



Order of the Arrow  
Office of the National Chief  
Irving, TX 75038

July 20, 2025

Brothers,

In just a few hours, the National Council of Chiefs will begin. Lodge and section leaders from across the country are arriving at the Philmont Training Center for what promises to be a life-changing week, one where we will grow together and learn how to bring the Order of the Arrow's new vision to life.

Before NCOC commences, I wanted to take a brief moment to share a few thoughts and words of advice—both for those joining us at Philmont and those supporting us from afar.

Over the past few months, I've had the privilege of attending one of my favorite kinds of events in the Order of the Arrow: section conclaves. These gatherings, filled with Arrowmen from across a state or even multiple states, bring together hundreds united by a shared love for our organization—for a week-end of program, fellowship, and more fun than can be put into words.

Each of these conclaves has rivaled the last in terms of excitement and energy, which I firmly believe is a vital characteristic in an Arrowman. It's that unapologetic enthusiasm that I find so admirable, especially among the young people who pour their hearts into our organization. Seeing Arrowmen proudly chant for their lodge, chapter, and friends never fails to bring a smile to my face. And conclaves offer that joy in abundance.

Around a month back, I was able to see a specific example of this while attending the Section E20 Conclave at J.N. Webster Scout Reservation in Ashford, Connecticut. This event was jam-packed with excitement from seven lodges

across the Northeastern United States.

There was one particular Arrowman who unapologetically showed his excitement to me and others throughout this weekend. On Friday evening, just before the opening show, a young Arrowman approached me with a beaming smile and introduced himself to me, saying, "My name's Justin, " he said, "but you can call me JT. " Without hesitation, he invited me to sit with his lodge, Owaneco Lodge #313, during the show. I gratefully accepted.

As we took our seats and the roll call began, I noticed that Owaneco's numbers were smaller than some of the other lodges. I soon was shown that it did not matter. When Owaneco was called, Justin leapt to his feet, cheering with a passion that could not be ignored. His enthusiasm was infectious. The Arrowmen around him rose to join in, drawn to the spark he had ignited.

I found his excitement and pride for his lodge so incredibly inspiring, not just to me, but to the Arrowmen around him as well.

I feel this speaks volumes about the power and responsibility that falls on each of us to bring excitement to the Order of the Arrow and Scouting.

After that interaction, I pledged to myself that I would always unapologetically show my excitement and love for the Order of the Arrow in every action of mine, and I would call on each of you to do the same because when we lead with passion, when we let our joy be seen and felt by others, we will surely realize our vision: to be why Scouts want to stay in Scouting.

To Justin, I say thank you for sharing your excitement with me and others. You are truly an inspiration.

To all those joining us at Philmont this week: bring your excitement. Let it be heard. Let it be seen. And watch how others will rise with you.

And to those supporting us from afar: know that your passion still matters deeply. Carry it with you into every conclave, every place, every interaction—because you, too, are shaping the future of our movement.

With five months left in my term as national chief, I look ahead with excitement. And I am continuing to uphold a promise to myself, and to you all, to continue in our efforts to ensure the excitement, greatness, and love of the Order of the Arrow.

In Service,

A handwritten signature in brown ink, reading "Samuel Crowder". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Samuel Crowder  
National Chief