

MERIT BADGE COUNSELING

The Merit Badge program is a vital element of Scouting and counselors play an important role in helping Scouts earn Merit Badges. The twelve Eagle-required Merit Badges represent exposure to, and knowledge of, certain skills and the core values expected of an Eagle Scout. The other Merit Badges could be the learning of a specific skill or sparking interest in a field that could go on to become a lifelong hobby or even a career choice.

Becoming a Merit Badge Counselor requires the following:

- 1) Completion of the BSA Adult Leader Application. The position code is "42" and there is no registration fee.
- 2) Completion of the Merit Badge Counselor Application (available in the "PDF Forms" link on the District website.

No special training in a particular Merit Badge subject is required. Familiarity with the subject (as a hobbyist) or having a strong interest in the subject is all that's necessary. When working with a Scout to review completed requirements, it is important to remember the phrase "no more, no less." Requirements often tell the Scout to "discuss," "show," or "demonstrate." That is exactly what the requirement means. Demanding more or accepting less is not appropriate. When working with youth, Counselors are expected to have completed Youth Protection Training.

ASM Alan-Michael Graves of Troop 621 is the North Star District's Dean of Merit Badges. ASM Joseph Lightfoot (also of Troop 621) and ASM Graves have spent countless hours in updating the District's Master Merit Badge Counselor list. Questions about counseling and submitting applications should be directed to them.

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