

Eleven Willowbrook students earn Eagle Scout status

Eleven Willowbrook students have earned Eagle Scout status, the highest rank attainable in Boy Scouts of America.

Those who earn that rank earn at least 21 merit badges and demonstrate Scout Spirit through the Boy Scout Oath and Law, service and leadership, which includes organizing, planning and completing an extensive service project in the community.

District 88 recently sat down with those students to ask them about their experience with Boy Scouts, their Eagle Scout project and what they plan to do in the future.

Senior Matthew Blondin

Troop number: 230

In Boy Scouts since: 2008

Received Eagle Scout status in: 2015

Eagle Scout project: I removed invasive species from a prairie area. I organized and planned the project. I also had to recruit people to help and lead my fellow scouts and friends in assisting me to finish the project. The project took about one day to complete.

Joined Boy Scouts because: My brother, Jacob, was in Boy Scouts. I wanted to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout and continue from Cub Scouts. I would like to come back and be an adult leader with my troop.

Future plans: I plan to attend University of Arkansas, where I plan to major in criminal justice and minor in sociology.

Senior Matthew D'Alessandro

Troop number: 140

In Boy Scouts since: 2008

Received Eagle Scout status in: 2013

Eagle Scout project: I made and reinstalled a cross at St. Pius X Parish on their bell tower. I had to construct and install the cross with the help of my friends and fellow scouts. The project took about a month to complete.

Joined Boy Scouts because: I had some influence from family-friends to join. I also liked the camp. I decided I wanted to follow in the footsteps of my older friends and attain the rank of Eagle Scout and be a productive member of society. I plan to become an adult leader and help my little brother advance in scouts. I also might do Venturing (a youth development program of Boy Scouts) in college.

Future plans: I will attend Valparaiso University to study meteorology. I want to be a weather forecaster for the National Weather Service in Norman, Okla., or in Chicago.

Senior Joseph Draus

Troop number: 230

In Boy Scouts since: 2008

Received Eagle Scout status in: 2014

Eagle Scout project: I made large wooden signs for Serenity House in Addison. We had to construct the signs and saw and shape the wood. We also had to paint and prime all the signs and assemble them together, as well as drill holes for the signs and pour concrete for the signs. The project took about six months to complete.

Joined Boy Scouts because: I had a lot of fun in Cub Scouts, and I liked the values and ideas of the group. I would like to become an adult leader and help out with my troop as much as I can.

Future plans: I'm going to The Ohio State University and will major in public affairs.

Senior Kevin Green

Troop number: 242

In Boy Scouts since: 2008

Received Eagle Scout status in: 2015

Eagle Scout project: I built a wooden picnic table that folds into two individual benches. I also made two new flowerboxes after I removed the old tractor tires that were being used as flowerboxes. I refurbished the other two preexisting flowerboxes. Lastly, I removed several tons of pea gravel from the playground to make room for new woodchips. Several of my friends helped with the project, which took about one year to complete (including all of the planning and building).

Joined Boy Scouts because: My parents thought it would be a good thing to get me into Cub Scouts. After that, I joined Boy Scouts in 2008. When I turn 18 years old, I'm going to sign up to be an Assistant Scoutmaster and go to meetings and campouts.

Future plans: I plan to attend College of DuPage to earn my associate degree in criminal justice. I then plan to transfer to Western Illinois University to earn my bachelor's degree in criminal justice.

Senior Andrew Kanelos

Troop number: 230

In Boy Scouts since: 2008

Received Eagle Scout status in: 2015

Eagle Scout project: I made a sorting table for a clothes closet, and then I painted the room for the clothes closet as well. Thirty-five volunteers helped with the project, which took 10 months to complete.

Joined Boy Scouts because: I wanted to join Boy Scouts because of all the friends I had in the program. Furthermore, it was something I really enjoyed. Boy Scouts is a very important part of my life, and I plan to become an adult leader in my troop to stay active with the organization.

Future plans: I plan to attend North Central College or University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I plan to major in kinesiology and pursue a career as a physical therapist.

Senior Tyler Olson

Troop number: 417

In Boy Scouts since: 2008

Received Eagle Scout status in: 2014

Eagle Scout project: I removed invasive species from the Morton Arboretum. I had to gather volunteers and tools to remove the plants, and the project took about six months to complete.

Joined Boy Scouts because: I went through Cub Scouts and wanted to continue with the organization. I plan to become an adult leader and help where I can.

Future plans: I plan to join the U.S. Air Force.

Senior Michael Roby II

Troop number: 230

In Boy Scouts since: 2008

Received Eagle Scout status in: 2015

Eagle Scout project: My Eagle Scout project was a prairie-restoration project at Knolls Community Park. We had to remove a lot of invasive species, dead plants and trees that should not have been in the park. The project took one day to complete and involved nearly 100 hours of help from friends, family and members of the community. The planning of the project started months before, along with getting approval and permission to carry out the project.

Joined Boy Scouts because: I was a Cub Scout since first grade, and after completing all the Cub Scout program had to offer, I found myself wanting to learn more and continue on in scouting. I also have to give credit to the great troop I found that solidified my decision to continue. Now that I'm an Eagle Scout, I am very glad I did. I plan to continue with the organization and become an Assistant Scoutmaster in my troop to give back what they gave to me. I also am still very active in my local Order of the Arrow chapter and lodge. The OA, as it is commonly called,

is the national honor society of Boy Scouts of America. I volunteer a lot with them, holding the chapter meetings every month and going to the lodge Executive Board meetings and other lodge events. In the fall, I will run for an Executive Board position.

Future plans: I will attend College of DuPage (COD) to complete my general education classes and to save money. After COD, I will transfer to a university to finish a degree in marketing, human resources or business. I haven't decided which career path I would like to pursue, and I hope my time at COD will either show me which path I should take or show me a completely new opportunity I previously did not see.

Junior Christopher Roder

Troop number: 242

In Boy Scouts since: 2009

Received Eagle Scout status in: 2015

Eagle Scout project: I created a 14-by-12-foot concrete slab at the local Veterans of Foreign Wars facility using hand tools. I had to fill out paperwork, remove layers of concrete and create a border and fill it with concrete. It took about one year to complete the project from start to finish.

Joined Boy Scouts because: I joined Boy Scouts because I wanted to learn valuable skills. I plan to stay involved with Boy Scouts by becoming an Assistant Scoutmaster.

Future plans: I plan to attend college and pursue a career in forestry as a park ranger.

Senior Christopher Senese

Troop number: 199

In Boy Scouts since: 2008

Received Eagle Scout status in: 2014

Eagle Scout project: I created the DuPagePads "Welcome Home Buckets." I had to plan the project, collect the materials, assemble the buckets and deliver the buckets. The project took three months to complete.

Joined Boy Scouts because: I joined Boy Scouts because my friends were in it. I'm now an adult leader with the organization.

Future plans: I will attend Northern Illinois University to study computer science.

Senior Austin Stoner

Troop number: 230

In Boy Scouts since: 2008

Received Eagle Scout status in: 2014

Eagle Scout project: I built dugouts at the Jefferson Middle School fields in Villa Park. After I finished, my design was used to put dugouts at all the fields at Jefferson and Jackson middle schools. I had to find steel and cut and paint the steel. I also had to weld the steel together, place the structure at the field and paint the steel again. The project took about seven months to complete.

Joined Boy Scouts because: I joined Boy Scouts because my dad and all my friends were in it. I plan to become an Assistant Scoutmaster in my troop and possibly help with a troop near the college I will attend.

Future plans: I plan to attend Augustana College and major in biochemistry.

Senior Henry Wallace

Troop number: 140

In Boy Scouts since: 2008

Received Eagle Scout status in: 2011

Eagle Scout project: I built a walkway and a gate to connect my church parking lot to a neighboring parking lot to allow for overflow parking during large events. I had to secure the wood, concrete, gravel and gate pieces necessary to build the walkway and the gate. I also had to find the tools and a lot of volunteers to help with the construction. The project took about two days to complete.

Joined Boy Scouts because: I wanted to learn about the outdoors and develop survival skills, as well as meet new friends. I plan to continue with Boy Scouts as an adult leader until I go to college.

Future plans: I plan to attend Purdue University to study chemical engineering.