

Religious Relationships Committee

Developing Council Programs

A Presentation for Council Scout Executives and Council
Executive Boards

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On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

The first thing a Scout pledges is his or her Duty to God.

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In May, 2018, the National Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America stated: “... the commitment of the movement to Duty to God is unwavering” and reaffirmed “... its unequivocal commitment to the Declaration of Religious Principle as a fundamental component of the mission of the Boy Scouts of America.”

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Declaration of Religious Principle

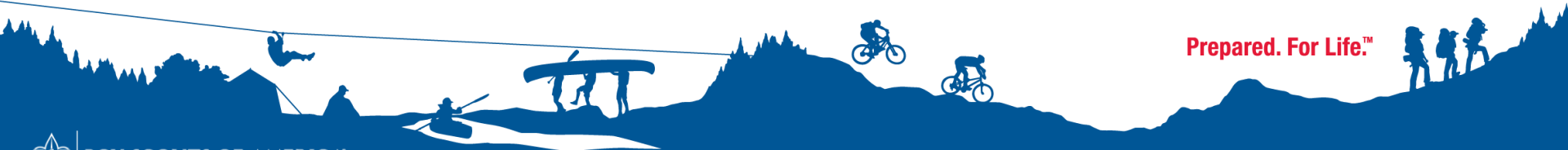
The BSA maintains that no member can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing an obligation to God.... The recognition of God is necessary to the best type of citizenship and is a wholesome precept in the education of the growing members. No matter what the religious faith of the members may be, this fundamental need for good citizenship should be kept before them. The Boy Scouts of America therefore recognizes the religious element in the training of the members, but it is absolutely nonsectarian in the attitude toward that religious training. Its policy is that the home and the organization or group with which the member is connected shall give definite attention to religious life.

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A Religious Relationships Committee can help a Council support their Scouts' Duty to God

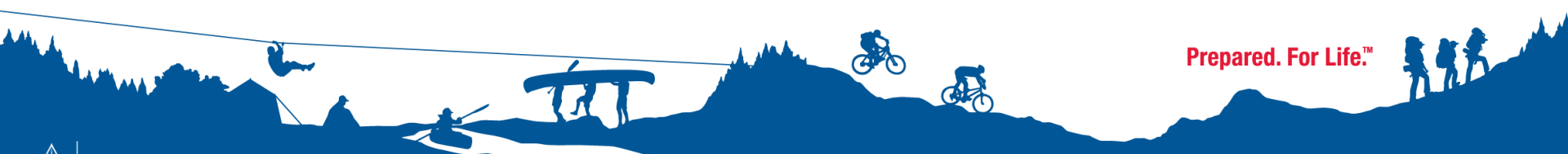


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The purpose of a Religious Relationships Committee is to help Scouting expand opportunities for children, youth, adults, and families within the Council to expand their faith and learn about others' faiths through local religious organizations.



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Said another way, the Committee should cooperate with the Council in its effort to fulfill Scouting’s belief “that no member can grow into the best kind of citizen without recognizing an obligation to God.”

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How Can a Religious Relationships Committee Help a Council?

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A Religious Relationships Committee Can

- **Promote Charter Organization relationships with faith-based organizations.**
- **Help youth and adult members to grow in their faith and to respect others' religious traditions as part of their Scouting journey.**
- **Use Universities of Scouting and other training events to increase awareness of the available age-appropriate religious emblems for youth members and recognize youth who receive those religious emblems.**

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A Religious Relationships Committee Can

- **Bring added emphasis to the observance of Scout Sunday, Scout Sabbath, Scout Jumuah, and other Scout religious observances such as hikes to places of worship, faith based retreats and religious emblem workshops.**
- **Recruit, train and provide Chaplains for Council camps, as well as scheduled religious services for Council and District events.**
- **Represent the religious diversity of the Council.**

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Steps to Form a Religious Relationships Committee

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Recruit/Assign Key Leadership

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Relationships Leadership Team

Vice President for Relationships
(Member of Executive Board)

Relationships Staff Advisor
(Advisor to Relationships Committee)

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Identify and Recruit a Vice President for Relationships

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The Person Selected as the Vice President for Relationships should be Someone Who:

- Knows and is active in Scouting
- Is able to connect with multiple local Faith Groups
- Has good leadership skills

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Assign a Senior Professional to the role of Relationships Staff Advisor

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Relationships Staff Advisor

**If the relationship to
Chartered Partners is a
Council priority, the
professional selected should
make it a major priority.**

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Committee membership should represent the religious diversity of the Council

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Where Can Committee Members Be Found

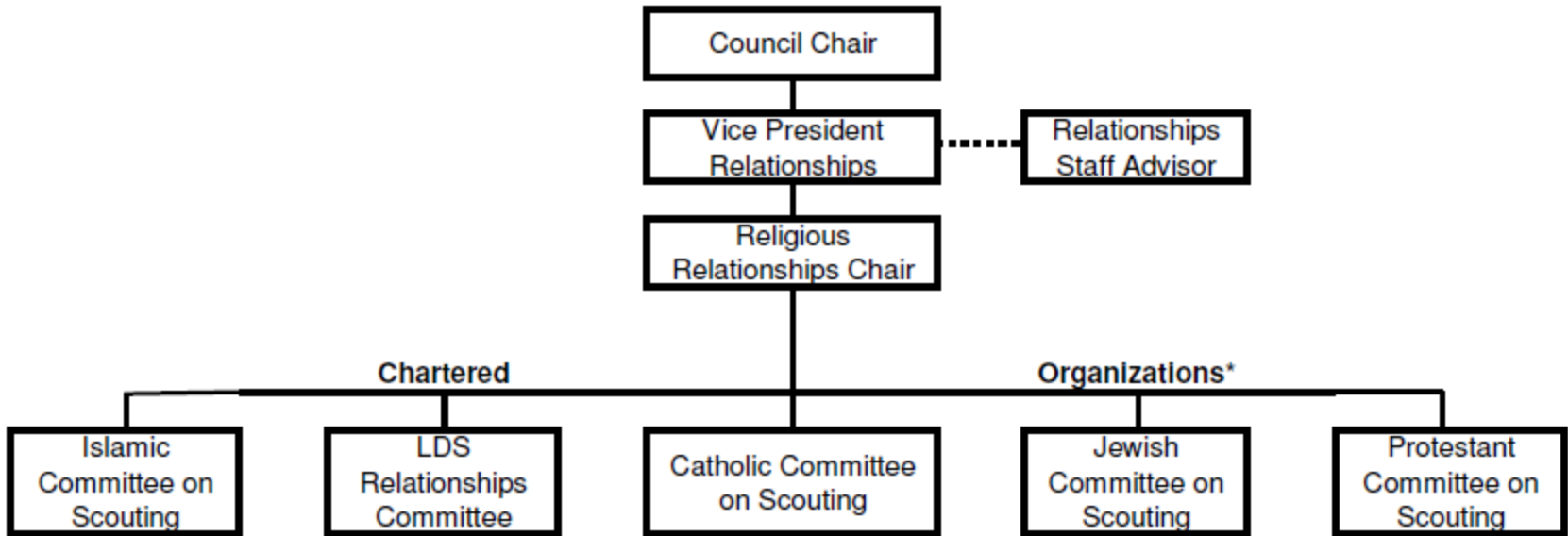
- **Incorporate Existing Denominational Relationships Committees**
- **Invite representatives from all faith based charter partners in Council to join committee**
- **Recruit from Local Recipients of Adult Religious Awards**
- **Seek Referrals from Local Faith Group Leadership**
- **Try to broaden Faith Groups being served by Scouting**
- **Contact Ministerial Alliances or Community Church Consortiums**

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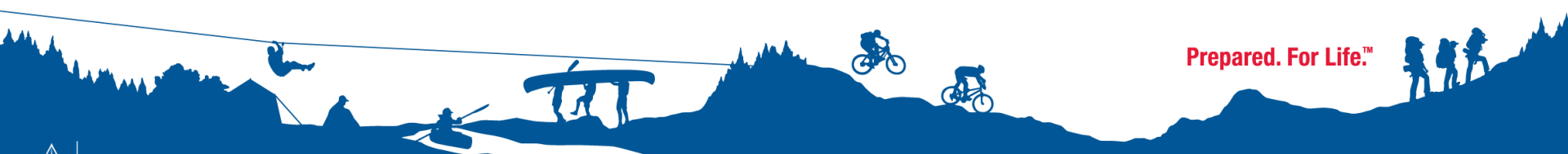




What Can a Religious Relationships Committee Look Like



*The makeup of the Committee should be reflective of Faith-Based Organizations within the Council



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Establish a Committee Action Plan

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Committee Action Plan

- **Select potential Charter Partners for unit growth and assign resources**
- **Select Committee Activities**
- **Encourage religious celebrations**
- **Encourage use of youth religious emblems including identification of a Council Religious Emblems Coordinator**

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What happens when a Council makes relationships a priority?

In 2015 Orange County (CA) Council

- Contacted and visited over 80 new unit prospects, met with over 60 potential chartered partner decision makers and started 24 new, sustainable units
- Trained 97 Chartered Organization Representatives

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Monmouth Council (NJ)

- 80-100 youth religious emblems earned each year
- Hosts Shomer Shabbat camp each summer for Jewish youth needing Kosher food and services daily
- Helped start or revive 6 Packs, 8 Troops, 4 Crews resulting in 10% Cub Scout growth and 15% Boy Scout growth
- Help refurbish existing chapels at camps
- Hosts annual faith based hike

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National Capital Area Council (DC)

- Religious Emblems Workshops
- Boy Scouts merit badge workshop for LDS
- Wood badge session on Religious Emblems and a LDS friendly course.
- Cub scout training Sabbath Friendly
- Jewish/Muslim Camporee/Derby/Regatta
- New or Revived Units: Packs 2, Troops 4, Crews 1 with trained leaders

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Resources

- **Chartered Organization Resource Guide (522-925CD)**
- **Unit Performance Guide (522-025)**
- **Chaplain/Chaplain Aide Training**
<https://www.scouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Chaplain-Training-V-4-04042018.pdf>
- **BSA Duty To God Brochure:**
https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-879_WB.pdf

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Resources continued

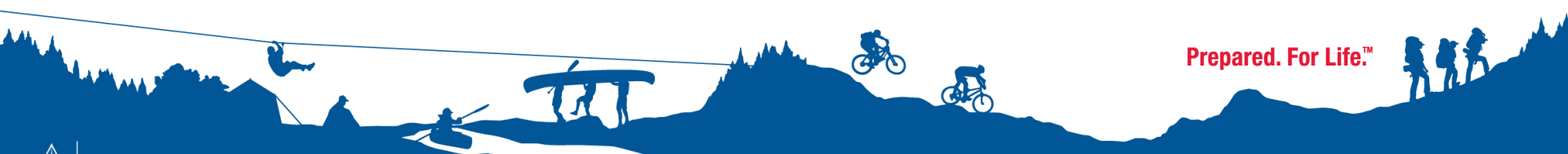
- **BSA Religious Awards Info:**
<https://www.scouting.org/awards/religious-awards/>
- **Getting a Religious Awards Program Started:**
<https://www.scouting.org/awards/religious-awards/getstarted/>

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Questions/Comments

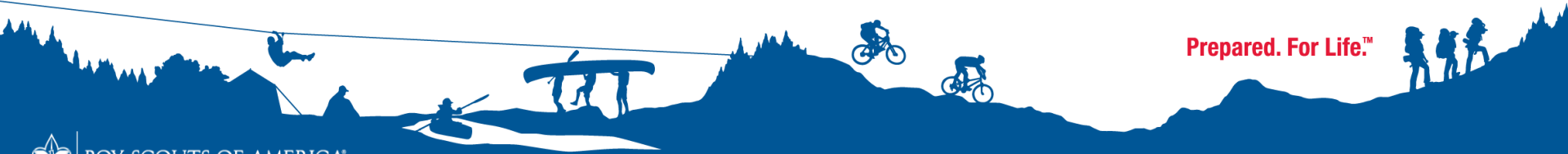


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Backup Slide



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The BSA has Partnered with many Religious Organizations

- More than thirty Faith Traditions have Youth Religious Emblems and Adult Awards ([Charter Partners with Religious Awards Available Through PRAY](#))
- More than twenty-five Faith Traditions have signed Memoranda of Understanding with the BSA: <https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/new-unit-development/chartered-organizations/religious-chartered-organizations/>

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