

“Eagle Scouts Association of the Philippines”

The Relevance of this Association

The history of the Eagle Scouts Association of the Philippines (ESAP) is one that has never been officially recorded. Popular history dictates that it was first founded in 1991 during the 12th Asia Pacific Jamboree (9th National BSP Jamboree) in Mt. Makiling, Los Baños, Laguna as the Citizen Award, Rizal, and Eagle Scouts (CARES) National Association.¹ Several pockets of council chapters were formed but the association never really took off. There were no records of any charters or articles of incorporation, only conclaves during National Jamborees out of convenience.

An Eagle Scout conclave held during the Philippine Centennial Scout Jamboree in 1998 dissolved CARES and created ESAP and national officers were elected by those present.

Not Even a Tenderfoot Association

Looking into the last 17 years of history, it begs the question of why nothing notable was accomplished. Someone would easily assume that an association made up of Eagle Scouts—the cream of the Scouting crop—is bound to achieve great things. But in contrast to this notion, the association barely ratified its Constitution and Bylaws in 2005 and held its first ever General Assembly in 2008.

People may argue that these two things are milestones worthy of notation. However, if you look at it like a Scout we are already 17 years old and we have only achieved the Membership Badge Requirements (Constitution and Bylaws) and our Investiture (first General Assembly). We have not even reached the rank of Tenderfoot and we will be aged out in 2009 (18th year from 1991). So in the great scheme of things, what have we achieved?

Lacking Original Purpose

An association lives for its purpose. But it is difficult to determine the purpose of ESAP if it was never written down before. For the last 14 years ESAP was an association for the sake of an association lacking that meaningful purpose for it to thrive. Purpose was brought to the association in 2005 when the set of officers led by National President Chito Morante drafted the first Constitution and Bylaws and had it ratified by the membership during a BSP National Jamboree.

Reading through the National Constitution and Bylaws will reveal that the purpose of the association includes promoting the BSP's advancement program and encouraging Scouts to attain the Eagle Scout, encourage former Scouts to be adult leaders, and harness the potentials of Scouts.² All of which are subset to the BSP's overall purpose.³

Although these purposes are lofty and can be said to be well in line with the purposes of the BSP, creating ESAP to mimic BSP's role brings the question of why is ESAP even needed. If

¹ (Esquillo)

² (Philippines, 2005)

³ (Philippines, 1992)

an individual is able to achieve a purpose by joining the first association (the BSP), the individual will find no need to join the second association (ESAP). ESAP's purpose should not be limited to a subset of BSP's purpose and should include serving the needs of its members—the Eagle Scout. Doing so creates original purpose that cannot be duplicated by any other association and ensures its continued relevance as an association.

Taking the Blinders Off

It is quite surprising how fellow Eagle Scouts have a limited view of what our purpose should be as an association. I find myself in arguments (friendly ones, but arguments nonetheless) trying to propose an expansion of our role and explaining the view point that an Eagle Scout is not obligated to become an adult leader in Scouting as a sort of a notion of “giving back” to Scouting. But don't get it wrong, no one can be more qualified than an Eagle Scout becoming an adult leader in Scouting, but becoming one is not everyone's calling, much like anyone can be baptized but not everyone can be a priest.

An Eagle Scout is not just a leader in Scouting; he is a leader in life. A limited view of the Eagle Scout keeps us chained in our birdcage and prevents us from the overall purpose of the BSP: “to promote...the ability of boys to do useful things for themselves and others”.⁴ It is important to know that the purpose is about “others” and not “others in Scouting”. Graduating boys to become Eagle Scout is the first step towards the BSP's purpose and in the overall scheme of things the only way to measure the success of BSP is by looking into the life achievement of an Eagle Scout.

Let us all stop having this limited view of the Eagle Scout and start accepting the fact that BSP trained us to be out to make an example of our principles and leadership abilities. Being out there promotes the BSP's program more to others compared to keeping ourselves cooped-up within our Troops.

Expanding Our Purpose

The association's purpose should extend to a more supportive role of the BSP and to seek out objectives not currently served by the BSP or any other auxiliary organizations. Doing so enables the association to become distinct and provide value to its membership.

The association should first and foremost seek to serve its membership. These services can be as simple as verification service of a member's Eagle Scout or facilitating the request of duplicate credentials. Such member-service must be intrinsic to an association. Similar to the three duties of a Scout embodied by the Scout Oath, the “Duty to Self” holds importance among “Duty to God” and “Duty to Country and Others”. Equally it is important for ESAP to realize its duties to various aspects of its identity.

Second, instead of directing members to serve in Scouting as adult leaders, the association should focus on indirect channels to get members involved. These indirect channels could be a fund to provide international Jamboree scholarships or college scholarships where members can pledge regular contributions. It could be in the form of a “re-orientation” brochure or literature to assist members who wants to be adult leaders of BSP but don't know where and how to start. It could also be direct recognition of scout leaders, Eagle or not, who has been nominated by a certain number of Eagle Scouts for directly assisting them

⁴ (Philippines, 1992)

in earning the rank. All these indirect channels and more help in the support of BSP's role without having to alienate our membership or placing the burden of an obligation on their shoulders to directly serve the BSP.

Third, the association should create non-competitive recognitions. Individuals may be recognized on their own merit for lifetime achievements in various aspects of their lives outside of Scouting through the "Distinguished Eagle Scout Award". Chapters may be recognized as "Quality Chapters" for accomplishing a number of service projects during the previous year.

Lastly, the association must create public awareness and educate the public of the existence the Eagle Scout. The association should create a publicity engine to get our names, activities, and achievements on national and local media. Positive publicity elevates our collective status as Eagle Scouts that other people, colleges, and employers will hold at high esteem.

Hopefully all these expansion of our purpose and indirect involvement becomes a self-fulfilling vision of supporting the role of the BSP using the basic idea of power in numbers.

Are We Relevant?

At the end of the day, we ask this question of ourselves – Have we been relevant as an association? For this question answers whether we, as an association, have been successful or simply fooling ourselves to justify our existence as a group. What make us as relevant as the Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP)? What makes us more or equally relevant to Scouting compared to other auxiliary associations such as the Ten Outstanding Boy Scouts of the Philippines Association (TOBSPA)?

To you my friend I leave this question.

Bibliography

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Appendix: Sample Recognition Requirements

The following are suggested recognition requirements for the purpose of providing an idea and spark conversation. These are not official recognition given by the Eagle Scouts Association of the Philippines.

The Convocation of Eagles Award

The award was specifically designed to be earned easily and to provide early recognition those who are starting to become the movers of the advancement program in the field. The idea is to allow the Eagle Scouts themselves identify the people they attribute to have helped them achieve their ranks.

Award Type

- A certificate signed by the National President.

Eligibility

- Past or present adult Scout leader, regardless of BSP registration status.

Criteria

- Receive the petition of at least ten-(10) Eagle Scouts attesting that the Scout leader has directly assisted each of the petitioning Eagle Scout achieve the rank.

Quality Chapter Award

The award is designed to be an annual award given out to the chapter during the association's National Assembly or Conclave. The award seeks to encourage chapters to be consciously performing actions and projects deemed to be part of its normal operation.

Award Type

- A plaque or certificate signed by the National President.

Eligibility

- Must be a recognized chapter of the Eagle Scouts Association of the Philippines.

Criteria

The following must be completed by the chapter within the same calendar year to earn the Quality Chapter Award:

- Complete and document at least two-(2) service projects within the chapter's area of coverage.
- Conduct a chapter annual meeting, conduct official chapter business, and record the minutes of the meeting.

- Hold at least six-(6) meetings of the chapter officers and record the minutes of the meeting.
- Submit chapter registration and annual dues on time.
- Do at least two-(2) of the following:
 - Increase chapter endowment at least P100,000 or 10%, whichever is greater.
 - Increase chapter membership at least 20% compared to last year.
 - Be a sponsor and provide leadership for at least two-(2) council activities.
 - Complete and document at least two-(2) additional service projects within the chapter's area of coverage.
 - Successfully provide media attention at least two-(2) of the chapter's activities or initiatives.

Distinguished Eagle Scout Award

The award is designed to be the highest honor given by the association to an Eagle Scout, regardless of their membership to the association. It recognizes the distinguished accomplishments of an Eagle Scout beyond Scouting⁵. No more than 1 award for every 1,000 association member per calendar year.

Award Type

- A wall plaque signed by the National President;
- A pin device to be worn on the Eagle Award ribbon; and
- A medal worn around the neck.

Eligibility

- Must have held the highest rank of Eagle Scout, Rizal Scout, or Scout Citizen for at least 25 years; and
- Must be any one-(1) of the following:
 - An Eagle Scout, Rizal Scout, or Scout Citizen of the Boy Scouts of the Philippines; OR
 - An Eagle Scout of the Boy Scouts of America that is of Filipino lineage or nationality; OR
 - An awardee of the highest Scout award of a National Scout Association that is of Filipino lineage or nationality.

Criteria

- Must have significant contribution and highly notable achievements in his professional career; and
- Must have continued involvement and contribution to volunteer organizations; Involvement with Scouting as adult leader is not necessary.
- Majority vote of the ESAP National Executive Board.

⁵ It is important that the recognition is for accomplishment outside of Scouting. Any accomplishments within the realms of Scouting are already recognized by the Boy Scouts of the Philippines and needs no additional recognition. Accomplishments outside Scouting include their professional careers and continued volunteerism to other civic organizations among others.