

2026 NATIONAL RECRUITMENT

LOCAL COUNCIL ACTIVATION PLAYBOOK

May 2026

Scouting  America™



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2026 Scouting America recruitment season! We hope you are as excited about the momentum our movement has experienced in the last three years as we are.

The energy and impact of Scouting America's 2024 and 2025 fall recruitment seasons was nothing short of remarkable. Across the country, local councils welcomed new families and inspired a new generation of Scouts — kids who, for the first time, put on their neckerchiefs, tried something new and began their journey.

Thanks to your hard work, creativity and passion, we've set a new standard for what is possible. And this year, we're poised to reach even greater heights together.

This playbook will evolve over time, serving as a central resource to empower every local council with the tools, strategies and inspiration needed to connect with families and showcase why all youth should consider Scouting America.

Our mission is to spark curiosity, build excitement and make it easier than ever for communities to say "yes" to Scouting. Our objective is simple but powerful.

To support you in your effort to make Scouting America visible, relevant and irresistible in your community. When we combine national momentum with local passion and creativity, there is no limit to how many new families we can welcome this season.



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TARGET AUDIENCES



Recruitment success is driven in large part by consistently sharing highly compelling messages that resonate on a personal level with families.

Here's a closer look at who we're trying to reach this recruitment season, their lifestyles and emotional motivations and **how we'll make meaningful connections with them.**



PARENTS / CAREGIVERS OF KIDS (AGES 5-10)

Moms. Today's mothers are multifaceted caregivers and leaders. Their experiences, whether navigating the early stages of parenthood or adapting to new professional roles, influence their approach to raising children. They are committed to fostering confidence, resilience, and a strong sense of connection in the next generation.

Dads. Today's dads are more hands-on and emotionally engaged than ever. They're eager for quality time and skill-building with their kids.

Hispanic and Multicultural Families.

Hispanic parents place a strong emphasis on family/community and want their children to be part of activities that align with their cultural values. They emphasize community and growth and see Scouting as a natural extension of their hopes for their children.



KIDS (AGES 5-10)

**Kids who are bursting
with curiosity and ready for action.**

They're drawn to the fun of trying new things, the excitement of outdoor adventures, the joy of making friends and the pride of being a part of Scouting.



COMMUNITY INFLUENCERS

Teachers, coaches, faith leaders and local business owners are the trusted voices families and kids turn to outside the home. They see kids' potential every day — and understand when a child needs connection, confidence or a positive path forward. These influencers can open the door to Scouting by sharing the opportunity and vouching for its lifelong impact.



MEDIA & LOCAL LEADERS

Local journalists, TV hosts and opinion leaders can help amplify our story. They have the platform and credibility to bring even more families into the fold.

When we speak directly to these audiences — honoring their dreams, answering their needs and inviting them into something bigger — we create the spark that leads to membership, lifelong memories and a stronger, more connected community.

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KEY CAMPAIGN MESSAGING & CREATIVE PLATFORM





WHY WE DEVELOP MASTER MESSAGING

Clear, compelling messages are among the most powerful tools we have to inspire families, motivate kids and rally our communities to become a part of our movement. Every word and every story we share should be intentional, unified and designed to resonate deeply with our target audiences.

Consistency and repetition are not just important — they are essential. Research has shown that most people need to hear a message **at least 7 to 12 times** before it truly sinks in and motivates them to take action. This is known as the “effective frequency” principle in marketing and communications. In a world overflowing with information and distractions, repetition is what transforms our message from background noise into a call to adventure that parents and kids can’t ignore.

- According to the marketing “Rule of Seven,” a prospective customer (or in our case, a parent or future Scout) needs to encounter your message at least 7 times before they’ll consider taking action.
- More recent studies in digital media suggest that with today’s crowded channels, it often takes 10–12 exposures for a message to break through and drive behavior change.
- Consistent, repeated messaging across multiple platforms — social media, school flyers, community events, earned media and word-of-mouth — reinforces our campaign and helps families remember not just the “what” of Scouting, but the “why.”

That’s why it is so vital for Scouting America to speak from one voice, especially during our key recruiting period — and that voice includes every part of our organization.

While the creative platform for the 2026 Fall Recruitment campaign is in development, here are some compelling hero messages to drive recruitment.

Core Scouting America Recruiting Messages

- **For more than a century, Scouting America has provided the nation's foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training, helping young people be "Prepared. For Life.®"**
- **Scouting America stands out as a true partner to families, teaching young people the life skills needed to navigate the world in fun, interactive, and adventurous ways.**
 - Scouting provides endless opportunities for skill development and relationship building from which all youth can benefit.
- **Parents who are unfamiliar with—or have misperceptions about—Scouting might assume that it's all camping, fishing and hiking. It is that and much more.**
 - Scouting focuses on skills that range from essentials in self-sufficiency and kindness learned early-on in Cub Scouts to advanced skills like rocketry, robotics and coding learned as they progress.
- **Cub Scouts encourages kids to make friends, be helpful to others, and do their best no matter the outcome. And starting early is key.**
 - With the help of powerful learning projects and exciting outdoor activities, Scouting teaches children that doing their best can be a fun and rewarding experience—no matter the difficulty of the challenge.
- **Scouting has some of the most vigorous safety measures in place of any youth-serving organization.**
 - Scouting aims to ensure families know their children will be safe, whether their child is attending a weekly Cub Scout meeting, going on a weekend campout, or attending the National Jamboree with thousands of other Scouts.
- **Scouting America is committed to providing a welcoming, safe environment where Scouts can freely express themselves, share their experiences, and become the best version of themselves by learning from, and respecting, each other.**
 - Scouting ensures its programs fit seamlessly into your family's schedules, allowing youth to thrive in all their extracurriculars.

A crucial part of this unified voice is always ending with a strong, clear and simple call to action: **“Visit BeAScout.org to start your Scouting adventure.”** When every council, volunteer and ambassador uses this call to action consistently — in every flyer, post, conversation and event — we make it easy for families to know where to go and what to do next. We remove uncertainty and make the path to Scouting clear, accessible and inviting.

When every council, volunteer and ambassador uses the same key messages, we build momentum and trust. Every family receives the same powerful invitation, no matter where or how they encounter Scouting. This unified approach ensures that every parent, every guardian and every future Scout hears a message that’s simple, strong and memorable. And the first step is always the same — visit BeAScout.org

As you create your own public-facing and internal materials, please ensure they are aligned with the above messaging and always include a consistent call to action. Where possible, localize the stories and examples for your own markets — add the faces, places and moments that will make your community see themselves in the campaign. But always filter your communications through this message platform for maximum impact.

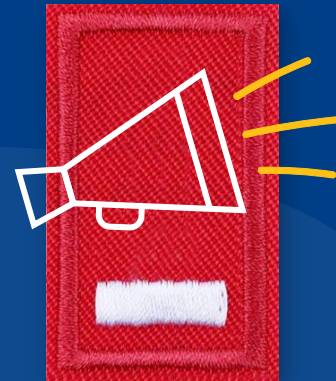
Together, through clear, repeated and inspiring messages — and with a unified, unmistakable call to action — we’ll turn awareness into curiosity, curiosity into action and action into a new generation of Scouts.

Let’s invite every family to begin their adventure!



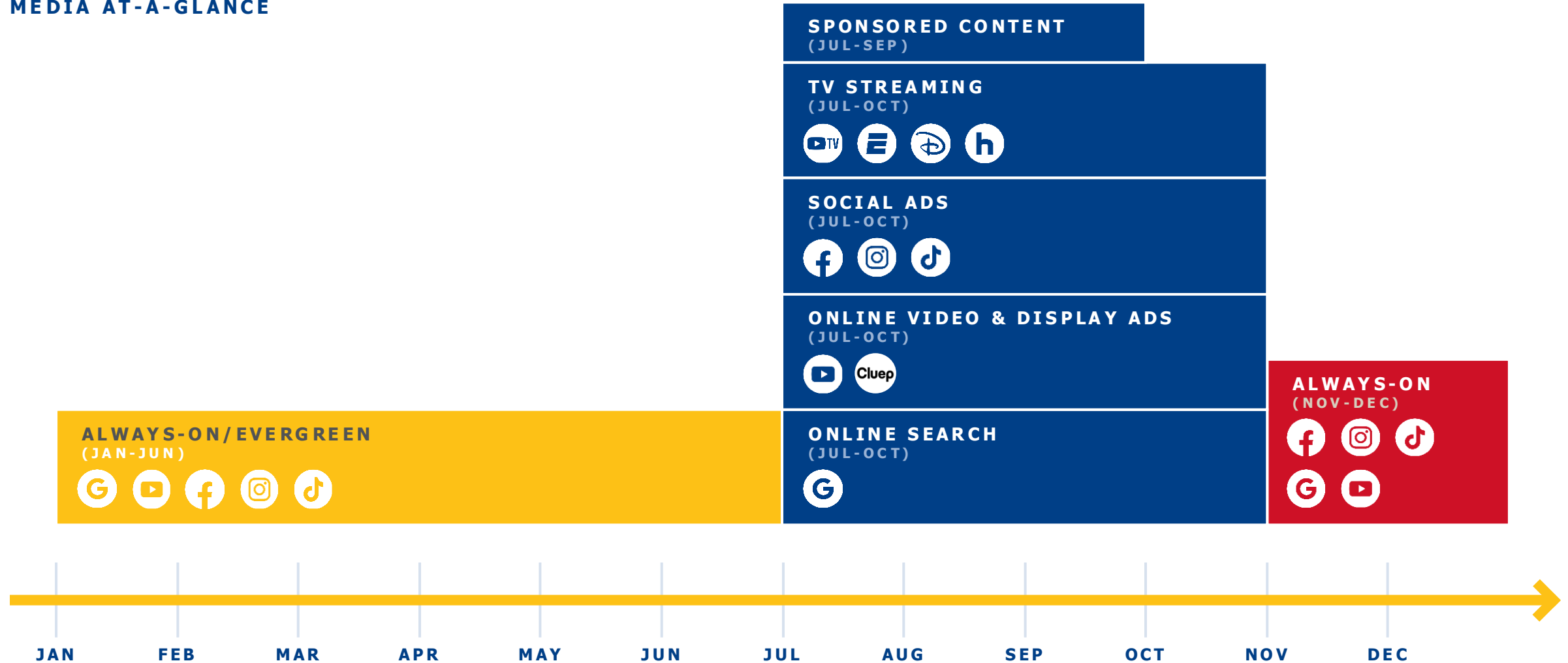
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MESSAGE AMPLIFICATION



2026

MEDIA AT-A-GLANCE





Media is most powerful when national and local efforts work hand in hand. The National Council drives broad awareness and inspires families nationwide to consider Scouting through high-visibility, targeted ads and partnerships on major digital and streaming platforms. Local councils build local momentum by delivering geo-targeted messages and campaigns that speak directly to families in their own community — ensuring that Scouting stays top of mind and easy to act on, right where families live, work and play. By aligning strategies and sharing best practices, national and local teams can maximize reach, minimize costs and convert interest into membership through BeAScout.org.

NATIONAL STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Scouting America's national campaign is designed to increase awareness, boost engagement, and drive new membership at BeAScout.org. By meeting parents where they are — in their social feeds, on streaming services, or reading trusted parenting sites — our multi-prong approach nurtures every step of their decision journey:

- **Not Thinking About Scouting.** Targeting parents and drive awareness through social platforms like Meta and TikTok. Then, reach them as they're streaming on Disney+, Hulu, ESPN+ and YouTube TV or reading a parenting article from a trusted publisher like ScaryMommy or Parents.
- **Seen Some Content but Not Ready to Act.** Reaching parents as they engage with related content online (like searching for outdoor activities for kids or Scouting-related keywords online through YouTube or Google Search or engaging with a Reddit community discussing how to raise children in a social media world in r/toddlers or similar).
- **Ready to Register for Scouting.** Retarget parents who have viewed campaign videos or engaged in content and encourage them to find a local Scouting unit via BeAScout.org, as this group has already shown intent through engagement.



To ensure optimal performance and cost efficiency, we ask local councils to be mindful of bidding on branded and campaign-specific keywords on Google Search and YouTube. Competing for the same keywords can lead to increased advertising costs, reduced ad visibility, and poor user experience. In addition to narrowed targeting settings, it is recommended that local councils leverage more specific keyword match types (such as exact match or phrase match) and include specific locations within their paid search campaigns (i.e. [St. Louis cub scout packs]) to avoid conflicting strategies. The national campaign will target the following keywords:

BRANDED	UN-BRANDED
cub scouts, scouts, cub scout programs, scouting programs, sign up for scouting, scouting near me, boy scout programs, scouting america programs, boy scouts, cub scouts near me, cub scout sign up, boy scout troops near me, join scouting, join cub scouts, scout troops near me, scout registration, bsa, scouting merit badges, scout camps, scouting america	after school activities, afterschool programs, kids activities near me, positive youth development, youth development opportunities, empowering youth programs, youth groups, extracurricular activities, extracurricular programs, STEM activities for kids, after school activities near me, sports programs for kids, after school enrichment programs, fun after school activities for elementary students, what to look for in an after school program
Some recommended keywords for councils to include in local paid search campaigns: "[city name] Cub Scout programs," "[city name] Scouting", "[city name] kids activities", "Cub Scouts in [city name]", "after school programs near [location]", etc.	

LOCAL AMPLIFICATION STRATEGY

Local paid amplification tactics are crucial for generating interest in Scouting by targeting the right audiences and fostering local engagement. These cost-effective strategies ensure that awareness and engagement efforts are grounded in the communities where families live, work and play:

- **Geo Targeted Social Ads.** Run a geo-targeted paid social campaign on Meta (Facebook/Instagram) to reach local parents of elementary school kids. By tailoring creative and messaging to local relevance, these ads can spark interest and drive traffic to sign-up or learn-more pages.
 - **Content Recommendations.** Ensure the content that you will be promoting has a clear call-to-action with instructions on how to engage (visit website, fill out an interest form, call, etc.). Additionally, local councils are encouraged to share and engage with national channels and partners such as Scary Mommy.
 - **Targeting Tips**
 - **Location:** Your city +25-mile radius
 - **Demographic:** Male/Female; ages 32-44; parents with preschoolers (ages 3-5); parents with early school-age children (ages 6-8); parents with preteens (ages 9-12)
 - **Interests:** parenting (children & parenting); parenting styles; parenting teenagers; positive parenting; toddlers and beyond; kid's activities (leisure); nature; outdoor recreation; outdoor activities
- **Local Digital Billboards.** Digital billboard placements near strategic locations like elementary schools, recreation centers or parks. These placements offer repeated exposure, reinforcing the presence of local Scouting opportunities.
 - Research and contact providers that offer digital billboard placements in your region (e.g. Lamar, Outfront, etc.) and inquire about availability, pricing and package options.
 - Costs will vary based on region, location and duration, but may average around \$5,000/month.

- **Local News Segment Integrations.** In mid-to-large markets, integrate your message into local lifestyle news segments through sponsored content or featured interviews. These segments offer a trusted, community-focused platform to tell authentic stories about the local council's impact.
 - Contact your local news stations or broadcast partners like TEGNA to discuss paid lifestyle segment opportunities in your market.
 - Costs will vary by market but may average around \$4,000.
- **Local Guerrilla Marketing.** Leverage guerrilla marketing tactics for a low budget way to grab attention in highly populated places. This could include floor decals or sidewalk chalk art at parks or rec centers (pre-approved), pop-up booths or public challenges at high traffic local events like farmer's markets and flyers at local businesses.

REMEMBER

- Always use clear, action-oriented language — every ad and asset should encourage families to “Visit BeAScout.org to start your Scouting adventure”
- Coordinate timing and visuals with your recruitment efforts for maximum impact
- Share results and best practices with National so we can all learn and improve together

Together, national and local efforts can make Scouting America visible, relevant, and accessible to families everywhere — one click, one sign-up, one Scout at a time.

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SOCIAL MEDIA & DIGITAL ACTIVATION





Scouting America's national and local teams are most powerful when working in harmony. The National Council will ignite broad excitement, create compelling content and leverage influential voices to tell the Scouting story on a big scale across social and digital channels. Local councils bring these stories to life in their own communities — showcasing real people, real moments and the authentic impact of Scouting close to home. When we all amplify each other's efforts, the energy and reach multiply, creating a powerful wave of momentum that drives families to join the adventure.

NATIONAL SOCIAL & INFLUENCER STRATEGY OVERVIEW

Nationally, Scouting America will launch a dynamic social and influencer campaign to build buzz throughout recruiting season:

- **Day Camp Content.** In July, content filmed at a Cub Scout day camp will highlight the adventure, learning and fun at the heart of Scouting. These will include Scouting spins on trending video concepts and heartfelt moments from real Scouts and leaders.
- **Influencer Partnerships.** Throughout August and September, several influencers will bring the campaign narrative to life across TikTok and Instagram, sharing entertaining stories about their own newcomer experiences and preparing their children for Cub Scout life.
- **Ongoing Partner Presence.** The recruitment campaign will launch a year-round influencer program, with partners posting moments with their local councils and signature Scouting events such as Pinewood Derby. Watch for campaign content from these influencers, as well as celebrity partners and Scouting America's channels. Councils are encouraged to amplify this content by liking, sharing and commenting on posts.

LOCAL COUNCIL SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVATION

Bring the campaign narrative to life in your own council by sharing authentic, local stories and images. The national social campaign launch date is to be determined. Once confirmed, Local Councils should plan to share your first post on or soon after that date. Below are easy, high-impact content ideas:

CONTENT THAT LEANS INTO THE CUB SCOUT NARRATIVE

- **Side-by-side photos of longtime Scouts with their Cub Scout photos.**
 - **Example post copy:** *From day one as a Cub Scout to being honored as a Life Scout! [NAME]'s adventure with Scouting is far from over.*
- **Show adult leaders' first campouts, first den meetings or first time in uniform.**
 - **Example post copy:** *Your Scoutmaster? They started exactly where you are. See how [NAME]'s first day shaped who they are today.*
- **A video of Scouts talking about "What I've Learned Since My First Day."**
 - **Example post copy:** *In 2023, [NAME] walked in as a newcomer. Three years later, they can't imagine life without Scouting. Hear how they're prepared for life!*
- **A video from a Scouting parent who was a Scout as a child, discussing their experience as a young Scout.**
 - **Example post copy:** *Back then, they were a Scout. Now, they're cheering from the sidelines as their child embarks on the same adventures they did. Meet [NAME] – and hear why they're passing Scouting on to the next generation.*
- **Encourage families to share their favorite "first" Scouting photo or moment in the comments, or on their own channels tagging the local council.**
 - **Example post copy:** *Your Scout's first badge. First knot. First "I did it!" moment. These are the memories that matter. Share your favorite Scouting first in the comments or tag us on your page – we'd love to celebrate with you! 📷💙*
- **Photos and/or videos of Cub Scouts experiencing their firsts, like selling popcorn for the first time or going on their first camping trip.**
 - **Example post copy:** *There's something special about watching a Scout try something new for the first time. What was your child's most exciting Scouting moment?*

Be careful not to include any potentially copyrighted material in your content. This includes popular music, celebrity names, brand names, or artwork.



LOCAL COUNCIL SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVATION

In addition to the influencer partnerships Scouting America will manage on a national scale, there is an opportunity for you to partner with local influencers to drive awareness for recruitment in your communities. Influencers are content creators with engaged audiences – typically ranging from 5,000 to 100,000+ followers – who share authentic experiences with their communities. We recommend inviting local influencers to attend a fun event, camp or activity with their children and encouraging them to post content about the experience.

You can find local influencers in your community using the search function on TikTok or Instagram. Enter hashtags relevant to your city (i.e. #STL or #stlouis for St. Louis, MO), scroll through the posts and select local influencers who post about family-friendly activities. It's important to vet each potential influencer before reaching out to them. Avoid partnering with influencers who post content that doesn't align with Scouting America's brand values. Once you've identified the influencers you'd like to partner with, reach out to them via email or Instagram direct message using the template inquiry below:

Hi [NAME],

My name is [NAME] and I am [TITLE] of the [CITY] Scouting America council. We have an exciting event coming up on [DATE] and I wanted to reach out to personally invite you and your family to attend.

[INSERT EVENT/ACTIVITY DETAILS]

Please let me know if you're interested in coming and sharing the exciting opportunities that Scouting America has to offer with your audience. We'd love to see you there!

Thank you,

[NAME]

Once an influencer has accepted your invitation, ask them if they'd be willing to share their content with you for review and approval before they publish it. If they do, ensure they have not included copyright material or violated brand safety standards.

The FTC requires that all influencers disclose when they have a relationship with a brand that they are posting content about. If you're providing the influencer with any type of compensation (such as free access to an event that isn't free to everyone or branded swag), be sure to inform the influencer that they should disclose the relationship. For example:

Per FTC guidelines, if you choose to post about your experience, please be sure to disclose that you were compensated by Scouting America. Something simple like 'Thanks to Scouting America for the experience!' or including #gifted works!

Be sure to keep an eye on their social channels so that you can see when the content goes live and engage with the post through liking, commenting and sharing.



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP ON LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is a powerful tool for Scouting America staff and volunteers to connect with community and business leaders, showcase the impact of Scouting in youth development, and raise the profile of our movement nationwide. When local council executives, board members and volunteers share the story of Scouting America on LinkedIn, we help build credibility, open doors for partnerships, and position Scouting as a modern, relevant force for good in our communities.

Every council staff and volunteer leader is an ambassador for Scouting America's mission and values. By sharing your experiences, council news and success stories on LinkedIn, you demonstrate the real-world impact of Scouting and invite others — civic leaders, business owners, educators and parents — to be part of the Scouting journey.

On the following page, you will find recommendations for elevating your LinkedIn profile, along with best practices for posting content and engaging with others.

HOW TO ELEVATE YOUR SCOUTING AMERICA PROFILE ON LINKEDIN

Whether you're new to LinkedIn or a regular user, here's how to ensure your profile reflects your leadership in Scouting America.

- **Professional Photo.** Use a recent, high-quality headshot — ideally in your Scout uniform or at a Scouting event — to reinforce your connection to the movement. Profiles with photos get up to 21x more views. Select a recent photo with your face taking up 40% to 60% of the image. Optimal dimensions are at least 400 x 400 pixels.
- **Background Image.** Choose a vibrant image from a Scouting America event — Scouts in action, a campout, a Pinewood Derby or a service project. Avoid using logos alone. Dimensions: 792 x 191 pixels.
- **Relevant Headline.** Clearly state your Scouting America role. For example: "Scout Executive, Scouting America — Inspiring Tomorrow's Leaders" or "Board Member, Scouting America | Champion for Youth." Maximum of 120 characters.
- **Summary.** In your own words, describe your passion for Scouting, your impact and your vision for youth in your community. Use first person language. Use keywords like youth leadership, character development, outdoor adventure and community service. (Max 2,000 characters.)
- **Custom URL.** Update your LinkedIn URL for easy sharing (e.g., [linkedin.com/in/janedoe](https://www.linkedin.com/in/janedoe)).

MAKING IMPACT ON LINKEDIN FOR SCOUTING AMERICA

LinkedIn is where community influencers, school superintendents, business leaders and elected officials go to get inspired. Make sure Scouting America is part of that conversation.

- **Post Regularly.** Consistent posting of content that adds value to followers can foster engagement and build credibility. Focus on sharing success stories, organizational accomplishments and announcements, and personal reflections.
- **Craft Impactful Social Copy.** Share a unique perspective on why Scouting matters in 2026.
 - Use hashtags like #ScoutingAmerica, #YouthDevelopment, #BeAScout — but limit to three.
 - Tag collaborators, local partners and Scouting America's national page.
 - Add photos or short videos, such as Scouts building robots, learning outdoor skills or giving back.
 - Keep your copy concise, authentic and positive.
 - Always end with a strong call to action — "Visit BeAScout.org to start your Scouting adventure."
- **Engage with Others**
 - Follow Scouting America [www.linkedin.com/company/scouting-america/]
 - Connect with other leaders and volunteers.
 - Target 2-3 engagements (reactions, comments, shares) per week on content you find relevant or interesting. When possible, comment on others' posts to join the conversation.
- **Monitor Your Own Channel**
 - Review engagement on your recent posts. React to positive comments and respond when appropriate.
 - Monitor for spam or negative comments, taking action only as needed.

07

LOCAL EARNED MEDIA STRATEGY





Local media relations is a key component of how we share great stories about Scouting America in our local communities. This is never more important than during our key recruiting period.

Once finalized, we will outline our national recruitment media strategy, and the specific touch points where you can leverage your local media to foster community interest, drive excitement in Scouting America and encourage kids and families to join.

But it's never too early to start. As we drive towards recruitment, get an early start and begin story mining and identifying impactful local stories that highlight unique Cub Scout packs and their achievements. Identify three or four stories within your council that you can share with media throughout Fall recruiting.

LOCAL MEDIA RELATIONS: BUILDING AND SHARING YOUR STORY

Compelling media coverage doesn't just happen by chance — it's the result of smart story selection, thoughtful preparation and well-coordinated outreach. Below, you'll find a step-by-step guide for building a media-ready story and pitching it to your local media.

IDENTIFY YOUR STORY



- **What is new, timely or unique?**
(first event, new merit badge, major community project, partnership)
- **Why does it matter locally?**
(Community impact, solving a problem, responding to a trend)
- **Who is affected?**
(youth, parents, schools, neighborhoods)
- **What makes it emotional or inspiring?**
(personal transformation, overcoming a challenge)

CHOOSE YOUR SPOKESPERSON



- **Staff or Key Volunteer.**
Trusted person who can articulate Scouting's impact.
- **Real People.**
A local Scout, parent, or family member who can share first-hand experiences and the difference Scouting has made.
- **Diversity Matters.**
Ensure your spokespeople reflect the diversity of your community.

GATHER YOUR VISUALS



- **Think Action, Not Static.**
Invite media to events with hands-on activities — Scouts building, hiking, flying drones, or helping the community.
- **Photo/Video Opportunities.**
Have high-quality photos ready and describe scenes that will be visually compelling for TV or social media.
- **Offer B-roll.**
Short video clips of Scouts in action can boost your story's appeal.

BACK IT UP: DATA + EMOTION



- **Use Real Numbers.** (e.g., "Over 200 local youth joined Cub Scouts last fall.")
- **Share Outcomes.** (e.g., "Scouts contributed 500 volunteer hours at local parks.")
- **Pair with Emotion.** (e.g., "For many families, it was their first time camping or learning STEM skills together — an experience they'll never forget.")

CONNECT TO BIGGER TRENDS



- **Tie to National/Cultural Themes.**
(e.g., balancing sports & Scouting, STEM and AI, community service, youth mental health.)
- **Show Relevance.**
How does Scouting help solve a problem or contribute to the greater good?
- **Universal Truths.**
Everyone starts somewhere. Scouting is where confidence and leadership are built, one "first" at a time.

LOCAL MEDIA RELATIONS: PITCHING YOUR STORY

Once your story is media-ready, it's time to share it with the right contacts in the right way. Below we've included tips and tactics for how you can engage with media in your local market.

Step 1 – Define Your Story

Before reaching out to the media, get clear on:

- **What is your news?** (event, milestone, award, new program, community impact)
- **Why does it matter?** (local relevance, human interest, timeliness)
- **What audience are you targeting?** (existing Scouts, prospective Scouting families)
- **Who does it affect?** (community groups, individuals, neighborhoods)

Step 2 – Identify Your Local Media Outlets

- **Make a list of relevant local media, including:**
 - TV stations (local affiliates of ABC News, NBC News, CBS News, FOX News, CW News, other independent local news outlets)
 - Newspapers and magazines (inclusive of digital properties)
 - Radio stations (news/talk or local segments)
 - Online outlets/blogs (hyperlocal news sites, neighborhood blogs)
 - Community newsletters
- **Make a list of relevant local media, including:**
 - A Google search for "[City] news outlets"
 - The stations or paper's website "Contact Us" or "Staff Directory"
 - Media database tools like Muck Rack, Cision (if available)

Step 3 – Find the Right Reporter

- **Target the reporter who covers your topic:**
 - Assignment Desk/News Desk (for general or breaking news)
 - Education
 - Community
 - Business
 - Features/Human Interest
 - Feel-Good Stories
- **TIP: Check past stories a reporter has written to ensure alignment.**

Step 4 – Craft a Strong Story (also known as a pitch)

- **Write a concise, compelling email and subject line.**
 - Should be quick, to the point and grab the person's attention!
 - **Example:** "Local [City] Scout Launches Community Garden Project for Eagle Scout Project"
- **Email body**
 - One to two sentence summary of the story.
 - Why it matters to the local community.
 - Key details: who, what, when, where, why.
 - Offer interview opportunities (with contact info).
 - Attach or link to a news release (optional but helpful).

Step 5 – Send the Pitch (at the Right Time)

- **Best times to email:** Early mornings (before 9:30 a.m.) or early afternoon.
- **Avoid sending late on Fridays or during major/breaking news events.**
- **Follow up via phone within 2–3 days if you haven't heard back.**

Hi, this is [NAME] calling on behalf of Scouting America's [COUNCIL NAME]. I know how busy your day can get, but I'm following up on an email I sent [EARLIER THIS WEEK/LAST WEEK] about a local Eagle Scout project that's making a meaningful impact in [CITY]. Do you have a quick moment to chat?"

NO: No problem. I'll try back when things are quieter. Thank you!

YES: Great! One of our local Scouts, [SCOUT'S NAME], is completing his Eagle Scout project by [BRIEF SUMMARY].

The project will take place on [DATE/TIME] at [LOCATION], and it's a great visual story with community volunteers, Scouts in uniform and hands-on work.

If you or someone on your team can attend, please let me know. I'd also be happy to arrange interviews with [SCOUT'S NAME], who's leading the effort, as well as [SCOUTMASTER'S NAME OR PROJECT PARTNER LIKE A NONPROFIT REP]. We also have visuals to aid with your story that I'd be happy to share your way.

If they don't answer, leave a voicemail pitch.

Hi, my name is [NAME] and I'm calling on behalf of Scouting America's [COUNCIL NAME] to follow up on an email I sent you about a local Eagle Scout project that's making a meaningful impact in [CITY].

One of our local Scouts, [SCOUT'S NAME], is completing his Eagle Scout project by [BRIEF SUMMARY]. The project will take place on [DATE/TIME] at [LOCATION], and it's a great visual story with community volunteers, Scouts in uniform and hands-on work.

I'd also be happy to arrange interviews with [SCOUT'S NAME], who's leading the effort, as well as [SCOUTMASTER'S NAME OR PROJECT PARTNER]. We also have visuals to aid with your story that I'd be happy to share your way.

If you or someone on your team can attend, please let me know. Feel free to call me back at [CELL PHONE NUMBER]. I'll also resend the email to you so it's at the top of your inbox.

Thanks for your time!

When you call matters!

- Newsrooms have night and weekend editors.
- Broadcast has planning meetings around 8 a.m. to set stories and assign crews.
- Morning show staff arrives anytime between midnight and 5 a.m.



Step 6 – Prepare for the Interview

- If a reporter responds:
 - **Confirm key details** (date, time, location, spokesperson availability)
- Interview tips can be found below.

Step 7 – After the Story or Segment

- Follow up with relevant assets such as high-quality images, videos or research data.
- Keep a close eye on when the story or segment goes live.
- Once the story is published or aired, send a thank you email to the reporter acknowledging their efforts and the coverage they provided.
- Keep the contact on your list for future pitches and outreach.

QUICK CHECKLIST BEFORE PITCHING

- Is my story timely, local and relevant?
- Do I have real people ready to give interviews?
- Are there compelling visuals or photo/video opportunities?
- Do I have real numbers or data to share?
- Does my story connect to a bigger trend or cultural moment?
- Am I ending with a clear call to action? (e.g., “Visit BeAScout.org to start your Scouting adventure!”)

EVENTS: LIVE REMOTES AND DEMOS

When organizing an event that is significant to your community, especially those involving partnerships with local organizations or offering great visual appeal, consider inviting media outlets to amplify your reach and engage the public.

HOW TO INVITE TV/RADIO STATIONS FOR LIVE COVERAGE

Local stations are often looking for upbeat, family-friendly content to fill their early morning time slots or weekend segments.

Step-by-Step

1. Find the right contact

- Look for the station's news desk, assignment editor, community calendar coordinator, or morning show producer.

2. Pitch your event 5-7 days out (minimum)

- Live segments are scheduled early — give plenty of lead time, especially for morning or weekend coverage.
- Make sure to follow-up 24 hours before the event.

3. What to include in your media alert:

- **Include the five W's in your pitch** (who, what, where, when, why).
- **Who is hosting or involved?** (e.g., [Scout's Name], [Pack/Troop/Council Name], local volunteers, community partners).
- **What is happening?** (e.g., Eagle Scout project, Cub Scout adventure day, service project, etc.).
- **When does the event takes place?** (date and time—with any ideal windows for media to attend noted).
- **Where the event is located?** (full address + any notes on parking or access).
- **Why it matters** (include a short explanation of the impact, significance, or visual appeal).
- **List who will be available for interviews.** This might include Cub Scouts, Cubmasters, community partners, parents or family members, etc.
 - Include a quick note on what visuals media can expect (Scouts in uniform, hands-on activities, group interactions, etc.).
- **Always include your name, phone number and email**, and make sure you or a designated contact is reachable on the day of the event.

GETTING PERMISSION & INVOLVING UNITS

- **Secure Photo & Media Releases and Parent Approval.** For all youth participants, especially those featured visually or interviewed.
- **Offer Media Prep Support.** Help parents and leaders know what to expect and how to help kids feel comfortable.
- **Be Present and Positive.** Attend the interview in person if possible.

Remember

Great local media coverage starts with a great story — one that's visual, emotional, rooted in real people and connected to something bigger. With the right preparation and a confident pitch, your council's stories will inspire families across your community to join the adventure!

MEDIA MATERIALS

For each national media moment, we will provide comprehensive materials and launch support to ensure effective communication. In preparation for each major media moment in August, September and October, we will follow up with:

- **Customizable News Releases and Pitch Templates.** Tailored templates for your local council to adapt and use for outreach efforts.
- **Key Messages.** Essential messaging framework to ensure consistency across all communications.



Below are frequently asked questions and responses to guide you in any media interactions.

You can also find additional FAQs at www.scouting.org/about/faq/.

Q: What does Scouting America stand for?

A: Scouting America reflects our mission to prepare every youth in America to lead a life of purpose and impact.

Q: Why did the organization recently change its name to Scouting America?

A: Scouting America's mission is to prepare all young people for lives of purpose and impact. The decision to update the organization's name to Scouting America underscores our commitment to serving America's youth.

Q: What is the difference in Scouting America now that it has a new name?

A: For more than a century, Scouting's mission has remained the same. And a new name will not change the mission of Scouting. This name aligns with our ongoing mission to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

Q: Why should I enroll my child in Scouting America?

A: Young people today face unique challenges in today's rapidly changing, technology-fueled world, and research shows that parents are concerned about how their kids will cope. Scouting America has been evolving to help them navigate it all and thrive.

Q: Can my daughter join Scouting America?

A: Yes! Scouting America has welcomed girls into the Cub Scouts and Scouts BSA programs since 2018. Today, there are more than 197,000 girls and young women who participate in Scouting programs. This represents 20% of our total membership. Scouting America is committed to providing a welcoming, safe environment where Scouts can become the best version of themselves.

Q: How old does my son or daughter need to be to join Scouting?

A: Boys and girls ages 5–10 can join Cub Scouts. Learn more about Scouting America programs at [BeAScout.org](https://www.beascout.org).

Q: Can my child join Scouting if we live in an urban center?

A: Scouting America is not exclusive to rural communities. You can find local Scouting units in major cities such as Los Angeles, Chicago, Minneapolis, Dallas, Phoenix and others across America.

Q: What if we don't have a unit in my local community? Can we start our own?

A: Yes, any organization can start a Cub Scout pack. To learn more about Scouting programs and requirements for starting your own unit, visit [BeAScout.org](https://www.beascout.org).

Q: What safety measures are in place to keep my child safe?

A: Scouting has some of the most vigorous safety measures in place of any youth serving organization. We aim to ensure families know their children will be safe, whether their child is attending a weekly Scout meeting, going on a weekend camping trip, or attending a National Jamboree with thousands of other Scouts. Our programs are designed to follow a strict set of rules and policies that can be found in the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#).

Q: What are the qualifications or experience required for Scouting America volunteers / leaders?

A: Every registered adult in Scouting is required to complete a youth safety training course and a criminal background check. For more information, visit the [Youth Protection page](#).

Q: What kind of activities will my child participate in as a member of Scouting America?

A: Parents who are unfamiliar with — or have misperceptions about — modern Scouting might assume that it's all camping, fishing and hiking. It's that and more! Members can take advantage of Scouting's modern-day skills that range from essentials in citizenship and character, learned early-on in Cub Scouts to advanced skills like rocketry, robotics and coding learned as they progress. And of course, the Pinewood Derby.

Q: What is the fee associated with enrolling in a Scouting America program?

A: Scouting America Annual Membership Fees include:

- **\$85** for Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing and Sea Scouting participants
- **\$65** for all adult volunteers
- **\$50** for Exploring participants - Youth & Adult
- Additional fees might be charged by local councils and units.
(Price subject to change; Effective May 1, 2024)

You can find more about Scouting America programs, including fees, at [BeAScout.org](https://www.beascout.org).



PREPARING YOUR SPOKESPEOPLE FOR INTERVIEWS

To prep for any media interviews, it's essential to equip your spokespeople — such as Scouts, parents and leaders — with clear talking points and responses to frequently asked questions (FAQs).

DO

- Keep the tone natural and comfortable within the context of the conversation.
- Deliver answers with energy and confidence.
- Keep your answers brief. Pause before answering.
- Stand or sit up straight.
- Maintain steady eye contact with the interviewer (but don't stare).
- Be aware of your facial expressions and gesture naturally.

DON'T

- Ever think you're "off the record."
- Fiddle with objects.
- Ramble.
- Let yourself be interrupted.
- Repeat the negative.
- Check your phone or your watch.
- Cross your arms.
- Nod if you disagree with what is being said.
- Use too many hand gestures.

FIVE RULES TO ACING AN INTERVIEW

Rule 1 – Know Your Interviewer

Research the reporter's typical coverage, style and angle to anticipate how they might approach the conversation. Consider current news that may influence the interview and prepare for a range of potential questions, from hardball to softball or even oddball inquiries.

Rule 2 – Know What You Want to Say

- To effectively shape your message, ask yourself essential questions: What headline do you envision? What facts support your theme?
- Identify key facts, statistics and stories that convey your message, along with the one crucial takeaway you want them to remember.

Rule 3 – Use your Messages

Bridging

Redirecting your key messages.

Example Phrases:

What's really important is ...

I'd also like to add that ...

The reason we're here today is ...

Blocking

Halting the direction of a question.

Example Phrases:

I can't speak for ...

What I do know is this ...

But as far as we are concerned ...

Flagging

Signifying important points.

Example Phrases:

The most important thing to remember is ...

This is what you need to know ...

The key point here is ...

Rule 4 – Paint a Picture

- **Tell a story.**
- **Use metaphors and analogies.**
- **Make it personal.**
- **Avoid jargon.**

Rule 5 – Project Positive Energy

- **Be passionate and confident about your message.**
- **Don't let a negative question bring you down.**
- **Pay attention to body language and facial expressions.**
- **Maintain eye contact.**

08

LOCAL EVENTS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Partnering with various groups around your community will allow your local council to tap into their networks for greater visibility and enhance the opportunities available to youth. Below you'll find suggestions for partnerships to consider exploring, recommendations for outreach, thought starters for potential events to host, and ideas for how to create dynamic environments that are engaging to both parents and kids at those events.

PARTNERSHIP & OUTREACH IDEAS

Find ways to establish strategic partnerships with schools, recreation centers and sports leagues, faith-based organizations and cultural groups, and other community programs. Reach out to leaders or administrators to initiate discussions and map out how a collaboration could come to life. Partnering with these groups will allow your local council to create co-hosted events that combine resources and expertise and provide mutual benefits that engage both parents and children.

Together, we can provide ready-made opportunities for families to do fun things with one another — because together — we can all grow into our best future selves.

SIGNATURE LOCAL EVENTS

Recruitment season aligning with the back-to-school window and the start of fall sports provides a vast opportunity to connect with school aged children and their parents. Alongside the national recruitment announcement in August, below are some considerations for how local councils can drive interest in their communities through events. Our goal is to provide an environment for parents to learn more and for children to get excited, so it is imperative that these pop-ups are both informational and interactive.

- **Sporting Event Activations.** Host informational booths or activation moments at high school sporting events and well attended rec leagues in your local area. Booths should include fun Scouting activities, such as knot-tying, s'mores station and more. Activations could include tunnel walks ahead of a game or halftime recognition at center field/court, where high school players each walk alongside a Cub Scout or introduce a local pack. Additionally, consider inviting media to these events to capture visuals and generate awareness.
- **Back-to-School Events.** Open houses are an excellent opportunity for local councils to introduce Scouting America and its mission. At the event, Scouting volunteers can emphasize the concept that everyone starts somewhere, making it relatable and encouraging. Start with brief introductions and an engaging welcome to attendees, then move into interactive programming, live testimonies, activities and giveaways.
- **Festivals, Fairs and Farmers' Markets.** Set up tables at local community festivals, fairs and farmers' markets to engage with both parents and their children. These weekend activities are often filled with families who simply wanted to get out of the house for the afternoon. Pique their interest with hands-on stations like Pinewood Derby car building or other demonstrations, accompanied by details of how to sign

MEASUREMENT & REPORTING



Measurement is critical to the ongoing success of Scouting America's recruitment efforts — both nationally and locally. Tracking what's working (and what's not) enables us to maximize our impact, pivot when needed, and make data-driven decisions that help more families discover Scouting. At the national level, detailed measurement lets us fine-tune broad strategies and understand big-picture trends. Locally, tracking your efforts ensures you're investing resources where they have the greatest effect, and learning which tactics truly resonate with families in your community. Measurement isn't about checking boxes — **it's about learning together and celebrating wins, big and small, as one Scouting America team.**

NATIONAL MEASUREMENT APPROACH

The National Council will use a comprehensive measurement strategy to evaluate recruitment success nationwide. This includes monitoring:

- **Earned Media Placements.** Number, type (TV, online, print) and impressions of media stories mentioning Scouting America
- **Message Pull-Through & Sentiment.** How well our key messages appear in coverage, and whether the tone is positive, neutral or negative
- **Social Content Performance.** Engagement (likes, shares, comments), reach and top-performing posts across platforms
- **Website Traffic & Conversions.** BeAScout.org traffic, click-throughs from campaign content and actual sign-ups



LOCAL MEASUREMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Local councils are encouraged to track similar metrics to understand which tactics deliver the best results in your area. This tracking is for your benefit — to help you keep track of the communications tactics that resonate in your area, providing insights to support which strategies were effective or not. Use your findings to refine your recruitment approach, celebrate your council's successes, and share best practices with peers.

Create a template to help you track these metrics. Use it to spot trends, highlight what's working, and make data-driven decisions for next year's recruitment push. **By measuring together, we learn together ensuring every family gets the best invitation to join the Scouting adventure!**

WHAT TO TRACK — WHY AND HOW

Number of Event Sign-Ups

- Use online registration forms (e.g. Google Forms or Scouting-specific tools) that capture contact information and the event name

Demographic of Event Attendees

- Include a required field on sign-up form or exit survey to capture age, school, zip code, Scouting experience (new vs. Scouting background)

Source of Sign-Up

- Include a required field on sign-up forms (e.g., "How did you hear about this event?" with options like flyers, social media, school, friends, church, etc.)

Event Attendance

- Use check-in tools such as QR codes, manual sign-in sheets or mobile apps to record who attended

BeAScout Sign-Ups

- Assess whether attendees went on to officially join Scouting and/or visit a local unit post-event

Earned Media Placements

- Count the total number of placements within a specified timeframe (recommend monthly) that mention your council or Scouting in your community. To further analyze, categorize placements by type (i.e. TV, online, print, etc.)
 - Assess whether the coverage is positive, neutral, or negative
 - Check how well the key messages are reflected in the coverage
 - Monitor for direct mentions of your spokesperson's name in media coverage

CONTACT INFORMATION





For any general questions, feedback or support needs regarding the recruitment campaign, please reach out to **your CST Director** to facilitate a discussion with national personnel.

For any marketing specific questions, please reach out to Darin Kinn for additional support.

Darin Kinn

Dir., Marketing & Brand Management
darin.kinn@scouting.org

For any communications or PR/Media specific questions, please reach out to Gordon Shattles for additional support.

Gordon Shattles

Dir., Communications
pr@scouting.org

We are here to assist you in making this recruitment season a success!

Together, we will achieve great results!

THANK YOU

for your dedication and support!

We look forward to sharing more information with you.

