

The Osaki Family Story: Why we honored our son with a James E West Fellowship

Join with us in securing Scouting's future. A few years ago, I was at Schoepe Scout Reservation at Lost Valley, serving as a volunteer leader. While I was there, I had the chance to meet a Life Scout who had just completed a ride on the camp's zip line. His challenge in riding the zip line was that he was paralyzed from the waist down, but that did not slow him down what so ever. Moments earlier, he had been strapped into a harness by the zip line counselors and I watched in amazement as he "flew" across the sky shouting with excitement. After we talked a bit about my interest in his plans to earn his Eagle Scout rank, he quickly changed the discussion to what was important to him: becoming a summer camp counselor at Lost Valley, so he could "help other Scouts to have the same extraordinary experience" just like he had. I don't know who was more inspired at that moment, *him or me*.

Being involved parents, my wife, Sandy, and I have witnessed first-hand how Scouting provides diverse and unique opportunities for developing leadership, teamwork, good judgment, and also offers a wide path of adventure for youth without regard to their individual abilities or backgrounds. Scouting programs enable the relative strengths in boys to grow and shine. The example of this outstanding young man is just one of many I've witnessed that demonstrates how Scouting inspires our youth to develop their potential.

Our son, Trevor, who became an Eagle Scout in 2010, has grown into a confident and responsible young man before our eyes. Boy Scouts has played a key role in who he has become and will be in the future – and his future looks bright. During his six-year tenure in Boy Scouts, Trevor has learned life skills that will enable him to make good decisions as an adult: leading groups, public speaking, project management and life saving techniques. His Scouting adventures have stretched to all corners of the U.S. and include aviation, fly fishing, high country backpacking, and white water kayaking. But his experiences have also developed his intellect and sense of citizenship. With the support of the Orange County Council, Trevor was able to complete a significant conservation project, which led to being awarded one of the most significant conservation awards in the U.S., the *William T. Hornaday Award for Distinguished Service in Conservation*. Like his Eagle Scout rank, this award will forever be associated with his achievements.

The Boy Scouts of America also provides a co-ed program for youth ages 14-20, called Venturing. My daughter, Jennifer, is a member of a Venture Crew, which significantly expands the outdoor activities and skill-building offerings available to her. As part of her Venture Crew activities, she completed the BSA Lifeguard Award, learning lifesaving techniques and how to use sound judgment in a life threatening situation. It boosted her confidence level to an all-time high.

Sandy and I strive to help others by supporting causes important to us. Yet, like many others, we have become more selective as to where we direct our financial resources in this challenging economy. By investing in the Council's James E. West Fellowship endowment program, we create our own legacy of being stewards of the Boy Scout program that provides many unique opportunities for our youth to develop important life skills. Most Scouting families, like ours, give to the annual program budget of the Council through the Friends of Scouting campaign, and we believe that's important. But we feel it is equally important that we think about the future of Scouting...now. That's why our family has contributed multiple times to the James E. West Fellowship, in the names of our family and children.

It is with great pleasure that Sandy and I ask you to join us by becoming a James E. West Fellow and help preserve and improve Scouting programs that are vital to our youth – *now and into the future.*

Charlie Osaki, Scout Parent