ability to do things for himself,” says Eulalia Leon Mateo, Jesus’ mother. “I was concerned because of his condition, but he seems to be taking charge and practicing all the skills that he gets taught in his meetings. He has also developed a sense of self by going to outdoor outings and camp. He is a lot more confident.”

Jesus adds, “I love Boy Scouts because you get to learn new things and go on camping trips. I am encouraged to do new things. Through Scouting I get to learn about camping, skills for life, leadership and how to be prepared. My goal is to become an Eagle Scout and encourage other people to join Scouting, too.”

A Passion for Helping Youth

“I have been working with Scoutreach for two years,” says Lizmarie Rivera, Scoutreach Program Specialist and Scout Leader of Jesus Matias’ Troop. “My passion for working with inner city youth and families led me to this job. As a human service major, I wanted to be part of a movement that invested in our youth while providing them with an enriching program that was innovating, adventure seeking and culturally diverse.

“Scouting helps youth grow because it exposes them to something new — the possibility of having more or dreaming bigger than the borders of their neighborhoods or communities,” she continues. “It gives them the opportunity to challenge themselves. It gives them a fighting chance! Programs like Scouting are important because they provide young boys with a sense of belonging, understanding of self, communities, and adventure. Many of us spend our whole lives searching for these things and they’re able to obtain them through Scoutreach.”
Scoutreach Program Specialist Chris Simms knows the benefits of Scoutreach firsthand. His mother signed him up for Boy Scouts when he was eight years old so that he could gain a “positive male influence.” Chris loved Scouting and the confidence it gave him. In fact, he loved Scouting so much that he accomplished what only 6% of Scouts do — he became an Eagle Scout.

“Scouting helped me make friends, go on adventures and push myself,” Chris says proudly. “My Scouting friends and I created friendly competitions between us that pushed us to do right, grow and be better.” Those boys he met in Scouting? He’s still friends with them today.

“Scoutreach helps keep a lot of young men from going down a stereotypical path based on the figures in their lives and the community they live in,” he says. “Scouting gives them opportunities they might not experience otherwise. It opened my eyes and ears and made me realize what was possible.”
You Can Help Make a Difference, Too

More than 32,000 metro-Atlanta youth take part in the once-in-a-lifetime adventures and character building programs that can only be found in Scouting. In doing so, they discover skills they never knew they had and develop into the leaders we’ll need in the years to come.

**Scouts Carry an Impact**

- 634 Scouts who earned their Eagle rank last year in metro-Atlanta gave **103,976 hours** back to our community in service through their Eagle Scout projects alone.
- Scouts collected **146,970 pounds of food** to feed Atlanta’s hungry.
- Youth who participate in Scouting are more likely than non-Scouts to **graduate from high school** and to stay away from drugs.
- Ninety-four percent of Scout parents say that Scouting helped their son become a better leader.

**For Every 100 Youth Who Become a Scout...**

- 18 will develop a hobby that will last throughout his adult life.
- 1 will use his Scouting skills to save another’s life.
- 17 will become Scout volunteers.
- 1 will use his Scouting skills to save his own life.
- 8 will enter a vocation that was learned through the merit badge system.

Scouting makes a profoundly positive impact on metro-Atlanta’s youth, our families, and our communities, but it doesn’t happen without committed volunteers and financial support.

- If you would like to volunteer with the Boy Scouts and make an impact on a child’s life, call **770-989-8820**.
- To make an investment in the Scouting program, visit [www.atlantabsa.org/give](http://www.atlantabsa.org/give).
“Scouting provides young people with skills, knowledge and self-confidence to develop them into leaders who will make a difference in today’s society. Scoutreach brings these opportunities to boys who would not otherwise have access to them. Not only does it make a difference in their lives, but it has a ripple effect in their communities as well. Support is essential in helping to buy the needed supplies and in funding leaders who work with these Packs andTroops.”

D. Richard Williams
Atlanta Area Council President
Chairman of the Board, Primerica

“Scouting provides a child the opportunity to be surrounded by caring adults, to experience challenging activities and to earn recognition that will last a lifetime. I have witnessed the transformation that occurs when a child receives this opportunity, and it has inspired me to spread the Scouting opportunity to as many children as possible. The benefit to our community is immeasurable.”

Degas A. Wright
Atlanta Area Council Executive Committee Member
President and Chief Executive Officer, Decatur Capital Management, Inc.