



5-STAR UNIT RECOGNITION PROGRAM

By Three Fires Council Commissioner Brian Caputo

The Three Fires Council is implementing an exciting new program to recognize its highest functioning units: the 5-Star Unit Recognition Program. This program replaces the Journey to Excellence Program, which Scouting America retired at the end of 2024.

The 5-Star Unit Recognition Program will recognize units that have achieved all five unit metrics on October 31, 2026, and have renewed their charters on time. The unit metrics are:

1. Adult Leader Training
2. Outdoor Activities
3. Youth Rank Advancement
4. Unit Size
5. Unit Growth

Detailed information about the unit metrics may be found at <https://www.scouting.org/commissioners/connections/> under “Unit Connection Guides.” To achieve the growth metric, a unit must have year-over-year growth in youth membership. Each unit’s membership on October 31, 2026, will be compared to its membership on October 31, 2025 (as updated in My.Scouting in November 2025 and yellow-highlighted in the chart [HERE](#).)

Units achieving five-star status will receive the following recognition:



Scouting America

Three Fires Council

1. Certificate. The certificate will be presented by a senior Scouting official, typically a commissioner.
2. Distinctive graphic for unit social media.
3. Distinctive council shoulder patch. The patch will be available for purchase from the Norris Service Center with the submission of a completed unit order form and payment. The patch may be displayed by youth and adult leaders in the unit as long as the unit maintains five-star status on successive annual assessment dates.
4. Feature article in *The Flame* discussing the practices of the unit leading to its success. The spirit of the article will be to share best practices in unit administration and operations.

Units need not apply for five-star recognition. The council will identify 5-Star Units and notify them of their achievement. However, a unit can monitor its unit metric status on its dashboard in My.Scouting.

Because Scouting America is in transition to a universal system of unit renewal on the last day of February, the next assessment for the Three Fires Council 5-Star Unit Recognition Program will be on February 29, 2028.

Questions concerning the 5-Star Unit Recognition Program should be directed to your District Commissioner or Council Commissioner Brian Caputo at caputobw@gmail.com or (630) 675-0624.

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