

## The Eagle Scout Service Project - & - The Beneficiary

While you consider the various kinds of projects you can do, you must also consider who will be the beneficiary of your effort. The requirement calls for you to complete a project: for any religious institution, any school, or your community.

The dictionary defines "beneficiary" as "one that benefits from something," in this case "one that benefits from your efforts." To eliminate your only three negatives:

- Projects may not be performed for the Boy Scouts of America, or its councils, districts, units, or properties.
- Projects may not be of a commercial nature or for a business.
- A project may not be a fundraiser - even for a worthwhile charity.

"Any religious institution" could be yours, perhaps your charter organization, maybe a church or synagogue in your area that might be in need or one that is not too close to you. "Any school" could be one you know well. It might be your Elementary, Middle or your High school or possibly a private or parochial school in your area or maybe one farther away. "Your community" might reference a service organization in your specific neighborhood, or Town or City or some community area farther away: maybe a community association in need, perhaps a project for the local Lions Club, Boys Club or Girl Scouts.

If you have been listening closely, you must be wondering if this information could be presented in a less vague and less confusing manner – but there is additional clarification:

- While projects may not be performed for the Boy Scouts
  - Any non-Boy Scout service organization can benefit from your effort, including the Girl Scouts.
- While projects may not be of a commercial nature or for a business
  - This is not meant to disallow work for community institutions, such as museums and service agencies (like homes for the elderly, for example).
  - The project beneficiary need not be a registered nonprofit.
- While a project may not be a fundraiser - even for a worthwhile charity
  - Funding is being raised on behalf of the project beneficiary.
  - The project beneficiary will retain leftover funds.

As for the ever-expanding community, the Boy Scouts of America has recently redefined "your community" to include the "community of the world." The world may seem a bit too large to consider, however, Eagle Scout Leadership Service Projects from Baltimore Area Council have:

- Established a prayer garden at a catholic high school in Connecticut.
- Built a playground in Russia.

Additionally you may consider scenarios in which an individual in need can affect a community. It then becomes a task to identify a source representing the "community" who will provide approvals. It might be someone representing a neighborhood association, watch group, homeowners association, or perhaps a division of a town or county.

Project ideas can be found almost anywhere: on internet, in newsletters, magazines and during casual conversations with friends or family. Finding a couple of ideas might be reasonably easy, but finding a Beneficiary that is willing to work with you under this new and improved structure might prove more difficult. This process is more structured than the former handshake and final signature. As with the previous Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project proposals, your beneficiary must approve your proposal before you start. Additionally, your project Beneficiary:

- Is not required to provide or offer any financial support for the project

- Must agree to provide documentation for any gifts of money or materials provided for the project
- Must agree to provide receipts to donors as needed
- May ask or be asked to deposit and dispense project funds
- Has the authority to stop work on an approved project

You are encouraged to work with your Eagle Scout Service Project Coach to identify a viable project concept for a reasonable beneficiary. Your Coach should be able to help you understand how to establish and maintain a healthy working relationship with your beneficiary representative to minimize misunderstandings. Your project planning may indicate you need to negotiate additional cooperation or concessions from the beneficiary, such as:

- Assistance securing permits in the name of the organization
- Secure storage space for tools or materials
- Access to restroom facilities
- Use of trash containers
- A responsible person to sign agreements or receive shipments

In a reverse of this thought, your beneficiary may wish to negotiate (or renegotiate) concessions that have not been considered viable in the past. Routine labor is not normally considered appropriate for a project, but the real test has to do with the scale and impact of the project. If 'routine labor' is conducted on such a large scale that it requires planning, development, and leadership, it may have sufficient impact to be acceptable - because there is no requirement a project must have lasting value, just value to the beneficiary. Your limitations include:

- Scouting activities may not include activities for youth that, by law, they would not be allowed to do in a workplace.
- Anyone under 18 who uses any power tool of any size must be supervised by a mature adult experienced in the use of the (specific) tool.
- There are limits in the use of hazardous power tools, machinery, and equipment.
- There are also limitations when working at heights or on ladders, and on driving motor vehicles.
- Projects are considered part of a unit's program and are treated as such with regard to policies, procedures, and requirements regarding Youth Protection, two-deep leadership, etc.

Before finalizing an agreement with a beneficiary, you and the beneficiary need to understand any insurance liability limits and concerns with working on a project on the beneficiary's property. You cannot assume the beneficiary's property provides coverage for your workers. Additionally, you cannot allow the beneficiary to assume you, your unit or Boy Scouts of America will provide overriding insurance for them. Insurance considerations as follows:

- Registered Scouts and Leaders are provided primary coverage on Official Scouting activities.
- Unregistered adults participating in a Scouting activity are provided coverage in excess of their personal insurance.
- In some cases chartered organizations might provide insurance, but this must not be assumed.