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## PRESS RELEASE

### Houston (MN) Teen Set to Soar as One of the Nation's First Female Eagle Scouts

#### *This Young Woman is Set to be Among Hundreds in the Inaugural Class of Female Eagle Scouts*

**Houston Minnesota** teen Hailey Alfson recently made history when she became one of the nation's first female Eagle Scouts – a prestigious achievement attained by some of the country's most noteworthy figures. Hailey Alfson is among hundreds of young women who will make up the Inaugural Class of female Eagle Scouts.

“Earning the rank of Eagle Scout takes hard work and perseverance, and we are honored to recognize Hailey for this significant accomplishment,” said Joe Carlson, Gateway Area Council Scout Executive/CEO, “Along the journey to Eagle Scout, young people gain new skills, learn to overcome obstacles and demonstrate leadership among their peers and in their communities. These benefits are invaluable for everyone, and we are thrilled that they are now available to even more youth.”

Young women have been part of Scouting for decades in co-ed programs offered by the Boy Scouts of America (BSA), including Sea Scouts, Venturing, Exploring and STEM Scouts. The BSA expanded that legacy further in recent years by welcoming girls into Cub Scouts and then into Scouts BSA last February. Scouts BSA is the program for youth ages 11 to 17 previously known as Boy Scouts. Since then, tens of thousands of young women throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin and across the country have joined the organization's most iconic program with many, including Hailey Alfson, working their way toward the rank of Eagle Scout.

The inaugural class of female Eagle Scouts will be recognized during a Be the Change event held online on February 21, 2021 ( <https://www.scouting.org/bethechange> )

“I joined BSA because I wanted to experience the same things my older brother, an Eagle Scout, did when he was in Boy Scouts. Scouts fits in well with my passion for hunting, fishing, camping, canoeing and generally being in the outdoors. Being a part of the BSA organization has made me a better leader, friend and person. In Scouting I have been fortunate enough to experience the Philmont Scout Ranch, go winter camping, attend summer camp, develop leadership skills at National Youth Leadership Training and give back to my community. Being prepared is one of the most important life lessons I've learned in Scouting. Through Scouting I feel prepared to handle anything my future might bring me” said Hailey.

Eagle Scout is the program's highest rank, which only about 6% of Scouts achieve on average. To earn it, an individual has to take on leadership roles within their troop and

their community; earn a minimum of 21 merit badges that cover a broad range of topics including first aid and safety, civics, business and the environment; and they must research, organize and complete a large community service project.

Hailey's Eagle Scout Project involved refurbishing a 100+ year old railroad bridge for use by a local snowmobile club. She removed rocks and brush, and with assistance from snowmobile club members and troop members, replanked the 100' X 15' bridge so that the snowmobile club could reroute the trail over the bridge and off the highway.

"It was a project we had been wanting to do for a while but never did. Hailey stepped up and got it done" said Ron Lewison, member of Houston Money Creek Snowriders.

In addition to gaining skills that last a lifetime, individuals who earn the esteemed Eagle Scout rank can reference it for academic, vocational, and military recognition, including scholarships and advanced enlistment grade.

### **About the Gateway Area Council**

The Gateway Area Council provides programming to 1,700 youth throughout a nine-county region of Western Wisconsin and Southeast Minnesota with the help of nearly 600 adult volunteers. Gateway Area Council Scouting programs take place in Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, Vernon counties of Wisconsin and Houston County, Minnesota. For more information, visit [www.gatewayscouting.org](http://www.gatewayscouting.org)

The Boy Scouts of America provides the nation's foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training, which helps young people be "Prepared. For Life.®" The Scouting organization is composed of more than 2.1 million youth members between the ages of 5 and 21 and approximately 800,000 volunteers in local councils throughout the United States and its territories. For more information on the Boy Scouts of America, please visit [www.Scouting.org](http://www.Scouting.org).