



Recognizing Abilities

Jim Africano Receives the 2016 Woods Services Award

The 2016 Woods Services Award goes to James F. Africano of Teaneck, NJ, Northern New Jersey Council, at this year's National Annual Meeting in San Diego.

Woods Services, a private, nonprofit organization serving individuals with disabilities, created the award in 1978. The award is given in memory of Luther Wellington Lord, who served as a residential supervisor for more than 23 years at The Woods Schools. During his years of service he founded and coordinated the BSA program at The Schools, and it was under his supervision that the first national Eagle Scout Award for an individual with disabilities was achieved. One national Woods Services award is granted each year to a BSA volunteer for exceptional service and leadership in the field of Scouting with disabilities.

In Jim's 41 years as an adult volunteer, he has held countless leadership positions. He is currently Assistant Council Commissioner for Special Needs/disAbilities.

Jim is the founder and current Chair of his council's Scouting Special Needs/disAbilities Committee, but his involvement with Scouts with special needs goes back as far as 1970 when he created a Disability Awareness Challenge for his council and ran it for ten years. Not only has he done countless programs for his council (and the Greater New York City area) since then, but to this day, there continues to be disability awareness challenges in the Northern New Jersey Council because of his tireless work. Also at the council level, through Jim's leadership and inspiration, the committee has developed a sophisticated mobile program that has been used as an outreach at many council events.

At the national level, Jim has been extremely involved in the National Jamborees. He has been on the Disabilities Awareness Challenge team in 1993, 1997, 2001, 2005, 2010, and 2013. He was on the committee to help with the transition of the Disabilities Awareness Challenge to the Summit between 2010 and 2013. His responsibilities have included field events layout and site management, staff scheduling and recognition, helping choose programs and editing multiple newsletters.

His efforts have impacted well over 50,000 Scouts, Scouters and families!