



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 25, 2018**

## **AdvanceCamp to Bring Over 2,000 Boy Scouts to the Solano County Fairgrounds on September 28 and 29**

*Independent non-profit provides opportunity to complete merit badge requirements*

**Solano County, CA** – The Solano County Fairgrounds is excited to be the new home of AdvanceCamp, a non-profit organization that provides an opportunity for Boy Scouts from ages 11 to 17 to work with counselors in order to complete the requirements to earn their merit badges. Starting at 3:00 p.m. this Friday, September 28 and continuing overnight and through the following afternoon, more than 2,000 Boy Scouts are anticipated to participate in the activities which include more than four dozen merit badges, fifteen of which are required to obtain the Eagle Scout designation. Participants can also include optional overnight camping at the Fairgrounds and an add-on excursion to Six Flags Discovery Kingdom.

AdvanceCamp began in 1999 as a method for scouts to work on finishing badges started at scout camps. Since then, this annual event provides over 60 badges and most Trailhead requirements for young or new scouts to work towards advancement. The event has been in Contra Costa County for the past 18 years and needed to change locations due to contractual difficulties with past facilities. “AdvanceCamp is excited to have found a new home at the Solano County Fairgrounds,” stated Executive Director, Steve Hoagland. “The facilities are a great fit for our program and we plan on being here for a long time.”

AdvanceCamp takes over 300 volunteers to run the badge stations, prepare food for staff, teach Trailhead activities and coordinate the movement of scouts throughout the day. It is the largest single advancement event for Boy Scouts in Northern California with scouts coming from eleven different Boy Scout Councils from all over the northern part of the state. In addition to activities on the Fairgrounds, four buses will be used to transport scouts to various locations off site for specialized badge activities like aviation, hiking, swimming, welding and climbing.



The idea for AdvanceCamp began in 1998 when a scout talked to Hoagland about the fact that he had partially finished the requirements of a number of unusual merit badges from summer camps he had attended. He wanted to finish them but could not find a merit badge counselor to work with. Thus was born AdvanceCamp. The first program was held at Contra Costa Fairgrounds with about 300 scouts and only about 15 merit badge offerings. Today, AdvanceCamp has grown to almost 2,200 scouts, offering 55 merit badges, with 150 counselors and 200+ volunteers to perform all the necessary functions at camp.

The mission of AdvanceCamp is to support educational opportunities for young men and to provide an effective youth program that develops personal, mental and emotional fitness, gives opportunities to develop self-reliance, develops a keen respect for the basic rights of others, and prepares boys for participating and giving leadership within their community and world. AdvanceCamp is a 501c3 non-profit run by registered volunteer Scouters with 100% of all funds collected going back towards the program.

In addition to merit badge activities, there are also opportunities to complete the requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class ranks. These requirements could have been started at another scout event, started at a previous AdvanceCamp, or initiated through contact with a counselor to be completed at a later time. Online registration for AdvanceCamp is now closed but limited spaces may still be available for select activities. Registration must be done as a Troop and completed by the Troop Leader. Visit [AdvanceCamp.com](http://AdvanceCamp.com) for more information including class availability, schedule, forms and camp requirements.

Established in 1949 to produce the annual County Fair, the Solano County Fair Association is a 501(c)3 non-profit agency that is governed by a Board of Directors which is appointed by the Solano County Board of Supervisors. The Solano County Fair Association has been providing educational, cultural, artistic, commercial and recreational programs to the residents of Solano County for over 70 years. The mission of the Solano County Fair Association is "to ensure a positive experience for the public by providing a year-round multi-purpose venue that showcases and celebrates the wide variety of resources and activities available to our diverse community."

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