

## Scott Altman Essay

Our nominee has demonstrated perseverance, courage, and teamwork throughout his life. Pekin, Illinois native, Scott Altman, had a mission growing up; it was to fly. At 6 feet and 4 inches Altman found out he was too tall to become an Air Force Pilot. Despite this set back and an offer from the Navy to work with submarines, Altman was determined. He took his passion for science and flying to a new level. Altman is now an astronaut for NASA and has spent more than 51 days in space.

A former Cub Scout and Boy Scout, Altman's impressive talent and dedication to his work has earned him the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Navy Strike/Flight Air Medal, the Navy Commendation Medal, the Navy Achievement Medal, and in 1987 won the Outstanding Achievement in Tactical Aviation award as selected by the Association of Naval Aviation. Scott Altman also did many of the flying stunts in the movie *Top Gun*.

In spite of such an impressive list of accolades, Scott Altman still carries himself with a confident, kind demeanor that is reminiscent of his time in Scouting. He credits the Boy Scouts of America for providing him with a solid foundation. "[Scouting] it's a part of everything, from flying an F-14 over Iraq to flying a space shuttle around the earth. It's something you take with you in your core values," said Altman

Teamwork building skills learned in Scouting are a tool Altman uses to work with NASA mission crews. Altman took a crew to the National Outdoor Leadership School for 10 days and went kayaking in the Prince William Sound area of the Gulf of Alaska. He

said it was a great way to teach the crew how to work together and bond in the same way as you would on a Scouting trip.

As a commander of the final Hubble space telescope servicing mission, Altman knows the importance of teamwork. He had to work with different groups across the country and pull them together to install a new power unit, camera, and solar arrays on the Hubble. Throughout the entire project, he said to his teammates “Everybody needs to do their job, and a little more, and we can accomplish great things;” something he learned in Scouts.

Altman leaves future generations of Scouting with a few words of wisdom, “Find your dream and keep after it. Start early, learn all you can, and never give up.” Scouting is a great place to do so.