

# The Quest

## Planting the Seeds for Building World Class NYLT Programs



[www.nylt-ysdc.org](http://www.nylt-ysdc.org)

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"Youth leadership development is a treasure that the Boys Scouts has to offer its members. This course is particularly strong, and so long as we keep a staff of inspired servant leaders & continue to learn from ourselves and the participants it will be a phenomenal course." - Mark Curtis, Northern New Jersey Council

### Scoutmaster's Minute by Mr. Abrahamson & Mr. Kearney

Another year's YSDC is come and gone. As the Scoutmasters for the course, we challenge all of you to improve your NYLTs. You start by improving yourself.

You took a significant step along the path of improving yourself by participating in YSDC. However, that is just one step. Improving oneself is something we all work on every day.

You can improve yourself by developing your vision for your NYLT course. What will success look like for the course? For some of us, having a course is success. For others, it's about developing the next group of youth leaders to run future courses. Write down and communicate your vision for your course.

You can improve yourself by working on the Be, Know, Do of NYLT. BE - the leadership values you internalize in the form of the Scout Law. KNOW - the vision, content and

structure of your course. DO - "I promise to DO my best..." - the Scout Oath.

You can improve yourself by serving others. Servant leaders motivate their teams to a common vision and then serve and support the team to accomplish the vision. Level 5 leaders create a self-sustaining culture that lasts beyond their leadership tenure. How will your leadership result in a better NYLT course for the next generation of staff and participants?

Always embrace feedback as the gift that it is. Sometimes it isn't wrapped as well as it might be, but that doesn't make it less valuable. Build your NYLT to value feedback. Model giving feedback as a gift. Wrap it carefully using the tools we learned at YSDC.

We're excited for you as you take your skills to your NYLTs and look forward to learning from you in the future.

### NYLT Quick Tip

#### Making the Most out of Morning Assembly

Morning assembly brings some unique challenges as compared to the rest of the day's activities simply by it being morning assembly. A well-executed morning assembly is a great opportunity to set a good example every day. Here are a few key pointers to keep in mind:

**Start and end on time.** Be sure the whole staff is there early and ready to start on time.

**Lead by example.** If you have a process for patrol presentations at assembly, be sure to explain it thoroughly and follow it as a staff when you are presenting.

**Have a plan.** Know who is presenting what, to whom, in what order, and how long it will take. This is a great way to help keep on schedule.

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Network with other NYLT Staffers, Scoutmasters, and Course Directors at the **Alpine Conference**. Links for registration forms and more information is available at [www.nylt-ysdc.org](http://www.nylt-ysdc.org).

*Feedback is a gift. Send your feedback about the newsletter to [newsletter@nylt-ysdc.org](mailto:newsletter@nylt-ysdc.org).*

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## Gaining New Tools by Julian Macrone

YSDC was truly an amazing experience for me. It gave me the opportunity to meet and take advantage of a huge knowledge base emanating from youth staff from all over the Northeast, hike some of the most breathtaking trails I've been exposed to thus far, learn from the best NYLT staffers the region has to offer, and make some truly awesome friends in the process. The week I had the pleasure to take part of at Yard's Creek is something I'll remember for years to come, but by far, what YSDC had the most profound effect on was my ability as an NYLT staffer.

I was told it before I took the course, and came to fully realize it after staffing my home council's NYLT: YSDC gives youth the tools

they need to be the best youth staffers they can possibly be. YSDC's emphasis on incorporating EDGE into presentations allowed me to bring my presentation skills to a whole new level, and the change was visible as soon as I began practicing my own presentations for my council's course. Because of this, YSDC truly enabled me to be the best troop guide I could be, and in turn, made the experience for my patrol that much more special. My knowledge of the NYLT course also grew tremendously from my week at Yard's Creek, and gave me an even better idea of what true servant leadership – something that even my home unit will benefit from. All in all, I definitely consider YSDC one of the

highlights of my Scouting career, and I know that I was better able to serve my council's NYLT because of my participation. YSDC makes better youth staff. It's as simple as that.

Quick Tip continued from previous

**Have fun with a purpose.** It can be very easy to have too much fun in an effort to make it enjoyable for all with skits, fillers, and stories. Remember, and remind the staff, that even fun is best when it is a hidden learning experience.

**Don't forget about the Scoutmaster and his minute(s).** Just like a good clinch on a presentation, the wisdom of the Scoutmaster minute is very important; even though they may sometimes seem to redefine the definition of a minute.

**Evaluate.** It is easy to deem morning assembly just another simple task and forget to evaluate. Remembering to reflect and see day to day improvement, even for simple tasks.

### Where are you on your Quest?

NYLT staff are always refining and applying their skills to make a world of difference, be it inside and outside of Scouting. We'd like to hear about your experiences. Send your stories to [newsletter@nylt-ysdc.org](mailto:newsletter@nylt-ysdc.org), and we'll feature some in each issue.

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## The Special Place by Scott Backer

Scouts and adult leaders alike can attest to the fact that those boys who go through the NYLT program show much growth upon completion. Many declare that the leadership training, friendships, and confidence gained from their time spent at NYLT was one of the greatest times of their lives. However, this experience is only special because of the Special Place that Scouts and Scouters strive so hard to create. But what exactly is a Special Place and why is it such a vital backbone of the learning experience at NYLT?

A Special Place is an environment where everyone who exists within it, feels safe. For me, the prime example of Special Place is at the Youth Staff Development Course (YSDC). At YSDC, we stress that each participating staff member should at all times feel safe enough to both

learn and grow. In this Special Place, there is no toleration of putdowns, name calling, or anything that can be either mentally or physically harmful. And most importantly, acceptance of diversity is key. It truly is a beneficial environment to any leadership development course.

It is easy to say that we create a Special Place at NYLT because it is just "the right thing to do." However, if we compare our NYLT learning experiences to those that do not occur in a Special Place, maybe at school or work, the differences become obvious. What is it about the Scouting environment that allows us to create this Special Place, and thus an environment conducive to learning? Simply put, it's the values we share.

When we are outside of our "Scouting worlds," we are often

surrounded by others who do not share our common values in the Oath and the Law. At least, that is how it may appear. However, we can see that at courses like NYLT and YSDC, where a diverse group is brought together with a common vision and values, that it is this common bond that makes it possible to create a place where anyone can learn and grow.

Creating a shared set of values embodying mutual respect, support, and inclusion will benefit any team—within Scouting or any other part of our lives. It is our challenge as leaders to identify this set of values, inspire the team to embrace it, and then harness that atmosphere of respect and cooperation for the good of the group. It's hard to unite a group around a shared set of goals, but the rewards are worth it.