



Fountain Valley, CA– Irvine residents Koby and Ben Nguyen have earned all of the available Boy Scout merit badges, a feat (according to meritbadgeknot.com) accomplished by fewer than 283 Boy Scouts since 1928. The two brothers became the first Vietnamese-Americans in the history of Boy Scouts of America to individually earn all 138 merit badges. “In the history of Boy Scouting, there have been about 52 million Boy Scouts,” said Lien Doan Chi Lang Charter Representative Ly Le. “It’s incredible to think that only 283 scouts have accomplished this feat to date, and to be the first Vietnamese-American scouts to do so is admirable.”

Koby, currently a 16-year-old junior at Beckman High School, joined Cub Scout Pack 279 when he was 8 years old and later earned his Arrow of Light, the highest award in Cub Scouting. He set his goal of earning all the merit badges as a way to learn new things and make new memories. “Every merit badge has a story behind it, and the process of earning merit badges allowed me to develop and learn what I wanted to do in life,” Koby said. “I was able to expand my knowledge and become more aware about the world around me.” Koby learned how to cook, communicate, and be a better citizen with each merit badge that he earned. His favorite merit badges were shotgun shooting, backpacking, cooking, camping and hiking. “I enjoyed these merit badges because

they were accomplished with my close scout brothers. They have always supported me and our bonds are built with memories of laughter, hardship, and brotherhood.”

The most challenging merit badge that Koby earned was backpacking at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. “It was five days of hiking, carrying fifty pounds, and eating from a bag for breakfast, lunch, and dinner,” Koby said. “By the end, I felt exhausted, but it was one of the greatest experiences of my life.”

Koby currently holds the position of Varsity Team Captain in Varsity Team 279. He also earned his Eagle Scout Rank in November 2015 as Lien Doan Chi Lang 71st Eagle Scout. Besides scouting, Koby is part of Beckman’s all-male dance team.

Ben, currently a 14-year-old freshman at Beckman High School, joined Cub Scout Pack 279 when he was 6 years old and eventually earned his Arrow of Light. After he advanced to Boy Scout Troop 279, he earned his first merit badge, electricity, at the age of 10. After earning more merit badges, he set his goal of attaining all 138 merit badges when he was 11 years old because he “knew how rare it was to achieve all of them.” He understood how difficult this feat would be, but he was determined to accomplish this goal with his older brother, Koby.

Ben shared that he learned a great deal along the way while earning all the merit badges. “Scouting taught me many things,” Ben said. “The most important thing I learned is life skills. Each merit badge was like an obstacle, and there were different ways to solve them.” His favorite merit badge was scuba diving because “of its journey of getting it.” Even though he was barely 12 years old, Ben dedicated countless hours over a 5-month period in order to earn the PADI certificate. He was determined to earn this merit badge, even though the scuba diving tanks and equipment weighed almost as much as him. Ben served as a patrol leader and is currently working on his Star Rank. He is also part of Beckman’s track team.

Ben and Koby are both part of the Lien Doan Chi Lang multi-level Vietnamese-American Scouting troop. Their individual accomplishment of achieving all 138 available merit badges represents a huge honor for Lien Doan Chi Lang as well as Boy Scouts of America.

About Lien Doan Chi Lang

Lien Doan Chi Lang (LDCL), formed on February 22, 1979, is the oldest Vietnamese-American Scout Group in the United States. As a Vietnamese-American Scout Group, LDCL's main purpose is to adhere to the scouting principles and methods, originated by Sir Baden Powell, as well as to retain the Vietnamese scouting traditions.



As a member of Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of America, United States and International Central Committee of Vietnamese Scouting, LDCL has produced a total of 77 Eagle Scouts and 34 Gold Award recipients for the last 37 years.

Today, with a total of 250 youth and adult leaders, hundreds of parents, and more than a thousand former scouts, LDCL has become a big scouting family with a long tradition that spans more than three decades.

Carolyn Zullo

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Carolyn Zullo is the Marketing Director for the Orange County Council, Boy Scouts of America. Her more than 10 years with the movement began as a camp staff member and has taken her across the country and back working for various councils on her journey. She is an artist, designer, photographer, traveler, and lover of dogs, chocolate, and classic rock.

