

Jack & Debbie Furst

Giving kids a chance at transformation.

Being a member of historic Troop 1 in Paoli, Pa., was a transformational experience for Jack Furst. "It was a really impressionable time in my life," he recalls. "And that troop really set the foundation for me."

If Furst's early exposure to Scouting through Troop 1's fast-paced, high-adventure formula changed him, then the change has been equally important to Scouting as a whole. That's because as national leader of the multiyear effort to find, design, develop and program the site and facilities of the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve in West Virginia, Furst's fingerprints are all over what many consider the single most important development in a century of Scouting. Furst believes the Summit is a transformational place for youth made possible by the generosity of donors. "Our movement cannot thank them enough," he says.

In fact, when the Summit opened in 2013, it was a testament to one of the critical life skills Furst says he learned

while pursuing his ultimate rank of Eagle as a member of Troop 1. "It's all about finishing," Furst says. "Those who make it to Eagle Scout have demonstrated at a young age it's about finishing. That's a strong skill that serves you well no matter where you are in life."

After Furst reached Eagle in 1973, he and his family relocated to the Dallas area, where he later co-founded the investment firm Hicks, Muse, Tate & Furst. His adult Scouting involvement began at the council level. He has since served as president of the Circle Ten Council and continues to volunteer in his son's troop.

During a lifetime in Scouting that began when he was a 7-year-old Cub Scout and continues today with service as a member of the BSA's National Executive Board, Furst says the benefits he has gained and given through Scouting as a participant, volunteer, supporter and executive have been consistent. "To whom much is given, much is expected," he says. "You learn about the importance of teamwork and the importance of others."

Jack Furst frequently contributes his energy to Circle Ten Council's Wood Badge courses at Philmont Scout Ranch (left). His passion for both youth and adult leadership education drives his support of the Rayado Ridge Leadership Camp, a new facility for Philmont Training Center, NAYLE and some Wood Badge courses.

"And it was fun. The adult leaders in Troop 1 threw a terrific program. It captured my creativity and imagination. It was worthy of the time."

Furst says he regards Scouting as the best youth-development program. "I have a real heart for creating platforms for young people to gain confidence, courage, character and momentum in their life in a positive way to be contributors to society and to themselves," he explains. "It's important that every youth has the opportunity to have an outstanding Scouting experience that, if properly delivered, should give that kid a lifetime gift of confidence and momentum"

That is his aspiration for the Summit — that the youth who visit will have the sort of transformational experiences Troop 1 gave him. He also makes the point that being



involved with Scouting as an adult can be a powerful way to influence the next generation and the future.

"It's big, it's massive, and it's legacy-oriented," he says.

"There's no place you can get involved with your time, talent or treasure and get better results within each of those categories than the Boy Scouts of America."

BSA National President Wayne Perry (from left), Jack Furst and BSA Chief Scout Executive Wayne Brock (far right) join Scouting supporters to thank J. Brett Harvey (second from right) for his generosity in building the CONSOL Energy Bridge at the Summit Bechtel Reserve.

WHY WE GIVE

To pass on strong values to the next generation.

IF JACK ISN'T INVOLVED in a Scouting leadership activity, his wife, Debbie, likely is. From the time their son joined Cub Scouts and Debbie found herself as a den leader, through today in her current role as director of training for her local council, she has been an active adult volunteer.

The Fursts' support for Scouting stems from the BSA's support of the values they hold. And among the most important of those values is helping others. They're especially committed to helping America's youth. "It's a great program," Debbie says of Scouting, "because it exposes them to so many different things. A lot of kids would never get to do some of the things they do with Scouting."

Scouting also helps the Fursts pass their values on to their own children. "We want them to have a sense of being in it for other people, that it is not all about them," Debbie says. And they hope Scouting imparts leadership skills, as well as another dose of their emphasis on giving back. "Being a leader isn't about being bossy but about being a servant to others," Debbie says. Scouting helps instill that value.

For Debbie and Jack, another important benefit of supporting Scouting with their time and resources is that they, as well as the other adult volunteers, simply enjoy it. "Sometimes I wonder about some of the adults, whether they're in it for the kids or for themselves," Debbie says. "They're

having so much fun, and that enthusiasm powers a terrific program for our youth."

Both the Fursts say they feel Scouting is uniquely positioned to create and sustain these values, especially because of the opportunity it provides for adventures like climbing mountains, visiting the Summit or going to a jamboree. "These experiences tend to be in the top two or three events in a person's life by the time they're 20 years old," Jack says. "In most cases, they'll stay in the top 10 for a person's life. That's why we do it."

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