



Military Heritage Museum

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Gary Butler Biography

Gary Butler is currently celebrating 50 consecutive years of service working for non-profit organizations. At age 15, his first paid position began as a summer camp dishwasher at Yawgoog Scout Reservation. He went on to serve six years working at Scout Camp, followed by two more years working as a childcare counselor at a home for foster children. In 1980, he joined the Boy Scouts of America as a full-time district executive. After several promotions, in 1991 he became the Scout Executive of the Rip Van Winkle Council, New York; followed by Scout Executive of the Penn's Woods Council, Pennsylvania; and in 2001 Scout Executive of the Greater Niagara Frontier Council, New York.

In 2005, Butler was promoted to the Director of Finance Position, National BSA Council, Irving Texas. He subsequently received several promotions including: Group Director - Council Solutions 2008, Assistant Chief Scout Executive – Council Operations 2010, and in 2013 he was promoted to Deputy Chief Scout Executive and Chief Operating Officer. A Distinguished Eagle Scout, Gary retired from the Boys Scouts of America in early 2016 after 35 years of service and relocated to southwest Florida.

Gary most recently served as the Executive Director of the Military Heritage Museum, a role he assumed in April of 2018. Gary led the Museum through its relocation and expansion project. After moving to its new location in early 2019, the Military Heritage Museum quickly became a major attraction in the area. Currently, the Military Heritage Museum is the largest military themed museum on the Florida Gulf Coast, from Naples to north of Tampa. In 2024, Gary stepped down from the Executive Director role and now serves part-time as the Museum's Director of Strategic Initiatives.

Prior to joining the Military Heritage Museum as executive director, Gary served as the Interim Regional Executive Director for the Charlotte County Family YMCA where he helped lead the successful acquisition of the Charlotte Y by the Sky Family YMCA headquartered in Venice, Florida.

Gary currently serves on the Charlotte County Council Tourism Development Council, on both the board of directors of Tidewell Hospice and Tidewell Hospice Foundation as Treasurer, and on the Governance Committee of Empath Health. He recently stepped down as the Treasurer of the Punta Gorda Historical Society.