



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 of the Arrow 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 Unit 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 Unit Leaders, OA Unit Representatives, and chapter election teams to include in their communication to units.

This program is a revision to the OA Unit of Excellence Program previously applicable only to Troops and Teams.

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 unit flag, per annum; a certificate of recognition from their lodge and become eligible to order OA Unit of Excellence patches for the members of the unit

Order of the Arrow Unit of Excellence Award Requirements:

Leadership: *Implement the OA Unit Representative program¹ in your unit.*

- Every six months, ensure that the senior youth leader in the unit appoints or reappoints one Scout to serve as OA Unit Representative and the Unit Leader appoints one adult to serve as OA Unit Representative Adviser.²

- Feature an annual presentation by the OA Unit Representative on the Order of the Arrow with a focus on the accomplishments of unit members.

Participation:

- Promote lodge events and ensure transportation is provided to all Arrowmen wishing to participate.

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

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

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

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

- Review the local OA calendar with the youth leadership during annual unit program planning and schedule unit events so that unit programs do not overlap with any full- lodge events.

Activation: *Demonstrate the depth of your unit's OA program through active participation in OA events*

- At least 33% of the unit's Arrowmen attend an OA event following their induction into the OA.

III. Recognition

Units selected to receive the **Order of the Arrow Unit of Excellence Award** will be recognized as follows:

¹ The OA Unit Representative Support Pack provides additional information on implementation of the OA Unit Representative program in troops, crews and ships.

² The OA Unit Representative Adviser (normally an Assistant Unit Leader) is a position of responsibility that has been created with the purpose of ensuring an adult guide exists to support the youth OA Unit Representative and to be a 'voice of the OA' at the adult level in the unit structure.

- National: Unit flag ribbon, per annum
- Local: National Certificate (available on-line), presented by the Lodge along with local lodge and council recognition
- Special recognition patches presented by the lodge to the OA Unit Representative, OA Unit Representative Adviser and Unit Leader
- Eligibility to order additional special recognition patches for other members of the unit who have contributed to the achievement of the Order of the Arrow Unit of Excellence Award.



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 and recognition patches can be ordered for your lodge's **Units of Excellence** by filling out the order form available at <https://oa-bsa.org/resources/forms> and mailing it 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.

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 units' OA programs, and through that, your chapters and lodge. Here are some suggested recognitions:

- Present ribbons, patches, and certificates annually at unit meetings or Courts of Honor
- List Unit Numbers, Unit Leaders, and Charter Partners in lodge and council publications, banquet programs, and on the OA and/or council website
- Recognize Units of Excellence at annual lodge banquets.
- Invite all recognized OA Unit Representatives, OA Unit Representative Advisers, and Unit Leaders to an annual "thank-you" dinner, hosted by the lodge
- Create a special event at district or council camporees to recognize *Units of Excellence*