OA UNIT REPRESENTATIVES

Learn about the unit representative program, how to be a successful unit representative and ways the OA can advocate and support units.

L511A OA TROOP/TEAM REPRESENTATIVE PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

1. This session is designed to provide a more complete understanding of the Order of the Arrow Troop/Team Representative program. It focuses on who the OA Representative is, what his responsibilities are, and how he fits into the overall operation of the Order.
2. The intended audience of this session is lodge and chapter leadership and with additional material the individual OA Representatives.
3. This session will help your lodge meet the OA Troop/Team Representative Quality Lodge requirement.

SPECIFIC GOALS/OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

1. Understand the benefits of the OA Troop/Team Representative Program to Scouting, the lodge/chapter, and troop/team
2. Describe the duties and responsibilities of the OA Representative
3. Learn how to support and develop the OA Representative

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

For this session, you will need the following:
- Power Point Projector & computer
- Power Point Presentation
- Easel with markers
- Chalkboard with chalk
- OA Unit Representative Handouts (See Attached)

PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENTS

Physical arrangements should be standard classroom with tables and chairs to allow for large and small group discussions.
TYPE OF TRAINER

The ideal trainer should be a youth Arrowman who has previously served as an OA Troop or Team Representative.

OTHER ADVANCE PREPARATION

Prior to arrival of the participants, print on the chalkboard or overhead projector:
- The session name.
- Your name.
- Contact information.
- Review materials needed for the session.
- Prepare session handouts.
- Timeline.

DETAILED OUTLINE OF SESSION

Background
(5 minutes)

The Order of the Arrow Troop/Team Representative is a youth liaison serving between the local OA lodge or chapter and his unit. In his unit, he helps meet the needs of the unit and will serve as a communication and programmatic link to Arrowmen, adult leaders and Scouts who are not presently members of the Order. He will do this in a fashion that strengthens the mission of the lodge, purpose of the Order, and the mission of the Boy Scouts of America. By setting a good example, he will enhance the image of the Order as a service arm to his unit.

“Let it be remembered that the Order of the Arrow was created to help the unit - to help it present its membership a better ideal of the inner qualities of the good scout camper. Qualities of character, like cheerfulness and service are hard for a boy or a man to understand in the abstract. They come easier when seen in human life. Let us realize the significance of the Order in the unit – for the unit is our best hope in scouting.”

Dr. E. Urner Goodman
Founder, Order of the Arrow

Benefits Description Activity
(10 minutes)

[For use in training the OA Troop/Team Representatives insert at this point individual table brainstorms about what they think the benefits of the OA Representative program would be to Scouting, lodges and chapters, and troops and teams]
Who Benefits from the OA Troop/Team Representative Program?
(10 minutes)

Scouting:

- With the Troop/Team Representative as a liaison between the Order of the Arrow and the troop or team, the camp promotions process will be smoother, leading to greater numbers of scouts at summer camp
- Creates a vehicle to strengthen the ties between the OA and the individual BSA troop or team. This will help with the retention of the older Scouts.
- With the organization of service projects, Boy Scouts and Varsity Scouts will be seen actively helping others in their communities

Lodge/Chapter:

- With an easier camp promotion process, the lodge/chapter can increase the number of units visited, increasing the effectiveness of this program in the Council.
- Eases the unit election process by having a person in the troop or team who’s job is to ensure that elections are held
- With positive OA leadership on the unit level, lodges will experience greater membership retention and higher Brotherhood conversion rates
- A unit’s OA members will have someone to organize transportation to OA events, increasing attendance at chapter/lodge functions
- The lodge/chapter can obtain unit’s reaction to presentations and improve its program to more fully meet the unit needs
- The lodge/chapter will be more aware of the unit’s needs and concerns and can better support the unit

Troop and Team:

- The coordination of OA calendar with that of troop and team will prevent OA members from having to choose between OA functions and unit events
- With the organization of service projects, there will be greater opportunity for community service hours that are required for rank advancement
- Experienced Arrowmen from other units who may be able to share their knowledge can be sought out by the OA Representative to augment the troop program
- Creates more opportunities for leadership in the troop or team for both youth and adults, effectively increasing membership retention
- Enables the unit to feed back to the lodge and chapter regarding the success of the lodge program

Job Description Activity
(10 minutes)

Have individual tables brainstorm about what they think the job description should be for the OA Troop/Team Representative and Adviser.
OA Troop/Team Representative Job Descriptions

(10 minutes)

Have individual tables report on how they would describe the OA Representative and Adviser Jobs and then present the official descriptions that are given below

**OA Troop Representative Job Description**

An Order of the Arrow Troop Representative is a youth liaison serving between the local OA lodge or chapter and his troop. In his troop, he serves as a communication and programmatic link to the Arrowman and adult leaders and Scouts who are not presently members of the Order. He does this in a fashion that strengthens the mission of the lodge and purpose of the Order. By setting a good example, he enhances the image of the Order as a service arm to his troop.

**OA Troop Representative Duties**

- Serves as a communication link between the lodge or chapter and the troop.
- Encourages year round and resident camping in the troop.
- Encourages older Scout participation in high adventure programs.
- Encourages Scouts to actively participate in community service projects.
- Assists with leadership skills training in the troop.
- Encourages Arrowmen to assume leadership positions in the troop.
- Encourages Arrowmen in the troop to be active participants in the lodge and/or chapter activities and to seal their membership in the Order by becoming Brotherhood members.
- Sets a good example.
- Enthusiastically wears the Scout uniform correctly.
- Lives by the Scout Oath, Scout Law and OA Obligation
- Shows Scout spirit

**OA Troop Representative Qualifications**

- Under 18 years old
- Appointed by the SPL with Scoutmaster approval
- OA member in good standing

**OA Troop Representative Reports To**

- Assistant Senior Patrol Leader

**OA Team Representative Job Description:**

An Order of the Arrow Team Representative is a youth liaison serving between the local OA lodge or chapter and his Varsity Team. In his team, he serves as a communication and programmatic link to the Arrowman and adult leaders and Varsity Scouts who are not presently members of the Order. He does this in a fashion that strengthens the mission of the lodge and purpose of the Order. By setting a good example, he enhances the image of the Order as a service arm to his team.
OA Team Representative Duties

- Serves as a communication link between the lodge or chapter and the team.
- Encourages year round and resident camping in the team.
- Encourages Varsity Scout participation in high adventure programs.
- Encourages Varsity Scouts to actively participate in community service projects.
- Assists with leadership skills training in the team.
- Encourages Arrowmen to assume leadership positions in the team.
- Encourages Arrowmen in the team to be active participants in the lodge and/or chapter activities and to seal their membership in the Order by becoming Brotherhood members.
- Sets a good example.
- Enthusiastically wears the Varsity Scout uniform correctly.
- Lives by the Scout Oath, Scout Law and OA Obligation
- Shows Team sprit

OA Team Representative Qualification

- Under 18 years old
- Appointed by Varsity Team Captain with Varsity Scout Coach approval
- OA Member in good standing

OA Team Representative Reports To

- Varsity Team Captain

OA Troop/Team Representative Adviser Job Description

An adviser to a Troop/Team Representative assists the youth they advise to succeed in his role of communication and programmatic link to the troop/team and its youth and adult leadership. They help include the Order of the Arrow ideals and activities in the program of the troop/team. Be setting a good example, they enhance the image of the Order as a service arm to his unit.

OA Troop/Team Representative Adviser Duties

- Supports the youth they advise, helping him to fully understand the needs of the unit and the elements of the lodge and chapter structure which are responsible for support to the unit.
- Promotes incorporation of OA ideals into the advancement program of the unit, in unit leader conferences, boards of review, and courts of honor. Promotes recognition of members who have completed their Ordeal, achieved Brotherhood, or been inducted into Vigil Honor membership within the unit.
- Attends lodge and chapter meetings with the youth they advise.
- Insures that the OA Representative has the necessary transportation.
• Helps the lodge, chapter, or extended Elangomat in insuring that messages and documents regarding the achievement of Brotherhood reach Ordeal members in the unit and works with the OA Representative to assess their impact.
• Assists the OA Representative in feeding back to the lodge and chapter the reaction of the unit and its OA members to the success of the OA programs which affect the unit, including Ordeals, unit elections, callouts, camp promotion visits, meetings and service projects.
• Sets a good example
• Enthusiastically wears the Scout uniform correctly.
• Lives by the Scout Oath, Scout Law and OA Obligation
• Shows Scout spirit

OA Troop/Team Representative Adviser Qualifications

• A unit assistant leader or committee member at least 21 years old
• Appointed by unit leader with approval of committee chairman
• OA Member in good standing

OA Troop/Team Representative Adviser Reports To

Troop/Team Leader

Organization
(10 minutes)

The new OA Troop/Team Representative program will be a great benefit to troops, teams, and your lodge if used correctly. It can strengthen the unit, increase attendance at lodge events, and aid in camp promotions or service opportunities. It can get your chapter feedback information, which will help you improve your program. Remember, your OA Troop/Team Representatives are depending on the lodge to give them the support that they need! The following are examples of how different lodges may implement the program. It is expected that the OA Troop/Team Representative would be an active participant at the lodge and chapter meetings.

Mega- Lodge (Chapter based)

The Chapter Chief should appoint a Troop/Team Representative Chairman to the Chapter Executive Committee. He would serve under the Vice Chief most applicable to the program (such as, Vice Chief of Promotions, Vice Chief of Program, etc.) Since your lodge and chapters are large, one chairman could not field all of the Troop/Team Representatives. The Chairman should have a set number of Liaisons underneath him. An Arrowman should only coordinate with five to seven OA Representatives. This will keep him from being overwhelmed. The fewer Scouts with which he must coordinate, the better he will do!
It will also be important for the Lodge Chief to appoint a chairman on the lodge level who will serve on the Lodge Executive Committee under the Lodge Vice Chief most applicable to the program. He will be in charge of coordinating with the camp promotions chairman, activities chairman, publications chairman and others to make sure that the OA Representatives receive the most current, up-to-date information on what they should be doing in their home troops and teams and to give them support and encouragement. The Lodge Chairman will organize training with Chapter Chairman and Liaisons. The OA Representative will be responsible for bringing to the chapter, troop or team requests for information and support for their programs. This information exchange should take place in monthly or bimonthly “meetings”. This will keep the OA Representative informed about his responsibilities and will make him feel important – ensuring that he will take pride in his work. This Lodge Chairman should also coordinate with the Chapter Troop/Team Representative Chairmen to make sure that the program is still healthy and that the handouts are effective and provide continuing support and encouragement.

**Small Lodge Structure (No Chapters)**

The OA Troop/Team Representative Program in a smaller lodge should be run similarly. There will still be a need for a chairman to run the program, and a need for the liaisons. A small lodge, however, may find that they may be more dependent upon the liaisons since there may be fewer leaders above them to assist them with their jobs. Special care should be taken to ensure that the liaisons are informed, effective and well supported. Because the Lodge Troop/Team Representative Chairman himself will be coordinating the program, he may not have time to make the handouts. A new position may be needed to make and distribute the handouts.

All Lodges

The Chairman should keep an updated roster of the OA Representatives in each troop since they will be coming in to and going out of office at different intervals. The lodge should mail out OA Representative Registration Forms to all of the units at least twice a year. It might be a good idea to make a short recognition ceremony for the new OA Representatives that could be performed at chapter or lodge meetings. The Chairman should conduct OA Troop/Team Representative Training Seminars at least twice a year for the newly appointed OA Representatives.

There is one important word of caution for a lodge when it begins to use this program; many times the OA Representatives will (and should!) be used as a calling committee to promote events and service projects. However, this means information must flow from the Lodge or Chapter Chief to the Vice Chief and then to Chairman and on down the ladder. Remember the flow of information should not turn into a telephone tag game. All levels of the calling committee must take notes so that the OA Representatives can tell their troop/team accurate information!

It is important to remember that the ultimate success of this program is dependent upon the OA Troop/Team Representative being a two-way communication link between the lodge/chapter
and the troop/team. Not only does information need to flow from the lodge to the unit, but also information on the needs of the unit must flow to the lodge. The lodge or chapter must be responsive to the needs of the troop or team.

The key to running this program successfully is simple: keep all Troop/Team Representatives informed and make them feel that they are needed and crucial aspects of lodge administration. As soon as your lodge has this program in place, you will begin to reap the benefits in the form of more capable leaders, and increased attendance at lodge events.

**QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD**

(5 minutes)

**Frequently Asked Questions**

1. What if a troop or team does not appoint an OA Troop/Team Representative?

   **Answer:** The Troop/Team Representative is a troop or team position and is therefore up to the unit to adopt and use the program. All that the lodge and chapter can do is to strongly encourage the units to utilize the program by pointing out the benefits to the troop and team.

2. What recognition is available for OA Troop/Team Representatives?

   **Answer:** There is a troop and team position patch available. Lodges and chapters are encouraged to develop recognition similar to what they use for other lodge and chapter officers and committee chairs. This informal recognition and the friendship of chapter officers are more important than the patches and other tokens.

3. Should OA Troop/Team Representatives meet as a group?

   **Answer:** The lodge or chapter should run an OA Troop/Team Representative Training Seminar at least twice a year. Additionally, the OA Representatives are expected to attend lodge and chapter meetings.

**EVALUATIONS**

Evaluation of the Session should take place at the end of the session. If used to train the OA Troop/Team Representatives, the evaluation should take place at the end of the session.

**SOURCE MATERIAL, REFERENCES & CONTACTS:**

Handout Material – Material prepared for the 2000 NOAC (See attached).

[www.oa-bsa.org](http://www.oa-bsa.org)

Power Point Presentation

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