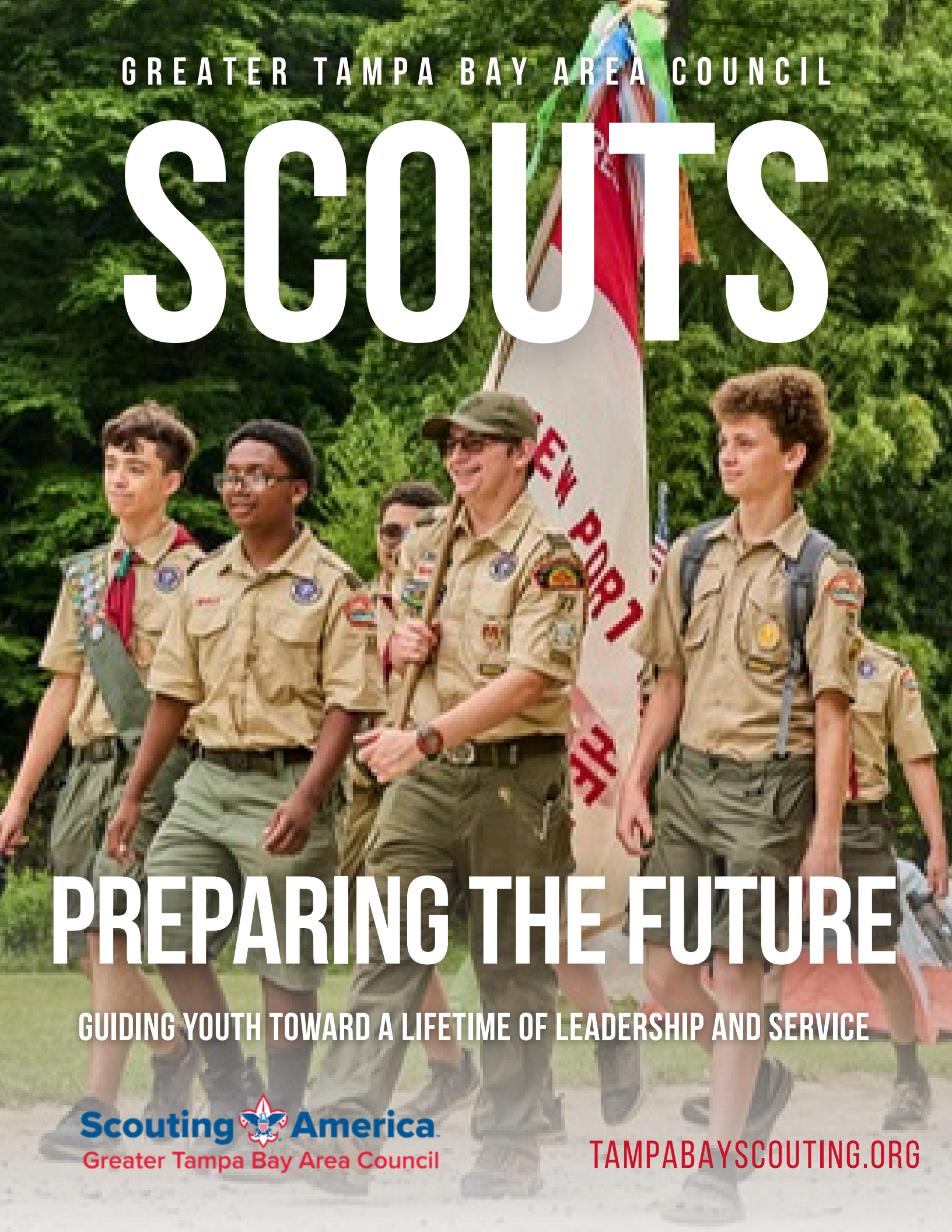
GREATER TAMPA BAY AREA COUNCIL

SCOUTS



PREPARING THE FUTURE

GUIDING YOUTH TOWARD A LIFETIME OF LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

Scouting America
Greater Tampa Bay Area Council

TAMPABAYSCOUTING.ORG

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2025 COUNCIL OFFICERS

Benson Porter | **Council President**

Rachelle Bedke | **Executive Vice President**

Peter Collins | **Vice President**

Matthew Cordani | **Council Commissioner**

William Daggett | **Vice President**

Nicholas Digirolamo | **Vice President**

Greg Holden | **Vice President**

Daniel Honegger | **Vice President**

Harry Kimball | **Treasurer**

Campbell McLean | **Vice President**

George Mitchell | **Vice President**

Hon. Thomas Palermo | **Vice President**

Eric Perron | **Vice President**

George Romagnoli | **Vice President**

Mark Rose | **Vice President**

Jim Kirkpatrick | **Vice President**

David Logsdon | **Vice President**

COUNCIL KEY 3

BENSON PORTER
Council President

MATT CORDANI
Council Commissioner

MIKE BUTLER
Scout Executive

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A MESSAGE FROM THE SCOUT EXECUTIVE

In 2025, the Greater Tampa Bay Area Council reached new milestones in program delivery and service. Almost every program quality metric exceeded expectations. New youth recruited far surpassed prior year efforts, a near record 47 new Scouting units were organized, and 254 young men and women earned the Eagle Scout Award.

The Council continued to make significant investments in the camping facilities as new centralized bathhouses are under construction at Camp Soule, a new maintenance facility is nearing completion at Camp Brorein, and plans for the new Camp Brorein Dining Hall are progressing with an expected groundbreaking this year. More enhancements are scheduled in 2026 for all the camp properties.

Gaining community support through fundraising efforts, special events, and popcorn sales highlighted the value Scouting has among the Tampa Bay region. Generous financial support ensured that membership service and outreach programs could continue to expand serving nearly 13,000 young people throughout 2025.

More than 3,200 dedicated volunteers shared their time and talents with Scouting serving as role models and mentors to our young people. Hundreds of volunteers completed valuable training programs to insure that quality Scouting experiences result in long-lasting impact for our Scouts.

Under the leadership of Council President Benson Porter and the Executive Board, the Council made significant strides to invest in quality program initiatives and camping facilities while working to grow member participation. This commitment will continue in 2026.

The Greater Tampa Bay Area Council is consistently recognized as one of the top councils in America and as we look toward 2026, we have great enthusiasm to build on the foundation and successes of 2025 to serve more youth and families with exciting Scouting adventures in the years to come.

Thank you to all the volunteers, Council leadership, and staff for your dedicated efforts to keep Scouting strong in Tampa Bay!

Look to see you on the trail!

Mike Butler
Greater Tampa Bay Area Council Scout Executive

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OUR VISION AND MISSION

SCOUT OATH

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.

SCOUT LAW

A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent.

SCOUT MISSION

To prepare every young person to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetime by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

GTBAC VISION

Preparing today's youth to do their best without fear of failure, and become men & women who live, lead, and serve with integrity, confidence, and purpose while having fun as kids, friends, and families.

MEMBERSHIP & GROWTH

STRENGTHENING OUR FOUNDATION FOR TOMORROW

In 2025, membership across the Greater Tampa Bay Area Council remained steady, reflecting the strength of our units and the dedication of our families, volunteers, and community partners. While many youth-serving organizations faced continued challenges this year, our council maintained a stable foundation—one that allows us to focus on delivering high-quality experiences to every Scout in our programs.

This year, we placed a renewed emphasis on retention, program support, and unit engagement, ensuring that young people already in Scouting had access to meaningful adventures, leadership opportunities, and hands-on learning. Cub Scouts enjoyed imaginative events that brought families together, Scouts BSA youth advanced in rank and tackled new challenges, and our Exploring, Venturing, and Sea Scouting programs continued providing unique pathways for teens seeking purpose and exploration.

Our steady membership is a testament to the commitment of our leaders and the value families see in Scouting.

As we look toward 2026, we are focused on intentional, strategic growth by expanding outreach, increasing visibility under the Scouting America identity, and equipping units with the tools needed to welcome new families.

With a strong foundation in place, we are well-positioned to grow our impact in the year ahead—one Scout, one unit, and one community at a time.

12,866
Youth Served

3,022
First-Time Scouts

254
New Eagle Scouts

COMING HOME TO SCOUTING

Growing up as an Eagle Scout's little sister, I sat through every knot demonstration and skill my brother practiced, never realizing how much those moments were shaping me.

Twenty-four years later, while filling out my daughter's Lion application, I wrote "Eagle sister" and felt a surprising wave of pride and nostalgia.

As we looked through my brother's old Scouting treasures—his Pinewood Derby car, summer camp notes, his Order of the Arrow invitation—I found myself sharing memories I hadn't touched in decades.

When I sent a photo of my daughter and me in uniform to my brother's former leaders and received warm replies, something inside me stirred. They remembered us, and suddenly, I remembered a part of myself I thought I'd left behind.

Standing beside my daughter in her own Scouting journey, I realized that Scouting never truly left me—it simply waited for me to come home.

Pamela Arnold | Withlacoochee District

3,446

Female Scouts

Scouting America
Greater Tampa Bay Area Council

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

SCOUTING FOR FOOD:
A YEAR OF COMMUNITY IMPACT

In 2025, Scouts across the Greater Tampa Bay Area came together for one of our most meaningful traditions—Scouting for Food. Their dedication paid off in a big way. Units, families, and community partners collected a remarkable amount of food for local pantries, ensuring thousands of families had access to essentials. This annual effort not only fights hunger—it strengthens empathy, service, and leadership in every Scout who participates.

This year's collection stands as one of our strongest demonstrations of what service in action truly looks like.

RJ FROM TROOP 79 COLLECTED OVER 170 LBS OF FOOD FROM HIS NEIGHBORHOOD

33,200 POUNDS COLLECTED

POPCORN SALES
ANOTHER SEASON OF UNSTOPPABLE SUCCESS

This year's popcorn campaign ignited excitement across the council, with Scouts setting ambitious goals and surpassing expectations at every turn. Units powered by teamwork, creativity, and community outreach drove our popcorn program to new heights. From record storefront shifts to digital sales that reached supporters far beyond Tampa Bay, our Scouts proved once again that perseverance pays off.

Every dollar raised strengthens our camps, programs, and the unforgettable experiences that prepare young people for the future.

$1.5 MILLION SOLD

"OUR SCOUTS HAD SOME PRETTY BIG PERSONAL GOALS THIS YEAR, AND WE'RE SO EXCITED THAT WE WERE ABLE TO HELP SUPPORT ALL OF THEM IN REACHING THOSE GOALS!" - SAMANTHA HARDWICK | PACK 413

2025 PROGRAM IMPACT

MORE ADVENTURES, MORE SKILLS, MORE SCOUTS AT CAMP

In 2025, our programs saw a meaningful rise in participation as Scouts and families embraced more opportunities to learn, explore, and grow together. From Cub Scout day events to Scouts BSA campouts, leadership courses, and Merit Badge Academies, nearly every council-led activity experienced an increase in registrations. This surge reflects the growing enthusiasm in our community—and the dedication of the volunteers and staff who bring these experiences to life.

Across our camps and training programs, Scouts pushed their limits, discovered new passions, and achieved milestones that will shape their futures. Our council events—whether rooted in outdoor skills, STEM exploration, service, or leadership—continued to provide the environments where confidence is built, friendships are formed, and character takes shape.

One thing is clear: 2025 was a year where more Scouts showed up, stood out, and stepped into their potential. With program participation on the rise, we are preparing the future by giving young people more opportunities than ever to lead, learn, and thrive.

36,600	**Total Number of Nights Camped**
5,281	**# of attendees at marquee Council Camp Event**
8,917	**Total # of Merit Badges Earned**
292	**Nationally Trained Adult Leaders**

SCOUTREACH SUCCESS

EXPANDING ACCESS, EMPOWERING YOUTH, STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

In 2025, ScoutReach continued to shine as one of our council's most impactful programs—opening doors, breaking barriers, and ensuring that every young person, regardless of circumstance, has the chance to experience the power of Scouting. Through strong community partnerships, dedicated volunteers, and focused support, ScoutReach provided thousands of youth with hands-on learning, character-building experiences, and meaningful mentorship that extends far beyond the meeting room.

This year also marked an incredible milestone for the program:

Our Annual Scouting Forward Breakfast raised over $40,000, the highest total in its history. The generosity of attendees, sponsors, and community leaders not only fuels the growth of ScoutReach but directly supports the youth who rely on it the most—helping us deliver safe spaces, quality programming, and opportunities that build confidence and leadership.

ScoutReach is more than a program. It's a promise:
Every child deserves the chance to discover who they can become.

And in 2025, that promise grew stronger than ever!

2,418 **Youth Served through ScoutReach**

SCOUT RECOGNITION

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE THROUGH EXCELLENCE TODAY

Scan the QR code to watch Jacob on Great Day Tampa Bay!

These merit badges give me real-life lessons and real jobs you can have." - Jacob | Troop 610

TAMPA SCOUT TAKES ON ALL 142 MERIT BADGES

When Jacob from Troop 610 began Scouting, he wasn't chasing records—he was chasing experiences. What inspired him wasn't the number of badges available, but the chance to explore the world through each one.

"These merit badges give me real-life lessons and real jobs you can have," he shared.

Now 17, Jacob has earned 120 of the 142 available badges, discovering new skills from whitewater rafting and fishing to citizenship and digital technology. Many of those experiences have grown into lifelong passions. "I go fishing every month now. Canoeing, kayaking, whitewater rafting—I do all of these because of Scouting."

Jacob's dedication has become a source of inspiration within Troop 610. Younger Scouts often ask for advice, compare badge counts, and learn from his determination.

His Scoutmaster—and proud father—Scott says, "He's inspired others to attend merit badge academies and challenge themselves."

Jacob's journey hasn't been easy, but he encourages others to start early and stay persistent.

Each badge has pushed him, shaped him, and helped him discover who he is and who he wants to be.

As he works toward completing all 142, Jacob stands as a reminder of what Scouting makes possible: curiosity, confidence, and a love of lifelong learning.

Honoring the Spirit of Eagle Scouts

Earning the rank of Eagle Scout represents the highest ideals of Scouting—leadership, service, and a commitment to making the world better. Whether through innovative community projects, environmental stewardship, support for public safety, or the personal journey of growth and perseverance that leads to the Eagle badge, these Scouts demonstrate what it means to live with purpose. Their achievements reflect not only the skills they've gained, but the values they carry forward as they prepare for the future.

Eagle Scout Lyla — Finding Her Voice Through Scouting

Lyla didn't join Scouting because she was excited about camping, uniforms, or earning badges. She joined because someone she trusted believed Scouting could help her. At the time, she wasn't sure it would. Earning the rank of Eagle Scout marked a turning point. Through her Eagle Scout service project, Lyla experienced firsthand the impact of service and leadership. Seeing how her planning, effort, and dedication helped others gave deeper meaning to the rank she earned and reinforced the values Scouting had been teaching her all along. Today, Lyla plans to mentor younger Scouts, volunteer as an adult, and carry the Scout Oath and Law into everyday life—living with dependability, respect, and a commitment to service.

Scout Vini — Training Tomorrow's Heroes

At only 13, Vini is demonstrating remarkable leadership through his Eagle project supporting the Polk County Sheriff's Office. He is raising funds for advanced simulation devices that help deputies train for high-stress scenarios by temporarily disabling an arm or leg—teaching officers how to stay effective even when "wounded." Sheriff Grady Judd praised Vini's initiative, noting the impact this equipment will have on deputy readiness and safety. A member of Troop 528, Vini has been in Scouting since 2021 and is committed to serving his community in meaningful ways. His project carries forward a proud tradition of Scouts aiding local law enforcement and reflects Scouting's mission to prepare youth for a lifetime of leadership.

Eagle Scout Ish R. — Innovating for K-9 Search and Rescue

For his Eagle project, Ishaanth partnered with the Pasco County Sheriff's Office to solve a pressing need: replacing worn, ineffective scent-training boxes used by the K-9 search and rescue team. After more than a year of planning, approvals, and construction, Ish delivered durable, weather-resistant wooden boxes now used to train over 55 working dogs. The project not only supports critical search operations but also demonstrates Ish's ingenuity and perseverance—especially as the administrative hurdles proved harder than the build itself. His work now strengthens one of the most respected K-9 units in Florida and stands as a model of service that leaves a lasting mark on community safety.

Eagle Scout Michael H. — A Lifetime Shaped by Scouting

Michael's Scouting journey began at just three years old, tagging along to his older brother's meetings and dreaming of the day he could join. From Cub Scout to Eagle Scout, his path took him through multiple units, each shaping his confidence and character. At Troop 71, under dedicated leadership, he found his Scouting home—earning his Eagle, mentoring younger Scouts, and continuing to serve long after his board of review. For Michael and his family, Scouting has always been more than badges and ranks—it's a shared legacy of adventure, values, and lifelong community. His story reflects the best of Scouting: growth, perseverance, and a commitment to giving back.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

THE HEART OF SCOUTING BEATS BECAUSE OF YOU

Our volunteers are the backbone of the Greater Tampa Bay Area Council. They are the mentors who cheer on a nervous Cub Scout at their first campout, the advisors who guide teens into confident leaders, and the steady hands that make every event, meeting, and milestone possible. In 2025, thousands of volunteers generously gave their time, skills, and passion to ensure that youth across our council could learn, grow, and discover who they are meant to become.

From running unit meetings and leading outdoor adventures to serving on committees and supporting councilwide programs, volunteers shaped every success highlighted in this report. Their impact is measured not only in hours served, but in lives changed—one Scout gaining courage, one troop learning teamwork, one community strengthened through service.

Scouting thrives because volunteers believe in the power of youth, believe in the mission, and believe in building a better future. To every leader, parent, mentor, and supporter: thank you. Your dedication prepares young people for lives of purpose, character, and leadership. We are better—stronger—because of you.

3,200+ Dedicated Volunteers

59,407 Volunteer Hours Donated

$1.94 MILLION Estimated Value of Volunteer Hours

2025 Silver Beaver Recipients

FRIENDS OF SCOUTING

CELEBRATING THE POWER OF THE SCOUTING COMMUNITY

IIn 2025, our Friends of Scouting events brought together supporters, community leaders, families, and volunteers who believe deeply in the mission of preparing young people for lives of leadership and service. Each gathering was more than a fundraiser—it was a celebration of impact, shared purpose, and the future we are building together.

This year's events showcased the strength of our Scouting community. From inspiring keynote speakers to heartwarming Scout stories, every moment highlighted why FOS matters: it fuels the programs, camps, training, and life-changing experiences that shape thousands of youth across the Greater Tampa Bay Area.

Through generous sponsorships, individual gifts, and passionate advocacy, attendees helped ensure every young person—regardless of background—has access to the opportunities Scouting provides.

Whether you joined us at a breakfast, luncheon, reception, or special gathering, your support helps deliver the adventures, mentorship, and leadership development Scouts rely on. Thank you for standing with us, believing in our mission, and investing in the leaders of tomorrow.

$1.2 MILLION

TOTAL MONEY RAISED

STRENGTHENING SCOUTING

THROUGH GENEROSITY AND SHARED PURPOSE

In 2025, the Greater Tampa Bay Area Council was lifted by the remarkable generosity of donors, foundations, businesses, and community partners who believe in the mission of preparing young people for the future. Their support fueled every part of our program—from camp improvements and leadership training to ScoutReach expansion and unit-level experiences that shape confidence and character.

Our partners invested not just dollars, but trust. They ensured that every Scout, regardless of background or circumstance, could access the adventures, mentorship, and learning opportunities that define Scouting. Their commitment helped us deliver safe facilities, high-quality programs, and innovative initiatives that open doors for thousands of youth across our region.

To our donors and partners: thank you. Your belief in Scouting's impact strengthens our entire community. Together, we are building opportunities, empowering leaders, and preparing the future—one Scout at a time.

2026 AND BEYOND

BUILDING MOMENTUM. EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY. PREPARING THE FUTURE.

As we look ahead to 2026 and beyond, the Greater Tampa Bay Area Council is focused on strengthening the programs, properties, and partnerships that prepare young people for lives of leadership and purpose. Building on the successes of 2025, we are entering the next chapter of Scouting with clarity, ambition, and an unwavering commitment to serving more youth across our region.

In the years ahead, we aim to expand access to Scouting by supporting new units, growing ScoutReach, and increasing visibility within the community through enhanced outreach and partnerships. We will continue investing in camp improvements and facility upgrades that create safer, more inspiring spaces for Scouts to learn and explore. Our program initiatives will focus on STEM opportunities, outdoor adventure, and leadership development, ensuring every young person can find a path that speaks to their strengths and interests.

Most importantly, we remain committed to supporting the volunteers, families, and donors who make Scouting possible. Together, we will build a vibrant future—one where every youth has the chance to discover their potential, develop their character, and shape their world for the better.

The journey continues—and the future has never been brighter.

SCOUTING 2025

A YEAR OF ADVENTURE AND ADVANCEMENT

Scouting America
Greater Tampa Bay Area Council

12,866 Youth Served in 2025

In 2025, our Council reached 12,866 young people across our communities. Each youth experienced hands-on learning, outdoor adventure, and character development that builds confidence, leadership, and resilience for life.

7,443 Scouts from Diverse Backgrounds

Scouting continues to reflect the communities we serve. In 2025, 7,443 Scouts came from diverse backgrounds, ensuring that Scouting remains accessible, welcoming, and relevant to families across the Tampa Bay region.

3,446 Female Scouts Served

Scouting empowers young women to lead with confidence. In 2025, 3,446 female Scouts participated in programs that emphasize leadership, teamwork, and real-world skills through adventure-based learning.

2,418 Youth Served by ScoutReach

ScoutReach removes financial and logistical barriers so more youth can experience Scouting. In 2025, 2,418 ScoutReach participants gained access to outdoor programs, mentorship, and leadership development they otherwise may not have received.

3,022 First-Time Scouts

Scouting welcomed 3,022 first-time Scouts in 2025. For many families, this marked the beginning of a journey built on belonging, discovery, and meaningful experiences that extend far beyond the first meeting.

254 New Eagle Scouts

Earning the rank of Eagle Scout represents years of dedication, service, and leadership. In 2025, 254 Scouts achieved this milestone, completing impactful service projects and demonstrating the highest ideals of Scouting.

LEARN MORE ABOUT SCOUTING AT TAMPABAYSCOUTING.ORG

$1.96M Est. Value of 59,407+ Volunteer Hours

Volunteers are the backbone of Scouting. In 2025, unit volunteers and Eagle Scout projects contributed more than 59,407 hours of service, representing an estimated $1.96 million in community value and countless moments of mentorship, leadership, and hands-on service benefiting youth and local communities.

$1.5M Total Popcorn Sold

Scouts raised $1.5 million through the annual popcorn fundraiser in 2025. These funds directly supported local programs, camps, and activities while teaching Scouts goal-setting, responsibility, and teamwork.

33,200 Pounds of Food Donated

Scouts answered the call to serve their neighbors. In 2025, 33,200 pounds of food were collected and donated to local food pantries, helping families facing food insecurity across our council area.

12,350 Merit Badges Earned

Merit badges connect learning to real-world skills. In 2025, Scouts earned 12,350 merit badges, exploring topics ranging from STEM and trades to health, conservation, and citizenship.

166 Community Partners

Scouting thrives through collaboration. In 2025, 166 community partners supported our programs through shared resources, mentorship, and opportunities that expand learning beyond the Scout meeting.

47 New Units Formed

Growth continues across the council. In 2025, 47 new Scouting units were formed, expanding access to Scouting in neighborhoods, schools, and chartering organizations throughout the Greater Tampa Bay Area.