



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

BLACK SWAMP AREA COUNCIL

The Eagle

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What does it mean to be an Eagle Scout? How does one become an Eagle Scout? Why does it require a project? These are common questions to someone who hasn't achieved the rank of Eagle. For those very few who have reached the summit, the answers are easy. Read this story highlighting one of our own Eagle Scouts in the Black Swamp Area Council.

Conner Winslow | Troop 777 | Lima, OH



In 2014, Conner Winslow, a shy young man, joined Scouting. He wasn't sure what to think about Scouting, but he jumped right into the program by going on a weekend campout with a group of Scouts he had never met.

Throughout that weekend, Conner was quiet. He couldn't tie up his boots without help and wandered through the first day of camp wearing a t-shirt, winter coat unzipped, and no hat or gloves, even though he had it all packed with his gear. After the weekend, no one expected him to return - including his parents. To everyone's surprise, he enjoyed it, and showed up to the next Troop meeting!

This was his first step in what would be the start of his Scouting journey. Over the next 5 years, Conner hovered on the edge of the Troop, unsure if he really wanted to fully engage. There was doubt he would make it. However, with continuous encouragement, Conner began to get more involved and kept showing up. He slowly completed requirements, inching closer and closer to the other Scouts. Over time, each event he attended helped him gain confidence in and outside of Scouting.

While Scouting did not come easy to Conner, with the help and encouragement from many, he reached Life Rank. This is a rank that is tough to move beyond for many Scouts. While Conner had his own unique ways of learning, he never allowed this to stop him. The Scoutmaster and fellow Scouts never let him give up, even when things were tough and he wanted to give up. This

was proven true when he was faced with looking up the mountain of an intimidating Eagle Scout project. Conner was tired and said he was done with Scouting. After a long conversation with his Scoutmaster, discussing all he had accomplished and learned through Scouting, his Scoutmaster said to Conner, "You are not going to do this for me or anyone else, you are going to do this for you."

After 5 years, in early 2019, Conner finished his last merit badges and started to tackle climbing the intimidating mountain towards his Eagle project. Conner had stepped out of his comfort zone many times in his scouting journey, but his Eagle project would be his biggest challenge during his journey. An Eagle Scout project is essentially creating, leading, executing and completing a strategic plan. With the help and guidance of many, the young man who once couldn't tie his own boots, faced the challenge and completed something, he thought he could never do.

Conner, a once shy young man conquered through what he thought would only ever be a dream, and successfully completed his Eagle Scout Board of Review on December 10th, 2019. Conner is a great example that every young man or woman who enters their own Scouting journey will learn and experience things they would most likely otherwise might not. Scouting can challenge, encourage, open doors, push comfort zones, and instill lifelong values. These values help shape each young individual to be a better part of not only their communities but their families as well.

Conner's story exemplifies what Scouting can do for so many young individuals, by changing their lives for the better.

If you have a Black Swamp Area Council Scouting story to share, please contact Jim Mason at Jim.Mason@scouting.org