

Michael J. Hardebeck
Western Region World Scout Jamboree Advisor

My typical introduction to mentors is for me to reflect upon my Scouting relationship with them. I will deviate from that model as I introduce this week's featured mentor, Michael J. Hardebeck. Rarely am I able to share the "Venturing heart" of a mentor. That treasured opportunity was provided me in Mike's response to my request to add him to our Mentor Hall of Fame.

Amy,

Greetings. It is a pleasure to hear from you again. We exchanged emails before the National Meeting last May about the World Jamboree and reaching out to the youth in all the regions.

We spoke a little at the National meeting; attached is a photo from that event. Wow, you were busy, but made time to speak with reporters, and be incredibly gracious in spite of the demands on your time.

I also attached a photo of the incoming and outgoing cabinet taken as you were speaking. Now this is impressive - young leaders with the weight of a country on their shoulders. You and these young leaders are what the scouting program is all about. There is no other organization that I know of that provides such responsibility, character development, honor, faith, and service.

It is not my objective to be recognized. I am capable of leading and making a fool out of myself at the same time. Rather, I do my best to get the adults around me to serve as roadies while the youth take center stage. I get goose bumps watching our children laugh, lead, and find terrific excitement from rolling in the snow to taking the National Stage.

I guess I owe my good friend Dr. Bruce (Noonan) a little special attention for mentioning me. If it wasn't out of respect for Bruce, and the work Craig Murray has done with the web site and with our World Jamboree crew, I would consider declining. However, your observation about getting the word out about the World Jamboree is very important. If this is a medium to help make sure we reach every advisor in the country to get these flyers out, to make phone calls to all their youth, to highlight the importance to our Professional staff that this World Jamboree is also a membership tool that grows our programs - then yes - put me on - I'll even sing Baby Shark, Yogi Bear, or the Alligator Song.

Many very fine people have been working to get the message out on why the world jamboree is so important for our youth to get out of hometown America and experience first hand what is going on in the world and how they can make a difference in their lifetime. There are many, far more deserving of recognition. The mentor hall of fame is a remarkably humbling home of brilliant people who've dedicated so much time to the success of our children. I'm not sure I belong there. But I have lived out of America for 20 years and I desperately believe that we have a rare opportunity to share something very special with the youth in America.

*I am humbly, Yours in Service,
Michael J. Hardebeck*

The Venturing program develops youth leaders and, with the assistance of mentors like Mike Hardebeck, provides them the opportunity to use those leadership skills - today and in the future.

As a student at an international school with 30% of my classmates from countries around the world, I echo Mike's sentiment that it is important for youth in the United States to experience first hand what is happening in our world. The World Jamboree is an excellent opportunity for our Venturers to experience a variety of cultures while meeting international Scouts. The Western Region is fortunate to have Mike Hardebeck as one of its World Jamboree Crew Advisors.

--Amy DiFrancesco, 2005-2006 National Venturing President

Michael J. Hardebeck



Michael J. Hardebeck
Tokyo Bay 2006

Mike Hardebeck has lived in Japan for a combination of over 20 years, serving the United States Navy, the community in Yokosuka Japan, and Scouting. Currently Mike's passion is bringing the World Jamboree experience to Boys and Girls age 14-17 for the 100th Anniversary of Scouting in England in July 2007. His work is with professionals, parents, organizations and youth to make sure that every youth knows that this is their chance at the best foreign exchange program ever.

Mike Hardebeck is the Far East Council Training Chair, Achpateuny Lodge Advisor, and National Council Representative. Mike also serves as Venturing Crew Chairman for two crews, Assistant District Commissioner for the Yokosuka Zone, and serves most of the units in Japan in some capacity, including summer camp program director for 4 years. Mike has been a contingent leader for Philmont Treks, Sea Base Cruises, World Jamboree Troops, National Order of the Arrow Conclaves, Sectional Conclaves, National Leadership Seminars, has served on the National Jamboree Staff for Action Centers, and as a member of the Philmont Training Center faculty.

Mike joined Cub Scouting in the Rio Grande Valley in south Texas and was a member of several troops in Houston and Austin Texas before earning the rank of Eagle Scout on March 11, 1978, Troop 10, Austin Texas. He served on summer camp staffs and upon assignment to his first ship in Japan, became the liaison for the Boy Scouts of Nippon, and later renamed, the Scouting Association of Japan. Mike served local units as assistant Den Leader and Assistant Scoutmaster before accepting District and Council positions.

Mike has received awards for Scouter's Training, Woodbadge, International Scouter's Award, District Award of Merit, James E West Fellowship, OA Arrowman Service Award, Commissioner's Key, Commissioner's Arrowhead, African Scout Association, Woodbadge Staff, OA Vigil Honor.

Mike is a graduate from The University of Texas, Austin with a Bachelor of Science in Communications. While at Texas, Mike was the Battalion Commander for the Navy ROTC program and upon graduation was commissioned as an Ensign in the U.S. Navy. Among his assignments, he graduated with distinction from the Naval Postgraduate School, in Monterey California with a Masters of Science in Information Systems. Mike has served the

U.S. Navy for 23 years, including the past 13 years as a Software Engineer and Systems Analyst at the Navy base in Yokosuka Japan.

Mike is a community servant, having coached youth in three sports for six years, served as the Director of Adult Religious Education for six years, charter member of the first Knights of Columbus chapter in the Orient, Parish councils, lay leader, and motivational speaker for the last 4 years.

Mike is married the former Ms. Kathryn Gordy of Austin Texas. They have been married for 21 years and together they have three children: James (Eagle Scout), Victoria, and Ashley.