

Troop 780

<http://www.BSATroop780.org>

Hometown U.S.A. Award

The **Hometown U.S.A. Award** is a joint program between Keep America Beautiful Inc. (KAB) and the Boy Scouts of America. It is designed to give recognition to the outstanding efforts of Scouts in their communities in regard to citizenship and environmental improvement.

The Purposes of the Award:

- To educate Boy Scouts about citizenship in relation to conservation and to involve them in community activities relating to environmental issues
- To offer a mechanism by which Scouts can develop positive attitudes toward their environment and community while being exposed to interesting career opportunities
- To provide the opportunity to honor Boy Scouts for their significant contributions toward keeping America beautiful

Award Requirements

1. **Merit badges.** Earn three merit badges from the following list of twelve: Citizenship in the Community, Communications, Environmental Science, Fish and Wildlife Management, Forestry, Gardening, Geology, Landscape Architecture, Nature, Plant Science, Public Speaking, Soil and Water Conservation.
2. **Community service project.** In addition to earning the merit badges, a Boy Scout is required to perform a community service project. The project should involve a minimum of eight hours of time, two of which must involve management planning, with the other six consisting of carrying out the project. It should help keep America beautiful and benefit the community either physically or financially. One way to do this is to plan the community service project as part of Keep America Beautiful Week or Public Lands Day.

Ideas for Community Service Projects

1. Develop and help maintain a community garden.
2. Build a nature trail for use as an outdoor classroom or for community enjoyment.
3. Develop a recycling project that involves your whole troop (i.e., newspaper and/or bottle collection).
4. Conduct a survey of local storefronts. Determine areas where litter has accumulated. Work with storeowners to help improve conditions.
5. Plan and make a presentation to elementary students about the importance of conserving natural resources. Take students on a nature walk, pointing out natural resources.
6. Conduct soil and water conservation activities on a heavily used trail to prevent erosion. Record your activities.
7. Construct water facilities and plant vegetation that will provide food and shelter for wildlife in appropriate places.
8. Adopt a park, block, vacant lot, etc. Erect signs urging others not to litter or vandalize. Protect a flower bed or plant species with fencing. Remove litter and debris. Build picnic tables or fix up old ones, paint benches, etc.
9. Research which plant species are native to your area and plant and maintain a community wildflower garden. Include descriptive and educational signs for the public.
10. Organize an anti-litter poster competition among junior and senior high schoolers. Arrange for businesses to donate awards for the winners and recruit community judges. Include media coverage. Get local businesses and schools to display the posters.

11. Become involved in a local environmental/recycling issue. Attend public meetings, talk to public officials, and make a report to your troop about what you have learned. Decide how you want to become involved in resolving the issue and spend your project time educating your fellow citizens as to your viewpoint and assisting your 'side' in its campaign.
12. Establish and maintain a bird sanctuary.
13. Find out which birds, animals, and fish are native to your area. Write an article on the importance of maintaining proper balance between man and nature. Take steps to maintain habitat areas for this wildlife.

Receiving the Patch

Scouts must complete the **Hometown U.S.A. Award application form** and present it to their Scoutmaster or troop advancement chairman. Contact Troop 780 Leadership for Application.

In order to qualify for the award, Scouts must have successfully completed the requirements as outlined. The troop advancement chairman will know which merit badges each Scout needs in order to qualify.

It is suggested that the community service project be under the overall direction of a natural resources professional or other qualified adult supervisor. After completing the project, the adult supervisor should sign a statement that the project has been completed and meets the requirements of the project sponsor.

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