

VENTURING—SCOUTING'S NEXT STEP

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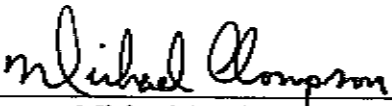
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To the Doctoral Candidate Review Board:

I am submitting herewith a Dissertation written by Steven McCarragher, entitled "Venturing- Scouting's Next Step". I have examined the final copy of this report for format and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Commissioner.



Michael L. Thompson

We have read this Dissertation
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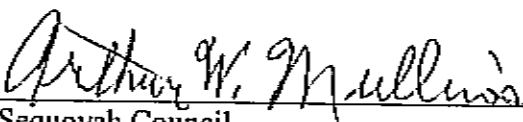


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Abstract

The purpose of this dissertation is to educate the adult leaders of Boy Scouts, the parents of the Scouts and the youth themselves between the ages of fourteen to twenty years of age. We have all heard about Webelos Den Leaders crossing their Arrow of Light boys into the Boy Scout program. Have you ever heard of Scoutmaster crossing their Eagle Scouts over to Venturing? They should cross over because Venturing is the next step. I believe it doesn't happen much at this point in our area because Venturing is still new, Venturing started in 1998. The Scoutmaster don't understand it is their job to make the crossover happen just like Webelos Den Leaders do. What the Scoutmaster doesn't understand is that once their youth in Boy Scouts (age fourteen or older) have reached the rank of Eagle, the Scout becomes bored and sometimes disruptive to the troop if there is nothing new to offer them and will leave Scouting. At that point the troop has lost one of their most experienced and valuable scouts. If the only Scoutmaster had known about Venturing and had encouraged the boy to crossover to Venturing instead of letting them drop out. This could accomplish two things, keep the boy in scouting and

enabling him to grow more and be better because of scouting. The other thing Ventures offers is you read it, someone teaches it to you, you experience it and you have to teach other what they learn in venturing which is a great resource for the troop the boy just left. So in reality you have not lost the boy but have gained another resource for your troop and a recruiter for Venturing. Along with that, in Venturing the youth are having fun, have camaraderie, challenges and learning experience like COPE course, scuba diving, wild carving and so forth that they may never have if not for Venturing. In the end because of the high adventure challenges the boy who is becoming a man is learning about mind over matter. By the time he gets the highest award, the Silver award the Venture has learned that what-ever he wants in life it is five percent ability and ninety five percent putting your mind to it to achieve it.

This dissertation goes into depth of how Cub Scout, Boy Scouts and Venturing is similar but is also different. It talks about what is venturing, why it is growing, literature, videos, training, recognition and programs.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Webelos are crossing over to Scouting. We all have heard about Webelos Den Leaders crossing their Arrow of Light Boys into Boy Scouting. Have you ever heard of a scoutmaster crossing their Eagle Scouts over to Venturing? Venturing is Scouting's next step.

BSA has steadily expanded the reach of its value-based programs as follows:

- 1910 Boy Scouting
- 1912 Sea Scouting
- 1935 Cub Scouting
- 1950 Exploring for young men 14-20 who wanted senior Scouting
- 1971 Coed Exploring—Young Women ages 17-20 joined now more career oriented posts
- 1991 Learning for Life—BSA Subsidiary
- 1998 Venturing- Coed ages 14-20- Outdoor oriented senior scouting

BSA Programs have three characteristics:

- **Mission-** Prepare; Ethical Choices, and Values
- **Aims-**Character; Citizenship; and Fitness
- **Methods of the BSA Program (There are three methods).** One method for Cub Scouts, one for Boy Scouts, and one method for Venturing.

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The Cub Scouts Method is:

- Ideals
- Den
- Advancement
- Family Involvement
- Activities
- Community Centered
- Uniform

The Boy Scouts Method is:

- Ideals
- Patrol
- Advancement
- Adult Association
- Outdoors
- Personal Growth
- Leadership
- Uniform

The Venturing Method is:

- Ideals

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- Group Activities
- Recognition
- Adult Association
- High Adventure
- Teaching Others
- Leadership
- No Official Uniform

CHAPTER TWO

WHAT IS VENTURING?

Venturing "is not a box or a package we present." "It is focused resources designed to help a community organization provide wholesome, flexible, well-rounded, challenging activities, tailor-made for teenage youth." Venturing is the young adult program of the BSA for men and women 14 (who have completed the eighth grade) through 20 years of age. Youth member is called a "Venturer". Venturing units are called "Crews". Venturing adults are called "Advisors". The youth leader is the "President". Venturing has the same chartering process which is a ten dollar fee.

Venturing is... thinking outside the box. Joe Q. Public's point of view is as follows: Venturers have uniforms; are boys only; have a compass; go on campfires; and is old fashioned. The Paradigm Shift is as follows: There is no

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required uniform; it is coed (which is the fastest program); uses a GPS; it leaves no trace behind; and is the "Cutting Edge".

The Venturing Oath: *As a Venturer, I promise to do by duty to God and help strengthen America, to help others, and to seek truth, fairness, and adventure in our world.*

The Venturing Code: *As a Venturer, I believe that America's strength lies in our trust in God and in the courage, strength, and traditions of our people.*

I will, therefore, be faithful in my religious duties and will maintain a personal sense of honor in my own life.

I will treasure my American heritage and will do all I can to preserve and enrich it.

I will recognize the dignity and worth of all humanity and will use fair play and goodwill in my daily life.

I will acquire the Venturing attitude that seeks the truth in all things and adventure on the frontiers of our changing world.

Venturing's teaching philosophy has four levels of learning. They include:

- Level 1- You read it
- Level 2- Someone teaches it to you
- Level 3- You experience it
- Level 4- You teach it to someone else

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We retain 85% of what we learn when we teach it to someone else. Venturing advancements requires a Level 4.

All of the Venturing awards require Venturers to teach what they have learned to others. When they teach others often, Venturers are better able to retain the skill or knowledge they taught, they gain confidence in their ability to speak and relate to others, and they acquire skills that can benefit them for the rest of their lives as a hobby or occupation.

CHAPTER THREE

VENTURING'S GROWTH

One question you may ask is where is Venturing coming from? Venturing comes from church youth groups that adopt the structure of Venturing to help strengthen their youth programs. Venturing comes from successful troops that adopt Venturing which meet the wants and needs of older boys which causes longer retention. Venturing comes from High School and College outdoor clubs that adopt Venturing to compliment their program. Venturing also comes from independent groups that are organized from high school hobby interest surveys.

Another question you could ask is why is Venturing growing? Venturing is growing because of an aggressive promotion Nation-wide; potentially lots of unplowed ground; targeted resources for new unit growth; tailor-made for teenagers because of the coed program, and no required uniform, and extreme sports and out-

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door activities. There are some perceived barriers to forming and retaining Venturing Crew. Survey results from 335 professionals that were taken.

The top four responses are as follows:

- 70% Low awareness
- 56.6 % Lack of training and knowledge
- 54.5% Lack of adult leadership
- 49.1% Potential chartering organizations lack of understanding of the program.

So a Scoutmaster's Challenges could be:

1. Keeping 14 to 18 year old Boy Scouts "engaged" in the troop
2. Challenging older Boy Scouts, while at the same time, trying to attract and retain younger Boy Scouts
3. Competing with older Boy Scouts' interests; cars, girls, high school activities
4. Providing leadership/role model opportunities to all older Boy Scouts
5. Giving younger Boy Scouts something to anticipate beyond the troop
6. Consistently offering exciting program to the youth

So what do 14 to 18 year old Boys want? They want challenging physical activities with boys of their own age and activities with girls. They also want control of their environment; independence, to be able to explore and experience their world, a sense of belonging and acceptance from their peer group, inclusion in a "gang."

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What do 14 to 18 year old boys need? They need consistent adults that "walk their talk"; character and ethical education outside the classroom; positive adult role models, male and female; opportunities to become proficient at something; and leadership opportunities.

Why should an organization charter both a Troop and a Venturing Crew? The Venturing program compliments the Boy Scout Troop. It adds exciting new recognition and leadership opportunities for your older boys. It allows flexibility, so boys can participate in both programs. Venturing can help solve many of the Scoutmaster's challenges. It meets the wants and needs of 14 to 20 year old young men. It provides a scouting program for daughters of scouting families.

Venturing is a resource to Religious organizations serving High School age Youth.

CHAPTER FOUR

VENTURING/VENTURE PATROL- WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

A Venture Patrol:

- Optional patrol of a troop.
- It is a male only troop.
- It is for ages 13 to 17.
- It has Boy Scout advancement only.
- It consists of a Venture Patrol Leader and an Assistant Patrol Leader.
- Venture Patrol is a good transition to Venturing.

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A Venture Crew is:

- Stand alone unit.
- It can be coed, all male, or all female.
- It is for ages 14 to 20
- Has 5 Bronze Awards, Gold, Silver, Ranger, Quest, Trust, Quartermaster, and Boy Scout advancement above First Class for male Venturers
- Has a President, two Vice President positions, Secretary, Treasurer, and Activity Chairs

CHAPTER FIVE

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN VENTURING AND EXPLORING?

Venturing requires an application process. It has members. It's Leadership Standards are determined by the BSA. Venturing has a Venture Oath and a Venture Code. There are awards and recognition in Venturing. Venturing is hobby, religious or sports outdoor based.

Exploring has rosters only. It has participants. Its Leadership Standards are determined by the participating organization. There is no oath or code. Explorers have awards and recognition. It has Career Education which makes it more careers oriented.

CHAPTER SIX

VENTURING RECOGNITION

There are three levels of National Venturing Leadership Awards for youth and adults. The Venturing Leadership Award is presented by councils, area/regions, and the BSA National Council to Venturers and adult volunteers who have made exceptional contributions to Venturing and who exemplify the Venturing Code and Oath.

There is the Venturing Advisor Award of Merit. One of the unique attributes of the Venturing program is the relationship between the Venturers and the crew Advisor. The ability to work effectively with young adults as they themselves plan and run the program is a true test of leadership skills.

The Ranger Award is available to all Venturers. The purpose of the award is to encourage Venturers to achieve high levels of outdoor skills proficiency and to provide a pathway for outdoor/high adventure skills training. Once earned, the

Ranger Award will identify a Venturer as an elite outdoorsman who is skilled at a variety of outdoor sports and interest, is trained in outdoor safety, and is ready to assist others in activities.

THE RANGER PROGRAM:

- Rangers are elite outdoorsmen
- Rangers are required to teach what they have learned to others. This is a major

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component!

- Rangers work with their advisors and consultants.

Ranger Core Requirements are:

1. Standard First Aid plus When Help is Delayed
2. Communications
3. Cooking
4. Emergency Preparedness
5. Land Navigation
6. Leave No Trace
7. Wilderness Survival
8. Conservation

RANGER ELECTIVES (Must earn 4 of 18):

- Backpacking
- Cave Exploring
- Project COPE
- Mountain Biking
- First Aid
- Fishing
- Ecology

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- Equestrian
- Hunting
- Lifesaver
- Mountaineering
- Outdoor Living History
- Physical Fitness
- Plants and Wildlife
- Scuba
- Shooting Sports
- Watercraft
- Winter Sports

Other Recognitions are the Silver Award (is the highest award in Venturing) and is equivalent to the Eagle Award in Boy Scouts. The Silver Award is available to all Venturers. Its purpose is to provide a pathway for personal development; encourage Venturers to learn, grow and serve; and recognize the high level of achievement of Venturers who acquire Venturing skills. Candidates must first achieve the Bronze Award and the Venturing Gold Award before they can achieve the Silver Award.

Like any high, worthwhile recognition, the Venturing Silver Award will be challenging and will take time to earn.

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The requirements for the Venturing Silver Award are:

- Earn one Venturing Bronze Award.
- Earn the Venturing Gold Award, which includes knowing and living the Venturing Oath, service, personal development, and 12 months tenure.
- Be proficient in emergency preparedness, including earning Standard First Aid and CPR certification, and knowing and using BSA Safe Swim Defense.
- Demonstrate leadership, including successfully completing the Venturing Leadership Skills Course.
- Participate in the Ethics in Action program, including Ethical Controversies activities and an Ethics Forum.
- Show a crew review committee you have met the requirements for the Venturing
- Silver Award.

There is also the Trust Award, Gold Award, Quest Award, the Outdoor Bronze, the Religious Life Bronze, Arts and Hobbies Bronze, Sports Bronze, Religious Award and Sea Scout Bronze Awards.

The Venturing Gold Award is designed to challenge young men and women with interests in a wide variety of Venturing activities.

The Venturing Gold requirements are:

- The candidate must have at least 12 months' tenure as an active, registered Venturer before final qualification.

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- Earn at least one Bronze Award.
- The candidate must have been an active member of the Venturing crew and served in a leadership role within the past 12 months.
- The candidate must have participated in a district, council, area, region, or national Venturing event.
- The candidate must, in consultation with the crew Advisor or a member of the crew committee, set and accomplish one personal growth goal related to each of the following areas: citizenship, leadership, service to others, community/family, outdoor experience, and total fitness (six personal growth goals).
- The candidate must plan, prepare for, and lead to completion two or more crew activity projects that relate to at least two of the following areas: citizenship, leadership, service to others, community/family, outdoor experience, and total fitness.
- The candidate must be able to recite the Venturing Oath.
- The candidate must submit three letters of recommendation to the crew Advisor that confirm he or she lives in accordance with the principles of the Venturing Oath. The letters should come from adults outside the crew, such as school or religious leaders, employers, or community leaders.

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- After completing all other requirements, the candidate should prepare evidence of completion of the work and submit it to the crew Advisor, should then appoint a review committee of four to six people including Venturers and adults. The committee should review the candidate's written presentation and interview the candidate to determine whether that person grew as a result of the pursuit of the Gold Award.
- Finally, the candidate must have qualified for the Gold Award before his or her 21st birthday.

The Gold Award is designed to recognize significant accomplishment in a Venturer's life as he or she has proven outstanding performance in a broad spectrum of activities.

There are five Bronze Awards that are available to Venturers. Bronze awards are offered to recognize Venturers who investigate new and different areas, such as sports, arts and hobbies, youth ministries, outdoors, and Sea Scouting. Venturers may earn all five awards.

The Quest Award is the sport and fitness award.

The requirements for the Quest Award are:

- Earn the Sports Bronze Award
- Complete an American Red Cross Sport Safety Training Course or equivalent

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- Complete the Fitness for Life Program
- Learn and do fitness assessments
- Sports disciplines (Choose a sport from a list provided in the Quest Handbook)

One elective is required from the following:

1. History and Heritage of Sports
2. Sports Nutrition
3. Drug-Free Sports
4. Communications
5. History and Heritage of the Disabled Sports Movement

Trust is an essential aspect of our relationship with others- both personally and corporately. Learning to trust is the challenge. Today young people live in an increasingly pluralistic society made up of multiple nationalities, cultures, and religions.

One way to work toward a safe future is to learn to get along and work together.

Understanding is a good start to trust.

While working on the Trust Award, Venturers will learn more about themselves, their communities, their religion and culture, as well as those of others. As with many other requirements throughout the Venturing Program, Venturers will be required to share what they learn with others.

The purpose of the Trust Award is:

- Help Venturers learn about their own religion and how it affects their lives.

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- Give Venturers the opportunity to pursue understanding and knowledge of cultures other than their own.
- Promote understanding and tolerance.
- Learn how to resolve conflicts both internally and externally, with positive outcomes.
- Learn about religion and culture within the context of the BSA.
- Develop highly trained Venturers who may become a training and leadership resource to dens, packs, and troops, religious organizations, the community, schools, and families.
- Provide Venturers a variety of practical, hands-on experiences while having fun.

Five requirements for the Trust Award are:

1. Tending your Faith (Learn about your own religious journey, and earn the religious emblem for your faith group).
2. Respecting the Beliefs of Others. (Learn about freedom of religion in the US and learn about religions other than your own in your community).
3. Understanding other Cultures (Learn about the historical significance of cultures in the US and study one cultural group in detail).
4. Serving your Community (Complete a community service project and learn about organizations in your community that serve youth).

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5. Transforming our Society (Learn counseling skills, conflict resolution, peace and reconciliation, and how to apply them in your own life).

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE VENTURING - THE BSA SMORGASBORD

The BSA Smorgasbord is to better serve high school – age youth by:

1. Use of retreat facilities for team building and programs
2. Literature to help with program planning
3. Awards and recognitions for youth and adults
4. Professional assistance with program planning, volunteer recruitment and finding resources
5. Five-hour extensive training for all adult leaders
6. Two-day Leadership Skills Course for all youth
7. Award-winning Youth Protection Video for youth
8. Youth Protection training for adults
9. Low-cost liability and accident insurance

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONDITIONS PROMOTING GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Every age has exciting possibilities for growth. We go through different stages of growth in our lives, and each one is crucial to our development. Adolescence is one of those vital signs.

Important things have been discovered about the growth and development that needs to happen at this time in life, things that as young people must not miss out on. When young people miss out on these kinds of things, they may become adults who are not healthy or whole. Perhaps those adults keep looking back and trying to fill the holes in their lives rather than looking forward and living full, productive lives.

What are these things that are so critical to growth and development? Young people need experiences that provide opportunities to:

- Interact with peers and acquire a sense of belonging.
- Gain experiences in decision making.
- Discuss conflicting values and formulate their own value systems.
- Reflect on self in relation to others and discover more about themselves by looking outward as well as inward, by interaction and introspection.
- Experiment with their own identity, with relationships to other people, and with ideas and try out various roles without having to commit themselves irrevocably.
- Develop a feeling of accountability in the context of a relationship among equals;

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to participate as a responsible member of a group of people.

- Cultivate a capacity to enjoy life.

Consider how many of these conditions are an essential part of Venturing. Look back at the goals of Venturing, and think about your responsibilities as a leader. They are all related to the conditions necessary for growth and development listed above.

Whenever there are people, there are challenging experiences. A challenging experience may be an interpersonal conflict or a problem that needs to be addressed. In Venturing, we have discovered that one of the most challenging experiences that a leader has is the area of delegating responsibilities. It is often hard to know when support and direction are still needed and when it is time to let go.

We are going to make this challenging experience seem easier than it really is, but we will talk about some guidelines for you to consider:

1. Keep in mind that every situation is unique and that the individuals involved are unique. You should consider each situation on its own merits.
2. If we are honest with ourselves, we are probably more aware than we would like to admit that we know when support is still needed and when it is time to let go.

Often, the problem is when not knowing the answer to this question—it is confronting ourselves and admitting that it is hard for us to give up some of our control, to step away from trying to do everything and letting someone else have the opportunity.

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3. It is important that when you delegate responsibility, you give people the opportunity to both succeed and fail. You do not step in too quickly; you truly give them the responsibility.

CHAPTER NINE

SCOUTMASTERS TAKING THE NEXT STEP

Scoutmasters need to take the next step and cross your Eagle Scouts over to Venturing. You will not be sorry. They will become a better Scout because of the Venturing experience.

Some national BSA statistics are:

- Average Boy Scout is 14 years and 1 month old
- Average Eagle Scout is 16 years and 2 months old
- Average Boy Scout attendance at summer camp is 2.8 years

Male Venturers may continue to work toward their Eagle. They must be at least a First Class earned as a Boy Scout or Varsity Scout. The requirements are the same. The Board of Review can be conducted by the Troop or Crew. If they are registered in both the troop and crew, they can receive multiple credits for many Bronze, Gold, Silver, and Ranger requirements. They must use crew leadership positions and participation.

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What does Venturing offer older Boy Scouts in your Troop? Venturing offers new advancement opportunities for boys interested in progressing beyond Eagle. It offers new, exciting awards and recognition for boys out of the advancement loop. It also provides activities with boys and girls their own age. It provides new leadership skills training for all members. Venturers give leadership to the troop through the Ranger program, and etc.

How does a Troop and a Crew work together? Scouts ages 14 to 18 and adult leaders can be members of both units; primary registration in the troop and multiple in the crew. The crew meets separately from the troop twice each month and has occasional activities with the troop and many on their own. Venturers in the troop, (especially troop leaders) are expected to participate in both units. Venturers teach and provide the program. The Troop recruits an Assistant Scoutmaster or committee member to serve as Crew Advisor. The Troop utilizes existing merit badge counselors as consultants for the Ranger Award. They utilize troop advancement chair to help conduct crew reviews for the Gold and Silver Awards. Venturers can wear distinctive uniforms and maintain the same unit number. Younger Boy Scouts think of the crew as an extension of the Troop.

Summary

What I hope this dissertation will do is to educate and then motivate Scoutmasters to the need to cross over their Eagle Scouts into Venturing. Once the Scout finishes his trail to Eagle, that it isn't the end of the trail but his beginning trail into the world of Venturing.

I have talked about this dissertation "Venturing – Scouting's Next Step" twice, once to the October 2007 Six and Twenty District Scoutmasters Roundtable and then at Troop 215 Court of Honor Meeting in November 2007. It was well received both times. The discussions educated them on what a Venturer is and what Venturing is all about. It also educated them that it is the Scoutmasters responsibility to encouraged the boy to crossover into Venturing instead of letting them drop out. Since the showing one more Venture Crew has started up along with one new Sea Scout Ship in our area. Venture Crew 215 have recruited a total of three Eagle Scouts and are continuing to grow. On February 28, 2008 history was made for Venturing in Six and Twenty District. Venture Crew 215 had three girls and two boys get their Silver Award which is the highest award in Venturing. For the girls they are the first to receive the Silver Award in the State of South Carolina and maybe the entire East Coast. For the Boys who are both Eagle Scouts they are number three and four in the State of South Carolina to receive the award since 1998.

I know this is just the beginning of many more Silver awards from Venture Crew 215 and our area. I also think with time and more education that Eagle Scout crossing over into Venturing will be just the same as Webelos Scout crossing over into Boy Scouts.

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