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By Jarom Shaver
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Excellence in Life and All 138 Merit Badges – Neil Mayfield

Cornelius Mayfield, or Neil for short, does not shy away from hard work. In fact, he looks for it, and then he thrives in it. Just before his 17th birthday, Mayfield accomplished what very few Boy Scouts have ever or will ever accomplish. Mayfield finished all 138 merit badges.

“Neil has a natural inclination to achieve excellence,” said Mayfield’s father. “For him, if he was going to earn 21 merit badges, the only thing that made sense was to earn them all.”

Mayfield’s hard work ethic and passion for Scouting started before he was a Boy Scout. At age eight, he started Cub Scouts with a uniform donated by his grandmother, who also is his role model. “When I turned eight she got me a full uniform and has provided support, encouragement and mentorship in every scouting endeavor since then.” said Mayfield. Mayfield went on to earn all his Cub Scout ranks, including all 20 Activity Badges while he was a Webelos.

Path to 138 Merit Badges

When he became a Boy Scout he really enjoyed the Scouting activities, especially camping. He earned his first merit badge and decided to set a goal to earn them all. He became a Den Chief for the Webelos Den and served for a year and a half, earning his Den Chief Award. He completed his Eagle in October of 2013 while living in Henderson, NV, part of the Las Vegas Area Council. In late 2013 he moved to American Fork, UT and continued his passion for earning merit badges. Neil completed his last merit badge in September of 2016.



One of the badges that stands out in Mayfield’s memory is the Space Exploration merit badge. He worked for weeks building his rocket with his counselor. He worked hard cutting and sanding the fins, painting, building the motor, putting composites together and getting the parachute ready. Mayfield was able to take his rocket out into the desert south of Las Vegas for launch with a rocketry club.



When asked why he would continue to do Scouting when there were all these other great things he was doing, Mayfield responded simply. "One of the reasons that I keep Scouting, even though I got my Eagle three years ago is because it continues to challenge and stretch me. I keep learning new things and making new friends. As new merit badges come out, I'll keep earning them."

Neil Outside of Scouting

Mayfield's passion for life and achieving excellence was always evident for Ryan Gunther, Mayfield's Scoutmaster. "Neil has a drive about him, a hunger to achieve, a goal-oriented approach to life that helps see him through anything that comes his way," said Gunther. "He sets his sights on something, and everything else just blurs away. He sees the goal and pursues it."

This is never more evident than when you see how much Mayfield has achieved outside of Scouting. He constantly draws from the diverse knowledge and experience he gained while earning 138 merit badges. Mayfield studies multiple languages including German, Japanese, Dutch, Russian and Swedish. He is also a section leader in the American Fork High School Marching Band as a tenor on the drum line.

Mayfield plans to attend college after high school. We are sure Mayfield will succeed in any environment he is placed in, with his hard work ethic and his thorough background in Scouting.



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