

DISPOSITIONS



EISENHOWER LEADERSHIP PATCH Boy Scouts



Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1909

DEFINITION: Good citizens understand, value, and demonstrate civic **DISPOSITIONS**—that is the traits, habits, attitudes, and behaviors that support civic engagement in public life.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER: “To be wise and reflective citizens . . . to cultivate the mind and to nourish the spirit, to be wholly educated, in the sense that man is a spiritual and intellectual and physical being. America needs citizens strong in their ideals and spiritual convictions, healthy in their bodies, and tirelessly inquiring in mind.”

CITIZENSHIP IS ABOUT DISPOSITIONS: In a speech to the Boy Scout Jamboree at Valley Forge on July 4, 1950, Dwight D. Eisenhower explained why the nurturing of civic **DISPOSITIONS** in every generation of American citizens is necessary to secure our nation’s survival:

“The glory of this nation is that it was conceived in courage, born in sacrifice, reached its maturity in the unselfish devotion and labor of patriots. So long as time endures, America will need these qualities of her citizens. And so long as these qualities do endure, so long will this country stand free, strong and pre-eminent among the nations.”

On January 21, 1953, Dwight D. Eisenhower was sworn in as 34th President of the United States. Later that day, he wrote in his diary that the presidency represented “a continuation of all I’ve been doing since July 1941—even before that.” By age 62, Eisenhower had spent a lifetime developing the civic **DISPOSITIONS** essential to good citizenship. He looked to boyhood heroes, people like Tom “Bear River” Smith, a martyred police chief who brought the “rule of law” to the Wild West chaos of Abilene, Kansas. He idolized George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, admiring their devotion to duty, generosity of spirit, and enduring patience. His parents, David and Ida, taught lessons of integrity, cooperation, compassion, and a respect for the dignity and worth of the individual. West Point imbued in him the very spirit of its lofty

motto— “Duty, Honor, and Country.” It was General Fox Conner who opened his eyes—and his heart—to an abiding affection for the ideals of liberty and self-government that had inspired the founding of the United States. As President of the United States, Eisenhower lived his civic **DISPOSITIONS**, expressing, “There is nothing wrong with America that faith, love of freedom, intelligence, and energy of her citizens cannot cure.”

VISIT THE EISENHOWER MUSEUM: Enter the museum and continue until you reach the last exhibit of the Presidential Gallery. “Afterthoughts,” is located on your right, just before the exit from the museum. Here you will find quotations, photographs, and textboxes about the Eisenhower Presidency and legacy. View the video that features the Eisenhower family and their recollections of Dwight D. Eisenhower—the president, the father, and the grandfather. The video lasts approximately 15 minutes. As you watch, listen for clues about the consequences of the decisions, actions, and example that Dwight D. Eisenhower left to each of us. Consider that you, too, will leave a legacy behind one day. What will your legacy be? How do you want people to remember you as a person and a citizen?

DISPOSITIONS AND CITIZENSHIP: What are the three most important lessons you have learned about the importance of civic **DISPOSITIONS** and good citizenship from your study of Dwight D. Eisenhower?

SHARE WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED: With whom will you share what you have learned about civic **DISPOSITIONS**? List them below.

- 1.
- 2.

YOUR EISENHOWER LEADERSHIP PATCH AND ROCKERS: When you have completed this handout, you have earned the **EISENHOWER LEADERSHIP PATCH** and the **DISPOSITIONS** rocker. If you have already earned the patch, completion of this activity signifies that you have earned the rocker. These items are available at the Visitors Center and Presidential Gift Shop. There are six rockers for the Boy Scout level. Boy Scouts may earn up to two rockers per museum visit.