

WELCOMING REFUGEES AND FOREIGN NATIONALS INTO THE BSA AND THE BSA ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM

International Committee, Michigan Crossroads Council BSA

JANUARY 11, 2023, update

Supporting Refugees & Foreign Nationals in the BSA

at <https://www.scouting.org/international/international-adventure/supporting-refugees-foreign-nationals-in-the-bsa/> states that refugees and international students living in the USA are welcome to join BSA units, earn BSA badges, and receive BSA credit for advancement completed in their home country. Details are below.

The third paragraph is:

While this guide is targeted specifically in support of refugees, please note that all foreign nationals living in the United States are welcome to participate in, register with, and/or transfer their international rank requirements to any eligible BSA program. This includes refugees, study abroad students, and international families working in the United States.

If you click on "**Can refugees join BSA programs?**", you reach this statement:

Foreign nationals living in the United States are welcome to participate in and register with any eligible BSA program. This includes youth who are refugees, study abroad students, and children of international families working in the United States. Please welcome these families into our scouting community and help them connect with local units.

If a youth has prior Scouting experience, foreign Scouts are entitled to have their accomplishments considered towards credit for BSA ranks. Please share the following policy with your local Advancement Committee.

BSA Guide to Advancement (2021), Page 35, Section 5.0.4.0 (updated version from the website)

5.0.4.0 Youth From Other Countries Youth from other countries who temporarily reside in the United States, or have moved here, may register in a BSA unit and participate in advancement. If progress from a foreign Scouting association is to be considered and applied to BSA requirements, then the foreign Scout must meet in person (or over electronic media) with members of the council or district advancement committee, along with at least one adult leader or committee member of the receiving unit. Previous advancement work is reviewed to determine the BSA rank—up to, but not including Eagle Scout rank—the youth is qualified to receive. The candidate must present evidence of membership and advancement from the previous association. Once a rank is determined, it is reported through Scoutbook or other internet portal for reporting advancement or on an advancement report. This procedure applies to all ranks except Eagle Scout, which is not considered equivalent to any other association's rank. If it can be established that Life rank has been achieved, then the council or district advancement committee can determine which BSA merit badges may be awarded based on previous effort and experiences that meet BSA merit badge requirements as written. This may leave a number of additional badges to earn—required or not—to achieve Eagle. Requirements for active participation, position of responsibility, Scout spirit, the service project, and the unit leader conference must be completed in a BSA unit. This procedure also applies to members of the BSA who, while living abroad, have earned advancement in another Scouting association.