



Dear Boy Scouts of America Community,

I am very pleased to announce the **Building Evidence in Scouting Together (BEST) study**, which will help explore and describe the Scouting experience and how it develops character for both adult volunteers and youth in Scouting. This national study is funded by a generous grant from the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation. Through this study, the BSA will have access to essential feedback from a select sample of Scouts, Scoutmasters, and Assistant Scoutmasters. This feedback will help us improve ongoing support and training for all in the organization.

The BSA, the Institute for Research on Youth Thriving and Evaluation (RYTE) at Montclair State University, and the American Institutes for Research are collaborating to conduct the study. Approximately 2,500 Scout troops have been randomly selected to participate in the study. If your troop has been selected, the research team will be reaching out to the troop's Scoutmaster and potentially other contacts to confirm troop contact information. The troop Scoutmasters will receive an informational packet and will be asked to help recruit Scouts and Assistant Scoutmasters to also participate in the study.

The research team will administer surveys, observe select BSA trainings, and conduct phone interviews with some Scoutmasters, Assistant Scoutmasters and individual Scouts. I encourage you to participate in this exciting opportunity if you are selected. The results of this study will help us to understand how the BSA builds youth character and provide us with the information to make our programming even better. I look forward to sharing some results of the study throughout the process.

Yours in Scouting,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael B. Surbaugh".

Michael B. Surbaugh
Chief Scout Executive

