

## **INDOMITABLE SPIRIT**

Today we lift up 27 exceptional leaders – 15 Silver Beavers, one Alumnus of the Year and 11 Pathmakers. Each of them has exemplified the ideals of Scouting and each has led by example. They, and the youth represented today who will follow them, have indomitable spirit. They have succeeded in spite of the odds. I'd like to spend a few moments reflecting with you on indomitable spirit.

Spirit may have different meanings to different people. International Scouting gives a Spirit Award to those who have “developed a greater appreciation and awareness of different cultures and countries.”

Scout spirit is unique. The Boy Scouts of America Mechanics of Advancement says: “*The ideals of the Boy Scouts of America are spelled out in the Scout Oath, Scout Law, Scout motto, and Scout slogan. Members incorporating these ideals into their daily lives at home, at school, in their religious life, and in their neighborhoods, for example, are said to have Scout spirit.*” This spirit is really important to us.

Indomitability is no less important. What does it mean to be indomitable? Webster's tells us it means “incapable of being subdued.” Subdued means “brought under control.” So to be indomitable is to remain independent, self-reliable and capable.

Scouting takes *indomitable* spirit. After 401 years, it takes indomitable spirit to be a black person in this country. While a wall is going up across our southern border, it takes indomitable spirit to be a LatMex person. When glass ceilings deny equal pay, it takes indomitable spirit to be or identify as female. When God is treated

like a four letter word, it takes indomitable spirit to be a person of faith. And when the National BSA must declare bankruptcy in order to compensate victims of past wrongs while ensuring a future for right doers, it takes indomitable spirit to put on your uniform and say "I am a Scouter and I support our youth, my unit, and our community." It takes indomitable spirit to teach youth about participatory citizenship, making ethical decisions, real leadership skills, and personal fitness.

Our Silver Beavers, Council Alumnus and Pathmakers all have indomitable spirit.

To our honorees I say, the Pathway to Adventure Council - your peers - chose you for this honor. Other adults, and the parents of the Scouts you have served so selflessly, wanted you to know how much you have meant to their children and their communities. We all appreciate and lift up your indomitable spirit.

This is an important recognition, yes, but it comes with a challenge – a challenge to continue what you have been doing, and to invite others to join you – to share your indomitable spirit. It's infectious. After all, it's only "one hour per week," right? One hour per week per Scout!

And so I close by saying *thank you*, thank you Silver Beavers, Pathmakers and Honor Guard Scouts for all that you have done, but more importantly for all that you *will do*, for Scouting.