

# Royal Rangers Advancement System Update 2016

*March 11, 2016*

## **PROBLEM:**

- Recent changes in the role & significance of the GMA have not been popular and have created inconsistencies with the historic role of the GMA in the program. The current GMA is not equivalent to the historic GMA, implying that they are two very different or separate awards that share the same name, leading to confusion.
- The Honor GMA is a valuable and significant goal for boys but it is not attainable for those who did not complete Ranger Kids or did not join the program until the 6<sup>th</sup> grade or later. Many boys are therefore discouraged from continuing with the program long-term since they see the new “highest award” as unattainable for them.

## **SOLUTION:**

1. Move the GMA to a new position in the advancement system that is similar to the historic role and significance of this award
  - a. Boys may earn the GMA by earning the highest award in any TWO age groups (with a minimum age of 12 yrs & completion of the Capstone Project)
2. Create an intermediate step to earning the Honor GMA and name both awards in such a way as to represent them as embellishments on the GMA rather than separate awards
  - a. Boys may earn the “GMA with Merit” by earning the highest award in any THREE age groups
  - b. Boys may earn the “GMA with Honors” (formerly Honor GMA) by earning the highest award in all FOUR age groups.
3. Rename all three annual awards in Adventure Rangers to something new to completely disassociate them from the BMA, SMA, and GMA awards of 2002 & 2010:
  - a. AR Year 1 BMA will become “Adventure Bronze Award”
  - b. AR Year 2 SMA will become “Adventure Silver Award”
  - c. AR Year 3 GMA will become “Adventure Gold Award”

## **ADVANTAGES:**

1. Re-establishes the GMA in a position of significance comparable to the historic GMA (completion of two age groups)
2. Maintains the GMA as the most significant award in the program, with the GMA with Merit and GMA with Honors awards being represented as “embellishments” to the GMA.
3. Older boys can earn the GMA without participating in DR (or working back in previous groups).
4. A minimum age of 12 yrs retains the traditional standard of the GMA.
5. Maintains the “GMA with Honors” (Honor GMA) in its current role as representing completion of the entire program

6. Provides intermediate steps of recognition for boys who may never earn the GMA with Honors but still qualify for an award beyond the GMA (i.e. the GMA with Merit)
7. Establishes a direct equivalency between the highest awards in RR and those of Girls Ministries
  - a. GMA = Bronze Medal of Honor
  - b. GMA with Merit = Silver Medal of Honor
  - c. GMA with Honors = Gold Medal of Honor

#### **SIGNIFICANT FACTORS:**

- It would still be true that the GMA is technically not the highest award in the program, and that the GMA with Merit and GMA with Honors are actually higher (as was the case with Buffalos prior to 2010), but the comparative equivalency between the new GMA and the historic GMA would likely be perceived as an acceptable restoration of the prominence of the GMA, even if it's not the "absolute highest" award available. Furthermore, we will celebrate the GMA as the "most significant" award in the program, with the other two being "embellishments" to it rather than separate awards.
- All regular requirements for AR advancement awards will remain unchanged. Only the names of the awards will change.
- Silver Buffalo awards will remain a part of Adventure Rangers, worn on the Adventure Gold award. Buffalos will not be associated with any of the GMA series of awards.
- The Capstone Project will remain unchanged, and still be required for the GMA.

#### **INSIGNIA**

1. Insignia for all the three GMA awards (GMA, GMA with Merit, and GMA with Honors) will utilize the same current GMA ribbon, medal, and patch, with (1) star being worn on the ribbon & medal to signify "with merit" and (2) stars to signify "with honors". No special insignia will be available to represent the merit or honors embellishments on the GMA patch.
2. Only the highest award from the GMA series may be worn, to signify that they are three versions of the same award, not three separate awards.
3. Medals insignia for the new AR awards
  - a. Adventure Bronze Award – blue & white ribbon with AR pendant
  - b. Adventure Silver Award - red & white ribbon with AR pendant
  - c. Adventure Gold Award - purple & white ribbon with AR pendant
4. The GMA (with or without merit or honors) will be worn in the #3 position in the medals & ribbons order of wear, after the medals of valor and courage.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION & TRANSITION**

1. These changes will take effect in the spring/summer of 2016, as soon as the new award insignia becomes available. Updated Discovery and Adventure Rangers handbooks will be available at that time. Updated Expedition Rangers handbooks and Leader Manual will be available some time later, as determined by current inventory. Award applications on the national web site will also be updated at that time.

2. From this date through 12/31/16, boys have the option of earning the current 2010 GMA (with the Capstone Project) or the 2016 Adventure Gold award (without the Capstone Project). After 12/31/16 the 2010 GMA will no longer be available.
3. From this date through 12/31/16 boys have the option of earning the BMA and SMA awards or the Adventure Bronze and Adventure Silver awards. After 12/31/16 the BMA and SMA awards will no longer be available.
4. Boys who have earned the BMA & SMA awards may continue to wear them or wear the new Adventure Bronze & Adventure Silver awards (but they cannot wear both).
5. Boys who have earned the 2010 GMA will still be considered GMA recipients but must earn the highest award in (3) age groups to qualify for the GMA with Merit, and all (4) for GMA with Honors. That is, the 2010 GMA represents the completion of (1) age group, not (2).
6. Boys who have earned the 2010 Honor GMA may continue to wear that insignia or the GMA with Honors insignia (but they cannot wear both).