

*Banding  
Together*  
FOR OUR  
VETERANS







# 2023-2024

## *Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary*

### *National Officers*



**PRESIDENT** Carla Martinez (center)

**SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT** Brenda Bryant (upper left, then counter clockwise)

**JUNIOR VICE-PRESIDENT** Lois Callahan

**CONDUCTRESS** Kim Harney

**CHIEF OF STAFF** Penny Hurt

**CHAPLAIN** Donna Mills

**SECRETARY-TREASURER** Ann Panteleakos



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Appreciate and proud are only a couple of words that describe how I feel about each and every one of my sisters, brothers and comrades. Thank you all so much for everything you do with the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary by supporting our Programs, because in the end this helps our veterans, service members, their families and communities.

When I was elected as the VFW Auxiliary National Guard back in 2018, I was asked how I felt, all I remember is saying "I feel like I am on cloud nine and nothing is ever going to change that," and it has not changed. The only thing I regret is that my mom and dad were not here to watch me accomplish this in person. Knowing they are my guardian angels and watching out for me makes me smile as I travel around giving updates on our organization.

I have chosen to continue with the same 12 Programs as Past National President Jane Reape. This will enable our organization to continue growing without having to interrupt things while trying to learn and mentor others on a new Program. Over the past 40 years that I have been with VFW Auxiliary, I have watched so many things change as well as the people and it is all for the better. Keep in mind that we want you to come up with ideas on how you can help our veterans. I can't wait to hear about your creative and wonderful ideas when I meet you in person during my travels.

My theme for the 2023-2024 year is: ***Banding Together for Our Veterans.*** I know that with your help we can all accomplish this. Fight for what our veterans need by helping with the bills we want supported by our legislators. Help our youth to understand the importance of education. Our hospitals and care centers need us volunteering so our veterans can get the care that they need whether it be short or long term.

I chose my theme, ***Banding Together for Our Veterans,*** because it reminds me of something I hear as a dual member (because I am also VFW member) and that is "Veterans helping veterans." If they can help each other then we, at almost 500,000 members, can also since we have the potential for at least twice the membership they do because we are the family members of veterans—it is because of the veterans that the Auxiliary exists.

There are many more things that we need to do, so let's link our arms together and reach out in solidarity and in extraordinary ways to show our veterans just how much we love them. Along with my theme I have chosen a motto for my year and while this is not usually done, I want everyone to remember: "Be Humble and Kind."

I am so humbled that you have put your faith in me to lead this truly spectacular organization because we are the best veterans organization in the world. Thank you all for your continued support.

Loyally,

Carla J. Martinez

VFW National Commander-in-Chief Sarmiento &  
Auxiliary National President Martinez

**Combined Special Project  
2023-2024**

**The VFW National Home  
Welcome Center Renovation Project**

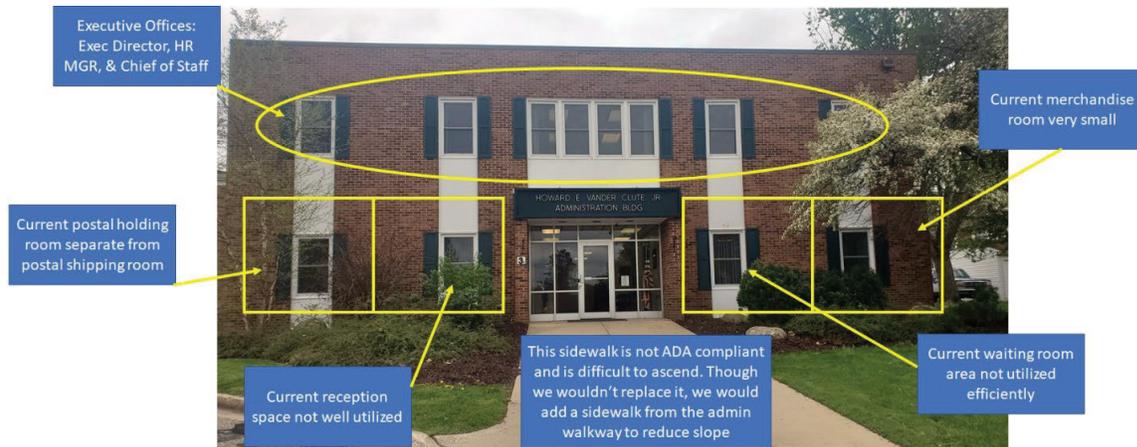


The goal is to remodel the existing lobby area into a welcoming retail space, updated reception and information area.

Just a few of the things that will be done with the renovation:

- Floors would be replaced with a nonslip surface
- A sidewalk would be added from the administration walkway to ensure ADA compliance
- Increase retail space and expand items carried for resident convenience, such as milk & bread
- Postal & parcel operations will be combined for resident & postal worker convenience

**Current Administration Configuration**



Beginning July 1, 2023, members may donate to this project in MALTA by selecting Make a Gift, National President's Special Project.

Checks can be made payable/sent to:  
VFW National Home  
3573 S Waverly Rd. Eaton Rapids, MI 48827

**Reference "Welcome Center Renovation Project"**

Or go to: [vfnationalhome.org/donate](https://vfnationalhome.org/donate)  
In comments section type:  
"Welcome Center Renovation Project"

**For questions, please contact:**  
**Lisa Jackson, "Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home Ambassador**  
[buddypoppyvfwhomeamb@gmail.com](mailto:buddypoppyvfwhomeamb@gmail.com)

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# CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE

**Every Department has the opportunity to join the Circle of Excellence.** The criteria are listed below. National Headquarters will track this information. Consider this a checklist for the Program Year of important items and deadlines that must be met. Membership is an important factor and will be encouraged by the Conference Membership Coaches, who will be working with Department Membership Chairmen to achieve the membership portion of the Circle of Excellence criteria. Log into your MALTA Profile, Duties, Circle of Excellence to complete your criteria form. **Your Department MUST achieve 250 points or more to enter the Circle of Excellence.**

## Criteria for entering the Circle of Excellence:

### 1. Growth in Membership:

Membership Standings by June 30, 2024 based on June 30, 2023 final membership statistics.

Membership will be based on figures listed on the CMR - Paid, Cancelled & Deceased report in MALTA.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
110		Over 101% in membership, not including deaths (current percent)
100		100% Plus in membership, not including deaths (current percent)
90		100% Plus in membership, including paid deaths (paid percent)
80		97-100% in membership, including paid deaths (paid percent)

### 2. Comply with Bylaws/Administrative Follow-Through:

A) All installation reports MUST be received at National Headquarters by July 31, 2023.

If not, the Department MUST submit a request for a suspension by that date for time to mentor and rejuvenate the Auxiliary. Once suspension is lifted, points will be awarded.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
15		Installation report received at National Headquarters by July 15, 2023.
10		Installation report received at National Headquarters by July 31, 2023.

B) All Auxiliaries MUST be bonded by August 31, 2023. If not, the Department MUST submit a request for a suspension by that date to allow time to mentor and rejuvenate the Auxiliary. Once suspension is lifted, points will be awarded.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
15		All Auxiliaries bonded by July 31, 2023.
10		All Auxiliaries bonded by August 31, 2023 or request for suspension.

C) The Department MUST have submitted a Council-approved audit and budget by October 1, 2023 or request an extension on or before that date. Once extension is met, points will be awarded.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Council-approved audit and budget by October 1, 2023 or request an extension.

D) Department, District and Auxiliary Officers (Presidents, Secretaries and Treasurers) dues MUST be paid by December 31, 2023 or submit an email or letter to relieve any non-paid Officers to National Headquarters by January 5, 2024.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Dues of Officers at all levels paid by December 31, 2023 or email or letter to relieve non-paid Officers to Headquarters by January 5, 2024.

# CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE

## Criteria for entering the Circle of Excellence (continued):

- E) The Department MUST have submitted the names of their VAVS Representatives to National or request an extension on or before that date by October 1, 2023.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Submit VAVS documentation to National Headquarters by October 1, 2023.

### 3. Department Communication:

- A) The Department MUST communicate with every Auxiliary at least quarterly in one or more of the following ways: email, mail, phone, website, newsletter, E-Newsletter or General Orders.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Communicate with Auxiliaries throughout the year.

- B) The Department Chairman of each National Program MUST send at least four (4) promotionals and/or communications to their National Ambassador by April 30, 2024.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Department Chairmen are to promote National Programs at the Department level.

### 4. Training:

The Department MUST hold at least one training session\* on each of the following:

*\*Training session can take place at a Department School of Instruction, meeting, Convention or other organized training events. These trainings can be combined into one session.*

- A) How to Identify an Unhealthy Auxiliary

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Department to host training session on how to identify an unhealthy Auxiliary by November 30, 2023.

- B) National Programs and Organizational Knowledge (e.g. Bylaws, Ritual and Booklet of Instructions)

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Department to host training session on National Programs and Organizational knowledge by November 30, 2023.

- C) The uses of MALTA & the Online Academy by April 30, 2024.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Utilize MALTA and the Online Academy by April 30, 2024.

# CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE

## Criteria for entering the Circle of Excellence (continued):

### 5. Programs Participation and Working Together on a Common Goal:

A) The Department President MUST complete and submit the online Year-End Report.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
25		Department President MUST submit the online Year-End Report by May 10.

B) What did your Department do to engage every Auxiliary in the work of the organization?

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		Department President MUST describe what the Department did to engage every Auxiliary in the working of the organization on the Circle of Excellence Report by May 10.

C) All Auxiliaries MUST complete at least one project, activity or donation that benefits veterans by April 30, 2024. If not, the Department MUST submit a request for a suspension by that date.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		All Auxiliaries MUST complete at least one project, activity or donation that benefits veterans by April 30, 2024. If not, the Department MUST submit a request for a suspension by that date.

D) The Department must hold a joint VFW and VFW Auxiliary Department-level project in addition to current National Scholarships programs. Project must be completed by April 30, 2024.

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		The Department must hold a joint VFW and VFW Auxiliary Department-level project in addition to current National Scholarships Programs. Project must be completed by April 30, 2024. Project to be described in the Circle of Excellence Report by May 10.

E) Any Auxiliary that is below 100% in membership on January 31, 2024 MUST be contacted by a Department Officer to determine a need for mentoring and/or other assistance. The Department Officer must contact the Auxiliary on or before April 15, 2024. The Department Officer must then report to the Department President by April 30, 2024.

*(If all Auxiliaries and Districts in your Department are at 100% on January 31, 2024 you will automatically receive 10 points.)*

Possible Points	Actual Points	Criteria
10		A Department Officer is to contact any Auxiliary below 100% in membership on January 31, 2024 on or before April 15, 2024. Department Officer is to report to the Department President by April 30, 2024. Outcomes are to be described in the Circle of Excellence Report by May 10.

# CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE

## Circle of Excellence Awards:

### **AWARDS FOR DEPARTMENTS AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN**

1. \$500 to the Department for meeting all of the criteria listed on pages 1-3 and entering the Circle of Excellence.
2. Circle of Excellence Year Patch for Department Banner Ribbon.

### **AWARDS FOR DEPARTMENT PRESIDENTS**

1. Circle of Excellence medallion.
2. Circle of Excellence tie or scarf.
3. Circle of Excellence pin.

# OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AWARDS

FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN 2023-2024

**The Outstanding Performance Awards are given each year to recognize hardworking Departments and Department Chairmen who have given an extra amount of effort.**

**The Outstanding Performance Award:**

- \$200 goes to the one Outstanding Department in each of the 10 Program Divisions\*.
- A Citation and a Keepsake goes to the Department Chairman of the one Outstanding Department in each of the 10 Program Divisions\*.

**Second-Place Outstanding Performance Award:**

- \$100 goes to the one Outstanding Department in each of the 10 Program Divisions\*.
- A Citation goes to the Department Chairman of the one Outstanding Department in each of the 10 Program Divisions\*.

**Programs Judged**

- Americanism
- Auxiliary Outreach
- "Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home
- Extension & Revitalization
- Historian & Media Relations
- Hospital
- Legislative
- Membership
- Mentoring for Leadership
- Scholarships
- Veterans & Family Support
- Youth Activities

**The Selection:**

The National Program Ambassadors of each Program listed will select the recipients. Chairmen will be judged on quality, creativity and originality of all communications, promotions and events. When a Chairman does anything to promote or publicize the Program to the members and the community, he/she should send a copy of the item or communication or a description of the event or presentation to the National Program Ambassador.

**Required to qualify:**

A minimum of four mail and/or email promotions to the members in his/her Department must be sent to the National Ambassador by April 30, 2024.

**Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. If neither the winner nor Department leadership are in attendance, awards will be mailed to recipients from National Headquarters upon return from the National Convention.**

*\*Program Divisions will be announced at the start of the Program Year.*

2023-2024

# NATIONAL PROGRAM AMBASSADORS

AND

# NATIONAL PROGRAM AWARDS

**\*Please note: The *Program Book* is printed prior to the National Convention. Depending on the *Bylaw* decisions made at Convention, section numbers may be different from the printed version.**

# AMERICANISM AMBASSADOR / PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR



**LINDA ROLOFF**

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(205) 637-0612  
roloff3@outlook.com

## More Than Letters

The words we use are immensely important! Just as our nation was “spoken into existence” so too we must speak the words we need people to hear in order to manifest the reaction we want to see. For expedience, more than anything else, we tend to shorten things or use acronyms. The acronyms, while accurate, don’t pack the same punch as saying the entire word. This year and going forward, I encourage you to use **#MoreThanLetters** especially when referring to our POWs, MIAs and KIAs. They are more than letters. Encourage the use of the words:

### **Prisoner(s) of War, Missing in Action, Killed in Action**

- Acknowledge them daily
- Learn and say their names
- Have a dedication ceremony
- Host a special program
- Write about them in your newsletter
- Share their stories
- Meet their families
- If your state has a POW/MIA Day ceremony at the Capitol, GO! If it doesn’t, start one.

Fly the POW/MIA flag under “Old Glory.”

Ask your governor to issue a proclamation acknowledging the third Friday in September as POW/MIA Remembrance Day.

Remember, not all of our treasured service members returned home from their duty protecting us and our way of life. So really, our celebration of other patriotic holidays (while important) would not be possible without those who put their lives on the line, who were

taken prisoner, went missing in action, or who were killed in action defending and guarding the nation. We must all remember that and include an acknowledgment of them in every holiday observance.

Present day America is the only nation on earth which was established as an ideal. Other nations rely upon the tribal bonds (racial and/or ethnic) of their people or the geographic constraints of their traditional homelands to be recognized as a nation or people. America is solely unique in that it was “conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.” - Abraham Lincoln.

America is in fact a concept; a pronoun for the mystical agreement into which her people, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, social status or ability, must enter daily. That unseen and unspoken agreement unites them more fully and securely to one another than anything else can because they must choose it daily. What this means is Americans are Americans because THEY SAY SO! We must agree and declare for ourselves that our neighbors are our compatriots because they are Americans in order for our citizenship to live in us and for us to live in it!

America is an almost perfectly realized vision. Though the founders of our nation were far from perfect, their concept of what this new nation could and should be was as close to pure as may earthly be expected of any society. We have been guaranteed in our founding documents the unabridged right to grow and achieve without limits. Such freedom is unmatched and worth every ounce of devotion we may give. It is ours to nurture, safeguard and pass on to future generations. In this way, America is also a verb; one which requires the action of her people to survive and thrive!

Americans are passionate about being Americans!  
Americanism is:

- Freedom and opportunity
- Ideal of loyalty
- Cultural, political and moral virtue
- Public ideology
- Honoring diversity
- A declaration of unity
- Defined by its rights AND responsibilities
- A shared vision and security
- Spoken into existence
- Chosen daily by its people
- Celebrating patriotic holidays together
- United under and honoring the Flag

The celebration of our patriotic holidays, the hearts that swell with pride, inspired by hearing our national anthem and the respect paid to our national standard (Old Glory, the red, white, and blue: The Flag) are the hallmarks of the precious freedom we enjoy as American citizens, and it is every American's duty to pass on the awesome story of this nation to her next generation!

### **Patriotic Instructor**

Here's why it's important to know American and Auxiliary traditions: it bonds us together in a kinesthetic and visual way, ties us to our past, and gives us a strong foundation on which to build an inspiring future.

### **#AuxTRIBE\***

Perhaps the American spirit and Americanism are most closely achieved by her citizens who serve in the military. At basic training, all recruits are "stripped" of their individualized selves through a crucible of exertion, toil and physical strain. One may rightly say that they are broken down to their base humanity and rebuilt into an ideal soldier, sailor, marine and citizen. The recruit is encouraged by their battle buddies to endure and bonded to them for their shared strength and skill. They rightly feel elevated, honored, special and necessary. They feel like they are a part of something great, and they have a clearly defined common goal and lifestyle. At the end of the process, they are a new creation, for all intents and purposes, they are members of a new #AuxTRIBE.

When many of our servicemen and servicewomen leave the service, they can feel displaced, depressed, disillusioned, and lost without the identity they shared with their comrades. Often, this is identified as:

- Post
- Traumatic
- Stress

Their feelings are chalked up to battle fatigue or exposures to the extreme experiences of combat. Ponder with me if you will that PTS might also be defined as:

- Post
- Tribal
- Separation

The extreme feeling of being out of uniform, without their comrades, and lacking a common mission with those around them. They long to talk about their shared experiences and be amongst those who not only value their service but understand it.

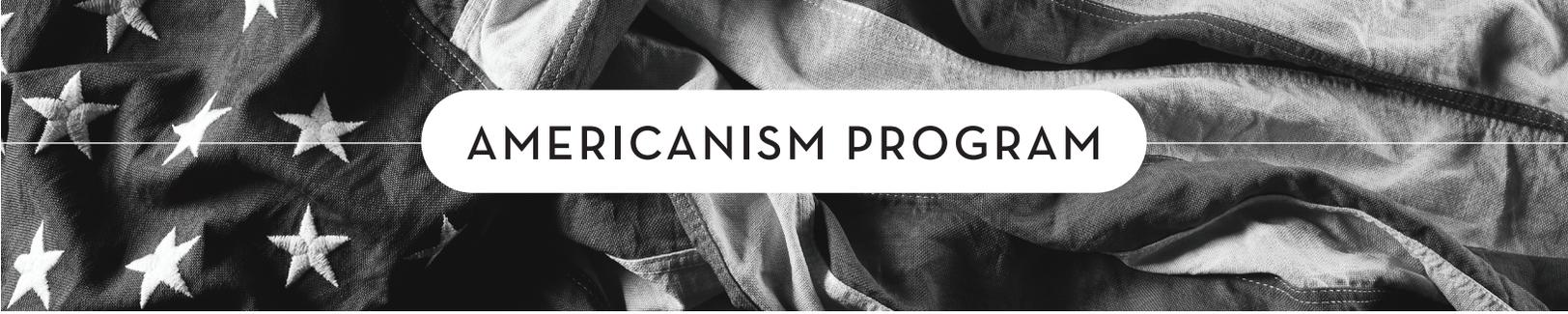
This is where we come in. We provide that community that they are looking for. We become their #AuxTRIBE. Our Auxiliary traditions, uniform and mission to serve veterans and their families, are recognizably similar to the traditions, uniforms and mission they had in the service.

When we know and adhere to the Auxiliary traditions and rituals, we create the environment that these veterans are yearning for:

- Embody brother/sisterhood
- Protect the peace of our Post(s)
- Be there for each other
- Learn and practice your VFW Auxiliary rituals
- Proudly wear our uniforms/and gear
- Encourage #AuxTRIBE mentality

Everything we do should build up our #AuxTRIBE and draw in our veterans!

\* **Tribe:** A social group made up of many families or generations that share the same language, customs and beliefs; a group of persons with a common character, occupation or interest.



# AMERICANISM PROGRAM

## Flag Education • Promote #AuxiliaryPatriotism • POW/MIA Recognition • Star Family Recognition

This definition of “Americanism” was originated by the Commanders-in-Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, United Spanish War Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, the National Commanders of the American Legion and the Disabled American Veterans of the World War at a conference held in Washington, D.C., in February 1927:

“Americanism is an unflinching love of country; loyalty to its institutions and ideals; eagerness to defend it against all enemies; undivided allegiance to the Flag; and a desire to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and posterity.”

### Patriotic Instructors

The Patriotic Instructor educates members about the proper salute to the U.S. Flag, as well as the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. He or she also takes the time to understand the VFW Auxiliary Ritual and the Federal Flag Code. He or she helps members to understand the traditions and ceremonies of the organization. The *Understanding Auxiliary Traditions* helpsheet and video are available in MALTA Member Resources.

For detailed information on Auxiliary traditions, rituals and patriotic ceremonies, reference the *VFW Auxiliary Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual*. Patriotic items and educational materials are available for purchase through the VFW Store at 1-833-VFW-VETS or online at [vfwstore.org](http://vfwstore.org).

### Flag Education

A large part of demonstrating Americanism and patriotic spirit is respecting and properly caring for the U.S. Flag. Flag etiquette covers everything from proper display of our Flag to acceptable conduct around this symbol of our nation.

For more information about Flag etiquette, the history of our Flag and to read the U.S. Flag Code, visit [vfw.org/community/flag-etiquette](http://vfw.org/community/flag-etiquette).

### Respect for the Flag - Engaging the Community

- Flag Education in Schools – Educating our youth about patriotism is an important step on the path to good citizenship. Encourage members of your Auxiliary to volunteer in schools and educate youth about the importance of respecting our Flag. Volunteers can visit individual classrooms or give a presentation at a school assembly. For more resources, see MALTA Member Resources.
- Recognition of Outstanding Community Flag Display – When a community member, business or organization takes the care and time to display our “Stars and Stripes,” it reinforces patriotism to the entire community. You may recognize this display of patriotism by presenting a certificate of appreciation from your Auxiliary.
- Flag Retirement Ceremonies – These ceremonies honoring our Flag serve as one of the most beautiful forms of respect for our country. This is the perfect way to involve the whole family of Auxiliary and VFW members. Flag retirement ceremonies can also serve as an event involving the entire community. For more information on this and other Flag etiquette, refer to MALTA Member Resources.

### Promote Patriotism – Celebrating Patriotic Holidays

Patriotic holidays are an opportune time to involve the whole family and bring community attention to your Auxiliary. When fun family events are presented to the community, prospective new members will walk through your door. Patriotic holidays can serve as the perfect way to show that your Auxiliary supports patriotism, veterans and their families as a top priority. For more information about patriotic days and ways to celebrate, visit MALTA Member Resources.

**National Vietnam War Veterans Day** – March 29  
National Vietnam War Veterans Day honors a generation of men and women who served and sacrificed. March 29 marks the anniversary of when the last combat forces departed South Vietnam in 1973, even though some troops remained until their final departure in 1975.

**Loyalty Day** – May 1

On May 1, 1930, 10,000 VFW members staged a rally at New York's Union Square to promote patriotism. Through a resolution adopted in 1949, May 1 evolved into Loyalty Day.

**Armed Forces Day** – Third Saturday in May

A day to pay tribute to the men and women currently serving in our nation's armed forces.

**Memorial Day** – May 30 (Traditional)

Patriotism calls for all citizens to be reminded of the deaths of their fellow countrymen during wartime. By honoring the nation's war dead, we preserve their memory and thus their service and sacrifice.

**Flag Day** – June 14

This day celebrates the official symbol for the United States: our "Stars and Stripes." Flag Day was first recognized by Congress on June 14, 1777.

**Independence Day** – July 4

On this day in 1776, our forefathers formed a new nation by adopting the Declaration of Independence.

**Patriot Day** – September 11

This day is to perpetuate the memory of those who perished in the attack on America that occurred on this date in 2001.

**POW/MIA Recognition Day** - Third Friday in September

POW/MIA Recognition Day honors the commitments and the sacrifices made by our nation's prisoners of war and those who are still missing in action. National POW/MIA Recognition Day, traditionally on the third Friday in September, is one of the 6 days specified by law on which the black POW/MIA flag shall be flown over federal facilities and cemeteries, post offices and military installations.

Auxiliary members are passionate about bringing attention to former prisoners of war and those missing in action by holding ceremonies to both educate their communities and honor these special veterans. One way to honor these veterans and educate youth and the community on this subject is by having a Missing Man Table Ceremony. This practice provides a visual demonstration of the significance of POW/MIA Recognition Day. You are encouraged to share this ceremony with youth groups partnering with the Auxiliary. Find a sample of the ceremony wording and table setup in MALTA Member Resources.

**Gold Star Mother's & Family's Day** -

Last Sunday in September

On this day, Americans are encouraged to display the Flag and hold appropriate ceremonies as a public expression of our nation's gratitude and respect for our Gold Star Mothers and Families.

**Veterans Day** – November 11

This is an opportunity to honor the brave men and women, both living and deceased, who fought America's battles past and present.

**Pearl Harbor Day** – December 7

This day is in remembrance of the same date in 1941 when Japanese bombers staged a surprise attack on U.S. military and naval forces in Hawaii.

**Branch of Service Birth Dates**

- U.S. Army - June 14, 1775
- U.S. Marine Corps - November 10, 1775
- U.S. Navy - October 13, 1775
- U.S. Air Force - September 18, 1947
- U.S. Coast Guard - August 4, 1790
- U.S. National Guard - December 13, 1636
- U.S. Space Force - December 20, 2019

**Military Flags Order of Precedence**

According to Department of Defense guidelines, military service flags, insignias, etc., should be displayed in the following order (left to right as you face the flags): Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force and Coast Guard.

**Star Family Recognition**

You may have seen a Blue Star, Gold Star or Silver Star service flag or service banner in the window of a home in your area. A service flag or service banner is a banner approved by the Secretary of Defense that family members of those serving in the United States Armed Forces can display.

- Blue Star Families can display a flag or banner with a white field and a red border, with a blue star for each family member serving in the United States Armed Forces during any period of war or hostilities.
- Gold Star Families can display a flag or banner with a white field and a red border, with a gold star that represents a family member who died during military operations.
- Silver Star Families can display a flag or banner with a blue, an outer red and inner white border, with a silver star that represents a family member who was injured, wounded or became ill during or as a result of combat.

You are encouraged to recognize and honor these families in your community.

# AMERICANISM PROGRAM AWARDS

## Awards for Auxiliaries

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community that our VFW Auxiliary acronyms are “more than letters.”
  - Citation to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event that educates their community that our VFW Auxiliary acronyms are “more than letters.” Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Americanism Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging. The Department Americanism Chairman must email National Headquarters by April 30, 2024 at [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org) a total combined list of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community that our VFW Auxiliary acronyms are “more than letters.”

The Department Americanism Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Americanism Ambassador by April 30, 2024 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

## Awards for Departments and Department Chairmen

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Americanism Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion that demonstrates VFW Auxiliary acronyms are “more than letters.” Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.
2. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of the Program goals listed at the top of Page 9. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

# AUXILIARY OUTREACH AMBASSADOR



SANDRA PINSONAULT

PO Box 6  
East Dorset, VT 05253-0006  
(802) 345-6911  
outreachamb@gmail.com

The VFW Auxiliary Outreach Program involves your Auxiliary volunteering to help nonprofit organizations and local groups with needs in your community. Auxiliary Outreach is time given to help, not monetary or in-kind donations. It is a **partnership** wherein one or more of your Auxiliary members help another organization or group make their project successful. Like us, many organizations are short on volunteers.

Ask what your Auxiliary can do to help the community, not what they can do to help us! Form a partnership to help other organizations by reaching out into your communities, local groups and organizations and offer to assist, then present the opportunity to your Auxiliary for a vote.

The first step in making your Auxiliary Outreach Program successful is reaching into the community. Here are a few basic steps:

- Find local groups and organizations in need of assistance.
- Ask what your Auxiliary can do to help them.
- Vote at your Auxiliary meeting to approve the activity.
- Form the partnership.
- Report the details.

### Where do you find these partnership opportunities?

- Ask your members; most members belong to more than one organization.
- Look in your local newspaper for upcoming events.
- Check local community bulletin boards.
- Check your local and surrounding town/city websites for their calendar of events.

### Suggestions for VFW Auxiliary Outreach

- Work with local police, fire and EMT on their activities (Child ID, fire safety and fire prevention activities at local schools.)
- Work with local parks and recreation departments to plant trees, clear trails and beautify parks.
- Serve food at soup kitchens or distribute food at food banks/cupboards.
- Drive for Meals on Wheels or help prepare food for delivery.
- Assist with local fundraising walks as a volunteer, not an entrant.
- Help your local library by working at book fairs.
- Assist local youth groups and at senior centers.
- Help your town or city during elections but remain non-partisan.
- Partnerships can be a single day event or ongoing events throughout the year.

### Benefits of the Auxiliary Outreach Program

- Helping others
- Learning new skills
- Meeting new people
- Developing a sense of purpose
- Personal growth

### Keys to making your Auxiliary Outreach Program successful

- Find organizations that need your help.
- Vote on the activity at your meeting.
- One or more Auxiliary member(s) must participate.
- Wear your VFW Auxiliary attire (name badge, shirt, hat, jacket, etc.)
- Report the hours volunteered.

### Events that are held at your Post Home are allowed if:

- The VFW or Auxiliary did not plan the activity, nor does it benefit our organizations.
- The organization is only using the facility as a venue to hold their event and they complete all of the preliminary planning on their own.
- We are only there as volunteers to help on the day of the event.

Find many resources that outline Auxiliary Outreach behind your MALTA login, Member Resources, Auxiliary Outreach.



# AUXILIARY OUTREACH PROGRAM

## Building Partnerships • Auxiliary Participating in Outreach

Auxiliary Outreach is volunteer work performed by one member, a group of members or an Auxiliary for the benefit of their community or its institutions. Auxiliary Outreach can:

- Be performed by people of any age, skill set or ability level.
- Benefit any group of people such as children, senior citizens and those with disabilities.
- Benefit animals, the environment and public spaces.
- Be done in communities of all types and sizes – rural, suburban and urban, small and large.

We volunteer to make a difference in our community, but we receive benefits including:

- Helping others
- Learning new skills
- Career advancement
- Increased confidence
- Meeting new people
- Fighting stress and depression
- Developing a stronger sense of purpose
- Personal growth

### Outreach and the VFW Auxiliary

While emphasis is placed on our core VFW and Auxiliary Programs, we realize Auxiliaries also participate with other community organizations. Auxiliaries can now report and be recognized for such community work through the Auxiliary Outreach Program.

Projects may be done by the Auxiliary alone or with the VFW Post.

Collectively, all of our volunteer hours need to be counted to effectively show the importance of the local VFW and VFW Auxiliary to the community.

Be visible and show your pride in the VFW Auxiliary by wearing Auxiliary-branded attire when you participate in Auxiliary Outreach. A shirt, jacket or hat with the Auxiliary emblem can start a conversation about the Auxiliary and what we do. It is also a great way to show members volunteering out in our communities and not just in our Post Homes.

### What's Considered Auxiliary Outreach

When an entire Auxiliary volunteers for an organization outside our own, it should be considered Auxiliary Outreach **if the project was approved by the Auxiliary and recorded in the meeting minutes prior to the project.** On rare occasions such as a natural disaster or emergency community need, the project may be voted on after the fact. (When the entire Auxiliary volunteers and only one member is able to show up, it still counts as Auxiliary Outreach.)

Examples include:

- Participation in walks that benefit other organizations as an event spotter, water station volunteer, timekeeper, etc. (Walking or running in the race is not part of Auxiliary Outreach.)
- Partnering with local police on child ID kits.
- Partnering with firefighters on fire safety and prevention.
- Partnering with EMT's to host CPR training.
- Partnering with parks and recreation departments to plant trees, adopt-a-park initiatives and develop community art installations.
- Volunteering at an animal shelter.
- Serving food at soup kitchens.
- Delivering food for Meals on Wheels.

When we participate in Auxiliary Outreach we become better citizens of the communities in which we live.

### What's Not Considered Auxiliary Outreach

- **Auxiliary Outreach is for projects NOT AFFILIATED with VFW or VFW Auxiliary Programs.**
- Volunteer work that is performed for the benefit of the Post or Auxiliary is NOT considered outreach service. Examples of projects that do not qualify include:
  - Repairs or maintenance to the Post Home.
  - Cooking or serving a meal for a Post or Auxiliary fundraiser.
  - "Buddy"® Poppy distribution.
  - VFW or Auxiliary meetings, Conventions, Conferences or schools of instruction.
  - Church activities for one specific congregation and not the entire community (e.g., usher, elder, deacon, minister, etc.)

**QUALIFIES**

Spending time in a local homeless shelter kitchen serving meals, bussing tables or cleaning up.

Partnering with the police or fire department on bicycle or home safety training class.

Your Auxiliary approves helping a local cancer group setting up their event or manning a booth.

Partnering with the garden club to clean up local parks.

Help a youth group collect food donations for the local food pantry.

**DOES NOT QUALIFY**

Taking comfort items to the local USO.

Donating trophies to a youth sports group.

Hosting a luncheon/dinner for a local community club.

Sending an Auxiliary check to support a charity that organized a walk-a-thon or run.

Collecting clothing and comfort items for homeless veterans at the Post Home. (This would be Veterans & Family Support.)

Passing the collection basket at church services.

# AUXILIARY OUTREACH PROGRAM AWARDS

## **Awards for Auxiliaries**

1. Most outstanding community partnership with another organization.
  - Citation to every Auxiliary that partners with another organization within their community. Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Auxiliary Outreach Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging.

The Department Auxiliary Outreach Chairman must email National Headquarters by April 30, 2024 at [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org) a total combined list of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences with the most outstanding community partnership.

The Department Auxiliary Outreach Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Auxiliary Outreach Ambassador by April 30, 2024 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

## **Awards for Departments and Department Chairmen**

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Auxiliary Outreach Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the most effective promotion of the Auxiliary Outreach Program. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.
2. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of the Program goals listed at the top of Page 13. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

# “BUDDY”® POPPY & VFW NATIONAL HOME AMBASSADOR



## LISA JACKSON

51 Edward Road  
Townsend, MA 01469-1107  
(978) 400-1658

buddypoppyvfwhomeamb@  
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### “Buddy”® Poppy

The “Buddy”® Poppy Program was started about a hundred years ago and it continues to help our disabled veterans, service members and their families around the world. This Program provides continuously from the flower’s fabrication through distribution. It provides support to those who make our Poppies and also to those who benefit from our Poppy drives.

How do we use the “Buddy”® Poppy? We benefit from donations received while distributing Poppies within our communities. We create Poppy displays to bring awareness about veterans and service members to the community. We use them to decorate packages given to our hospitalized veterans. We use them as table decorations for our events. We decorate our wreaths for Memorial and Veterans Day with Poppies. The more we use, and the more we buy, the more veterans, service members and their families benefit.

When reporting on the “Buddy”® Poppy Program, it is important to know that we only count the money going out. We do not need to know how much you brought in from your drives. We need to know how much your Auxiliary donates to veterans and the number of Poppies procured from the VFW.

To remind our membership that “Buddy”® Poppy funds shouldn’t be counted coming in, but rather when funds are donated, or go out, members are encouraged to use #poppiescount when you are posting photos of your “Buddy”® Poppy Drives. Include details about your projects and photos about how you use Poppies in another Program. Doing so will highlight the “Buddy”® Poppy Program and how it benefits veterans, service members and their families.

How do you use the money from your Poppy drives? The money received from the Poppy drives is placed in the Relief Fund. It is used to assist any veteran, service member and their families in their time of need. More information can be found in the *Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual* about how to use Relief Fund monies. One way it can be used is to donate the funds to the VFW National Home.

### VFW National Home

The VFW National Home was founded in 1925. It is located in Eaton Rapids, Michigan. It began as a haven where families left behind by war could remain together. Today it has evolved to meet the changing needs of America’s military and veteran families.

The future is looking bright at the VFW National Home. They have created a new logo, removing the blue screen from around the tree and the words “for Children.” They kept the tree made out of three hearts. The VFW National Home is helping families, parents and their children today. They no longer have house mothers and children without parents. Each home is available to a family that is having difficult times. There are 42 homes available. Each family is allowed to stay at the home for a maximum of four years. During their tenure, families are given the assistance they need. The VFW National Home assists with finding jobs, provides day care, assists with budgets and any mental health and social assistance the family may need. It is truly a new beginning for a family that is struggling day-to-day.

The VFW National Home has strategic goals. The first of these goals is to be the first name that comes to mind for all our veteran service organizations. We need to get the word out about the VFW National Home. If the American Legion or any other veteran service organization has a family in need, we want them to be directed to the VFW National Home. Share their brochure with your local clergyman and veteran service officer. Provide the National Home helpline: 800-313-4200 which is available Monday through Friday from 8am-4pm CST.

The National Home has resources to help our veterans even if they do not want to move to Eaton Rapids. They can connect the veterans to services in their own state.

The National Home is also working to upgrade their technological capabilities. Donations are needed to update the internet in each of the homes and community buildings.

**Other ways you can donate to the National Home:**

- Purchase a brick for the Tribute Park
- Become a Life Member
- Become a Hometown Hero Contributor
- Shop the National Home's Amazon Wishlist
- Donate to Health & Happiness
- VFW Auxiliary National President Carla Martinez & VFW Commander-in-Chief Duane Sarmiento have a special joint project for 2023-2024: The VFW National Home Welcome Center Special Renovation Project. Locate the flyer in MALTA Member Resources under "Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home.

Finally, plans are underway to celebrate the 100-year anniversary in 2025. Please be sure to reach out to your District Trustee to see how you can help and participate in making their 100-year celebration memorable.

Be sure to use the information in MALTA Member Resources for more ideas and information regarding "Buddy"® Poppy and VFW National Home.

# “BUDDY”® POPPY & VFW NATIONAL HOME PROGRAM

## “Buddy”® Poppy Education and Community Outreach • National “Buddy”® Poppy Display Contest

### VFW National Home Education and Community Outreach

## “Buddy”® Poppy

The “Buddy”® Poppy has been an integral part of the VFW community for nearly 100 years. As the VFW’s official memorial flower, the Poppy represents the blood shed by American service members. It reiterates that we will not forget their sacrifices.

The Poppy movement was inspired by Canadian Army Col. John McCrae’s famous poem, “In Flanders Fields.” Poppies were originally distributed by the Franco-American Children’s League to benefit children in the devastated areas of France and Belgium following World War I.

The VFW conducted its first Poppy distribution before Memorial Day in 1922, becoming the first veterans’ organization to organize a nationwide distribution.

In February 1924, the VFW registered the name “Buddy”® Poppy with the U.S. Patent Office. A certificate was issued on May 20, 1924, granting the VFW all trademark rights in the name of Buddy under the classification of artificial flowers. No other organization, firm or individual can legally use the name “Buddy”® Poppy.

These small but mighty memorial flowers have raised millions for the welfare of veterans and their dependents. The Poppy Program also provides financial assistance in maintaining state and national veterans’ rehabilitation and service programs, and partially supports the VFW National Home.

### How to Order

- Contact your VFW Department Headquarters to order Poppies. Poppies do not need to be ordered through your Post.
- Request the order form from your Department Headquarters at least two to three months (8 to 12 weeks) in advance of your distribution date.
- Brochures, “Buddy”® Poppy distribution supplies and promotional items can be purchased from the VFW Store at [vfwstore.org](http://vfwstore.org) or by calling 1-833-VFW-VETS.

### “Buddy”® Poppy Distribution Tips

- Contact your city/town clerk’s office to see if a permit is required for your distribution event.
- Get permission from the desired distribution location(s) store managers/owners prior to promoting your “Buddy”® Poppy distribution event.
- Make sure all Auxiliary members know the time, day and place of your distribution event.
- Share information about your distribution event with your local paper and on social media. Post flyers in high-traffic areas such as grocery stores, coffee shops, the post office, etc.
- Ask for assistance from youth groups such as VFW and/or Auxiliary youth, JROTC, after-school and faith-based clubs.
- Ask volunteers to wear Auxiliary- and/or VFW-branded clothing to both promote the Auxiliary and VFW and connect the distribution of poppies to the organization.
- Remind volunteers they are NOT SELLING “Buddy”® Poppies, but DISTRIBUTING them for donations.
- Never refuse someone a “Buddy”® Poppy because they are unable to donate. A “Buddy”® Poppy honors all veterans.
- See the VFW’s “Buddy”® Poppy Chairman’s Guide for further assistance in setting up a “Buddy”® Poppy drive, as well as other helpful resources. The guide can be found in MALTA Member Resources.

### Honor the Dead by Helping the Living

- At the Auxiliary and Post level, all proceeds from Poppy drives are to be placed in the Relief Fund with receipts and expenditures in accordance with the Treasurer’s Guide and the *Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual*. (Sec. 904)
- “Buddy”® Poppy drives can be hosted at any time during the year – not just Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Try doing one at least once a quarter. If you have enough volunteers, host a monthly Poppy drive.

- Distribution of “Buddy”® Poppies should be included in every Auxiliary, District or Department activity including parades, patriotic events, membership drives, BINGO or trivia nights, etc.
- There are many creative ways to distribute the “Buddy”® Poppy including window displays, posters, wreaths, remembrance walls, hats, event centerpieces, etc. Let your imagination run wild!

### **Official National VFW “Buddy”® Poppy Display Contest**

- Takes place annually at National Convention.
- Displays are judged in three (3) categories.
- This is an official National VFW contest.

Contest rules and judging guidelines, etc. are available in MALTA Member Resources. This is a VFW contest and the rules cannot change. If you have further questions after reading the rules and guidelines, please contact Lynn W. Rolf III at [lrolf@vfw.org](mailto:lrolf@vfw.org).

### **Unofficial “Buddy”® Poppy Display Contest**

If your Department decides to hold an unofficial “Buddy”® Poppy Display Contest, for example holiday tray favors, please ensure that all participants and judges understand the rules and guidelines. The winners of an unofficial contest will not be forwarded to National for judging.

## VFW NATIONAL HOME

For nearly 100 years, the VFW National Home located in Eaton Rapids, Michigan, has helped military and veteran families who need a fresh start. Families can live there rent-free for up to four years and have access to professional case management services, on-site licensed child care, life skills training, tutoring and other educational services, as well as recreational and community service opportunities. Families find healing in a safe and peaceful environment of tree-lined streets, 42 single-family homes, facilities such as a gym, library, computer and science labs, day care center, playgrounds, fishing pond, hiking trails and more!

Founded in 1925 as a place where families left behind by war—mothers and children, brothers and sisters—could remain together, keeping the family circle intact even when their serviceman didn’t come home, the VFW National Home serves as a living memorial to America’s veterans by helping our nation’s military and veteran families during difficult times.

Reintegration, post-traumatic stress, high unemployment, rehabilitation from battlefield injuries, emotional wounds, financial stress, fractured family relationships, hopelessness and more can be the outcome for families with a parent serving our country—now, recently, or from earlier generations. Over the years, the National Home has met the changing needs of America’s military and veterans’ families.

Through it all, one thing has remained constant: the National Home’s commitment to honor our nation’s

veterans and service members by providing help and hope for their children and families.

The National Home’s community is open to families of service members, veterans and—recognizing that the effects of war can last for generations—descendants of members of the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary. The family can include one or both parents with one or more children.

In accepting families to the program, only one thing is asked of them: They must be committed to making changes in their lives. To remain at the National Home, they are expected to demonstrate consistent progress toward family goals. Together, in partnership with the whole family, the National Home is dedicated to helping each family reach its full potential.

Even military families not living on the National Home campus can receive invaluable assistance through the National Home Helpline, which is staffed by caring professionals who help callers with urgent needs seek solutions in their own communities. If you know someone who needs assistance, encourage them to:

- Call the Helpline at 1-800-313-4200,
- Email [help@vfwnationalhome.org](mailto:help@vfwnationalhome.org), or
- Visit [vfwnationalhome.org/help](http://vfwnationalhome.org/help).

The VFW National Home, a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, is governed by a seventeen (17) member Board of Trustees made up of VFW and VFW Auxiliary members, who as Life Members of the National Home, are dedicated to the mission of the National Home.

One way the Auxiliary supports the National Home is through gifts of 10 cents per member to the Health & Happiness Fund. Contributions are critical since the campus and its programs receive no government funding. The Health & Happiness Fund supports the following at the National Home:

- Christmas gifts
- Graduation gifts
- Maintenance of Auxiliary-sponsored buildings
- Emergency repairs and renovations. Donations can be made online in MALTA or by mail.

**To donate online in MALTA:**

- Visit [vfwauxiliary.org](http://vfwauxiliary.org) and select "MALTA Member Login."
- Log in to MALTA.
- Select "Make Gift" from the Main Menu.
- Select the "Make a Gift" button.
- Enter the amount you choose to donate.
- Enter payment information.
- Select the "Pay Now" button.
- You will receive confirmation your gift has been made.

**To donate by mail, send a check earmarked Health & Happiness to:**

VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters  
Attn: Health & Happiness Donations  
406 W. 34th Street, 10th Floor  
Kansas City, MO 64111

Another way to offer support is by becoming a Life Member of the National Home. There are two types of membership:

1. VFW and VFW Auxiliary members and organizations are eligible to become Life Members. Life Members may vote for the Trustees who represent their National Home District and approve any proposed changes to the bylaws and articles of incorporation.
2. Any individual or organization wishing to support the National Home's mission can become an Associate Life Member. Associate Life Members do not have voting privileges.

The cost of becoming a Life Member is a one-time fee of \$50 and includes a membership certificate, a wallet card and a Life Member pin.

Visit [vfwnationalhome.org/membership](http://vfwnationalhome.org/membership) for:

- More information
- Life Membership application
- To purchase a Life Membership

**For more information, visit the National Home's website at [vfwnationalhome.org](http://vfwnationalhome.org).**

# “BUDDY”® POPPY & VFW NATIONAL HOME PROGRAM AWARDS

## Awards for Auxiliaries

1. Most outstanding use of the “Buddy”® Poppy in another VFW Auxiliary National Program.

- Citation to every Auxiliary that uses the “Buddy”® Poppy in another VFW Auxiliary National Program. Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging.

The Department “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman must email National Headquarters by April 30, 2024 at [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org) a total combine list of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences with the most outstanding use of the “Buddy”® Poppy in another VFW Auxiliary National Program.

The Department “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Ambassador by April 30, 2024 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into the Auxiliary account after National Convention.

2. Most outstanding activity and/or event that educates their community and/or other Veteran Service Organizations about the VFW National Home.

- Citation to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event that educates their community or another Veteran Service Organization about the VFW National Home. Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging.

The Department “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman must email National Headquarters by April 30, 2024 at [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org) a total combine list of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences with the most outstanding activity and/or event that educates their community and/or another Veteran Service Organization about the VFW National Home.

The Department “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National “Buddy”® Poppy & VFW National Home Ambassador by April 30, 2024 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into the Auxiliary account after National Convention.

3. Citation to each Auxiliary that contributes a gift of 25 cents or more per member to the Health & Happiness Fund based on June 30, 2023 membership statistics.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

### **Awards for Departments and Department Chairmen**

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department "Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion to educate their community about the "Buddy"® Poppy. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

2. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department "Buddy"® Poppy & VFW National Home Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion to educate their community and/or Veteran Service Organization about the VFW National Home. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

3. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of the Program Goals listed at the top of Page 18. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

# EXTENSION & REVITALIZATION AMBASSADOR, NATIONAL CHIEF OF STAFF



**PENNY HURT**  
*National Chief of Staff*

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whatisaredflagauxiliary@  
gmail.com

As the Extension & Revitalization Ambassador and National Chief of Staff, I believe it is my duty and responsibility to work with each Department Chief of Staff and provide the guidance, resources and tools they need, so, that they, in turn, can work with their District Presidents, Auxiliary Presidents and Chairmen to ensure that Auxiliaries are functioning in a healthy manner.

A Chief of Staff must be patient, have the ability to listen, understand and show compassion, vital tools in solving an existing problem. Auxiliaries look for guidance from their Department Chief of Staff, and as each Auxiliary is different, a Department Chief of Staff needs to utilize a “one size does **not** fit all” plan. We need to ensure that Auxiliaries are conducting business in a way that works for them and their members feel empowered and engaged.

Although the Department Chief of Staff must provide information to the Auxiliaries, they need to ensure that the District Presidents or assigned Official Representative can as well. The Department Chief of Staff and the District Presidents should work together. A District President or assigned Official Representative needs to be honest in their assessment of the Auxiliary. If the Department President doesn’t know an Auxiliary is in trouble, they can’t help.

Ensure the legacy of our great organization continues through strong, healthy Auxiliaries with members who are prepared to take over leadership roles when needed. *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation* and MALTA Member Resources are two of the most valuable tools available to members on all levels to learn about and understand their duties.

## **Official Visit Communication**

Department Chiefs of Staff must educate District Presidents or the assigned Official Representative about how to recognize red flags that may lead to problems in an Auxiliary. The report must be an honest assessment of the Auxiliary and affirm that the Auxiliary is in good working order or that it has areas in need of improvement. If your Department does not have Districts, it is the responsibility of the Department President to recognize the red flags that may lead to problems in an Auxiliary.

## **Extension & Revitalization**

Extension is a two-part Program: instituting new Auxiliaries and assisting troubled ones. It doesn’t do any good, on any level, to bring a new Auxiliary in the front door only to have one go out the back door. We need to save what we have and grow new, well-functioning Auxiliaries.

## **Presentations to an Unaffiliated Post**

Choose a positive, knowledgeable member to speak to the Post Commander and ask for permission to address Post membership about the benefits of having an Auxiliary. An Auxiliary cannot exist without a Post and a new Auxiliary cannot be instituted without a 2/3 vote from the Post. Extension presentations and tools are available in MALTA Member Resources.

## **Revitalize and Rejuvenate**

Since District Presidents or the assigned Official Representative have first-hand knowledge of their Auxiliaries, it is important that they communicate with the Department President and Chief of Staff to identify areas of concern. When visiting individual Auxiliary meetings, be sure to recognize any achievements the Auxiliary has attained. Every member needs to feel that their involvement is necessary for the success of their Auxiliary. All Officers of the Auxiliary, the Mentoring for Leadership Chairman and the Membership Chairman should take part in revitalizing the Auxiliary. Encourage the Auxiliary to reach out to their community to recruit new members and inform the community of the advantages afforded to those areas that have active VFW Posts and Auxiliaries.



# EXTENSION & REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

## Maintain and Strengthen Current Auxiliaries • Present to Unaffiliated Posts Establish New Auxiliaries • Recognize Red-Flag Auxiliaries

Chiefs of Staff work with District Presidents and the Department President to maintain current Auxiliaries. They encourage members, promote teamwork and provide guidance during challenging times such as suspension, consolidation or even the loss of a Charter. Chiefs of Staff also work closely with their Department President and organizers to establish new Auxiliaries.

### Maintaining Current Auxiliaries

The National Organization has developed many resources for members to use, including tools available on the Online Auxiliary Academy and in MALTA Member Resources. These resources have proven to be valuable tools in helping Auxiliaries be more productive.

1. The Healthy Auxiliary Tool Kit includes seven (7) resources to assist Auxiliaries in identifying and solving issues:
  - Healthy Auxiliary Checklist
  - Healthy Auxiliary Member Questionnaire
  - Auxiliary Meeting Clinic
  - Communication Phone/Text Tree
  - Good Job Certificate
  - Healthy Auxiliary Certificate
  - VFW Auxiliary Mentoring Guide
2. *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation* makes every effort to educate members on all aspects of the duties of Officers at all levels, how to be a Chairman, the why of reporting, etc.

These tools invite all members to come forward and take on a position of leadership, mentoring, and being a member who advocates for their Auxiliary and the veterans we serve.

### 5 Essentials of an Auxiliary

The National Organization requires only five (5) things of an Auxiliary:

1. Auxiliaries should have at least ten (10) business meetings per year. (Sec. 210) Five (5) members in good standing (of that Auxiliary) shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. (Sec 212)
2. Dues should be paid by at least ten (10) members on or before February 1 of the current year. (Sec. 207)
3. Quarterly Audits by Trustees must be submitted. (Sec. 814)
4. Officers elected, installed and reported to National Headquarters no later than June 30. This generates the bond application via email. (Sec. 804A and 806A)
5. The offices of President and Treasurer MUST be bonded by August 31.

### Establishing New Auxiliaries

Whether a VFW Post decides on its own that it wants an Auxiliary or whether an Auxiliary member or non-member sees the potential for a new one, the steps for creating an Auxiliary are the same.

1. A VFW Post must vote by 2/3 majority to have an Auxiliary. (An Auxiliary can never exist on its own without a Post and can never be started without that Post's permission.)
2. The Department President appoints the official organizer of that Auxiliary, and he/she must be a member of the Auxiliary.

- It would help to allow two others who are knowledgeable with Auxiliary business and work well with others to be on an organizing team. They can answer questions and assist with training, educating and mentoring the new Auxiliary once it is instituted. It is recommended that the organizer and the organizing team work with the Auxiliary and its members for at least a year, or until they are ready to proceed as an Auxiliary in good standing.
3. A minimum of 15 eligible applicants must be on the Charter application. Transfers are accepted at the close of the institution and just prior to the installation of the newly-formed Auxiliary.

The Department Chief of Staff could assist by providing the following tools for the organizer and organizing team:

- Talking points for the first meeting.
- A procedure for membership applications.
- When and how to collect dues.
- Assist in securing and filling out official and proper paperwork.
- See that deadlines and filings are met in a timely manner.
- For more information on this topic, see Article II of the *VFW Auxiliary Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual*.

### **Suspensions, Cancellations and Consolidations**

An Auxiliary is in danger of losing its Charter when they are unable to meet the 5 Essentials of an Auxiliary. Suspensions are used in certain cases to give Auxiliary members a chance to fulfill their duties and continue with their mission of serving veterans, service members and their families.

Please know that being placed on suspension is not negative. It is not labeling your Auxiliary as a “bad Auxiliary.” It simply means there is some work that needs to be done to get your Auxiliary where it needs to be. A team appointed by the Department President to mentor, educate and listen will help bring your Auxiliary back to health.

Cancellations can only be done by the National President, with or without the recommendation of the Department President.

If a VFW Post closes or consolidates, Auxiliary National Headquarters will be notified. **ONLY AFTER THIS NOTIFICATION** can the process for closing or consolidating begin.

- Far too often, an Auxiliary will start the cancellation or consolidation process because they heard through the grapevine the Post was shutting down or consolidating with another Post. Rumors can be harmful and actions should not - and must not - be taken due to rumors.
- The notification from National Headquarters will allow ample time to close, move members to their desired working Auxiliary or consolidate where the Post goes.

# EXTENSION & REVITALIZATION AWARDS

## **Awards for Members**

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one member in each of the four Conferences who assisted the Department Chief of Staff in nurturing/strengthening a struggling Auxiliary and utilized *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation* in their efforts. The Department Chief of Staff must complete and submit the required nomination form available in MALTA Member Resources to the National Chief of Staff by April 30, 2024.

\$25 VFW Store gift certificates will be mailed directly to the winning members from National Headquarters after National Convention.

## **Awards for Departments and Department Chairmen**

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Chief of Staff in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best guidance and advice. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.
2. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of the Program goals listed at the top of Page 24. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

# HISTORIAN & MEDIA RELATIONS AMBASSADOR



**DIANA MORRIS**

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Tradition and history are revered in our organization. Many Auxiliaries proudly celebrate 100 or more years of history. Many of our members treasure long-standing rituals and practices. Unfortunately, we are increasingly finding that some of our Auxiliaries do not necessarily share this enthusiasm or have members wishing to join an Auxiliary that does. Thus arises a conundrum: Can we retain our traditions while also attracting the new members necessary to keep the Auxiliary a strong, vibrant and relevant organization? Our Auxiliaries are well worth preserving and in this coming Program Year my hope is that we will band together to preserve our history with open hearts.

The work of the Auxiliary is important. By sharing our stories, we are doing our part to promote the Auxiliary in our communities. Service is more than something we do; it is who we are. I am always astounded by the service and heart we give to our communities and veterans. This is going to be a year of courage, kindness, service and unlimited possibilities to share the history-in-the-making of our organization.

Be mindful and respectful before you #SNAP (S.N.A.P.): Stop Now Ask Permission. Be certain to print the youth and adult photo releases available in MALTA Member Resources. These releases protect the photographer and the person being photographed, especially children. Be aware of what you are photographing. For many reasons, it is important to have permission to take someone's photo. Remember what kindness looks like. When taking photographs, connect with the subject and the emotion.

Photography opens doors into the past, but it also allows a look into the future. A camera is a SAVE button. Let your Auxiliary legacy members become STARS, for without our STARS, our Auxiliary would not exist. This Program Year, connect with a legacy member and complete a three- to five-minute video interview :

- Ask why they joined.
- Ask about their favorite memorable moment(s).
- Place emphasis on bringing the past to life.
- If your Auxiliary has no legacy members, look to your District or Department.

Submit your video interview to your Department Historian & Media Relations Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging. The Department Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department winning entry along with the winning video to the National Historian & Media Relations Ambassador by April 30, 2024. The winning video may be shown at National Convention.

### **Photography tips to avoid:**

- Closed eyes.
- Open mouth, a mouth full of food, distracting objects in the picture (e.g. bunny ears, trees popping out of someone's head or from behind the body.)
- People posed in awkward positions.
- Offensive language on clothing.

### **The Auxiliary and District Historian & Media Relations Chairmen**

The job of the Historian & Media Relations Chairmen is to capture the Program Year. At the Auxiliary, District and Department levels, these members are the people who get the word out about the Auxiliary to our communities. The Chairmen promote the Auxiliary through media, Post/Auxiliary newsletters, websites and any other media available to them; they capture special memories and activities through photos and videos and they inform the public about our valuable National Programs. This member keeps a written report of the Program Year for the Auxiliary, District or Department and submits it to their respective President at the end of the year. Consider presenting him or her with a digital scrapbook or photo book.

### **Department Historian & Media Relations Chairman**

The Department Historian & Media Relations Chairman keeps a record of the Department President's activities and should include his or her travels, Official Visits and other official functions. They collect material in written form to capture their Department's history in chronological order. They should also compile photographs, and newspaper and video clips of Auxiliary news. They can also reach out to local media outlets to organize interviews and news opportunities for the National President during the Official Visit.

Department Historian & Media Relations Chairmen should capture the National President's Official Visit. Send me a PowerPoint presentation with a minimum of five photos of the National President during her visit to your Department; include clear (not blurry) photos that tell a story. Submit it on a thumb drive and mail to me, your National Historian & Media Relations Ambassador by April 30, 2024.

The PowerPoint from each Department will be combined into a single presentation and shown at the National Convention. A copy of the single presentation will be presented to the National President to keep.

### **Media**

For Social Media, a great place to start is MALTA Member Resources. There are many resources here, everything from the basics to setting up a Facebook page for your Auxiliary.

Media is the piece of the puzzle that helps create a successful Auxiliary. Social media may be intimidating, but don't let that stop you from learning something new. Most

of us are very familiar with Facebook and email. Utilize them. If you need help creating a PowerPoint, ask a fellow member to help or recruit a student at a local school or ask your children/grandchildren to assist you.

Get to know your local newspaper, radio and television reporters. Send information directly to those contacts rather than the editor. Send a personal email and be sure to include your personal contact information.

Our Auxiliaries are doing amazing things; let's get that out there. Together we can. Let's put a spotlight on our pride and the work of our organization for generations to come. I believe you will find the inspiration. Let's reclaim the stories of our Auxiliary history and Auxiliary heritage. Let your stories be seen in a kind and beautiful way. Consider your Facebook page and/or Twitter page to be your Auxiliary marketplace.

# HISTORIAN & MEDIA RELATIONS PROGRAM

## Historian Duties • Media Relations

The member responsible for Historian & Media Relations duties is a memory keeper and collector of the five W's: the who-what-where-when-and-why of your Auxiliary. These individuals compile and chronicle memories and events in written and digital formats, including photographs, memorabilia, print news, audio and/or video clips and social media posts. The Historian & Media Relations member captures the narrative of the Program Year. At the Auxiliary, District and Department levels, these members are the people who get the word out about the Auxiliary to our communities. They inform the public about our valuable National Programs.

### Auxiliary and District Historian & Media Relations

This member keeps a written report of the history of their Auxiliary or District and submits this to their respective President at the end of the year. Supplemental material can include photographs and newspaper clippings that document special Auxiliary events.

### Department Historian & Media Relations

This member keeps a comprehensive record of the Department President's activities, and should include travels, Official Visits and other official functions. Collect material in written form to capture your Department's history, in chronological order. As with the Auxiliary Historian & Media Relations Chairman, this position also compiles photographs and newspaper and/or video clips of Auxiliary news.

The Department Historian & Media Relations member also documents and photographs the National President's visit, and may reach out to local media outlets to organize interviews and news opportunities for the National President.

### National Historian & Media Relations

This member documents the travels and activities of the National President. Department-level reports and photos are essential for this job. According to Article VIII, Sec. 822 of the National Bylaws, "The Historian shall collect all authentic material pertaining to the history of their Auxiliary, carefully compile the same, and submit a report at the end of the year."

In addition, he or she may also choose to compile a keepsake pictorial scrapbook, photobook, slideshow or video for the National President, but this is not essential.

For the media relations piece of this role, a great place to start is MALTA Member Resources.

There you will find:

- The VFW Auxiliary Publicity Guide that includes lots of valuable information and ideas to promote your Auxiliary.
- The VFW Auxiliary Elevator Speech/What We Do that summarizes who we are, what we do and how we describe ourselves as an organization to the media.
- Website and social media information – There are a lot of resources here, everything from the basics to setting up a Facebook page for your Auxiliary.

### Who should you contact about Auxiliary news?

Learn the names of reporters who cover stories most similar to yours and tailor your own list of media contacts. Send information directly to these contacts rather than the editor—news staff who specialize in relevant areas, like society and calendar page editors, are more likely to be receptive to including Auxiliary events. Feel free to send a reporter or editor a personal email, and be sure to include your contact information.

### What's newsworthy?

Consider these questions: Does it involve local people? Does it interest non-members? Is it timely? Does it help the community? Is it unique and new? If the answer is yes, this is a chance for you to pitch a story with an "angle" that will showcase your Auxiliary's hard work and accomplishments. Let's show our communities, and our nation, everything we do to improve the lives of veterans, service members and their families.

### Photography tips

Photos should be clear and sharp, at least 1 MB (megabyte) in size and taken with attention to detail. Avoid the following photo faux pas:

- Closed eyes
- Mouths open or full of food
- Distracting objects in the frame or awkward placement of people or things (e.g., trees popping out of someone's head, bunny ears, etc.)
- Offensive language on articles of clothing

# HISTORIAN & MEDIA RELATIONS PROGRAM AWARDS

## **Awards for Auxiliaries**

1. Most outstanding video interview with a VFW Auxiliary legacy (longtime active) member.
- Citation to every Auxiliary that submits a 3-5 minute video interview with a legacy Auxiliary member. Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form and video interview to their Department Historian & Media Relations Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging.

The Department Historian & Media Relations Chairman must email National Headquarters by April 30, 2024 at [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org) a total combined list of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form and video interview.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences that submits most outstanding 3-5 minute video interview with a VFW Auxiliary legacy member.

The Department Historian & Media Relations Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form with the winning video to the National Historian & Media Relations Ambassador by April 30, 2024 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

## **Awards for Departments and Department Chairmen**

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Historian & Media Relations Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best use of media relations training. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.
2. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of the Program Goals listed at the top of Page 29. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

# HOSPITAL AMBASSADOR



## DELLA STEEGE

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The Auxiliary Hospital Program is essential to veterans and is equally rewarding to the volunteers who dedicate their time and efforts to this Program. After 100-plus years of hospital volunteering for our veterans, the pandemic has altered our Hospital Program in many ways, yet the goal is still the same. We must find new processes and get creative to complete the work. Our new normal in volunteering may never resemble the way we used to do it; some facilities are still not letting volunteers in to see veterans, but the need is still there.

I became a Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) Representative during the pandemic. I have yet to visit with inpatients or attend a monthly bingo game, but when the call goes out for assistance, I don't hesitate to be one of the first to respond to that call for help. Many of the day-to-day needs of our veterans can be met by a gift card, so it is important that the VA Center for Development and Civic Engagement (CDCE) or Volunteer Services personnel have gift cards to local businesses on hand. Let's make volunteerism an actual group event again because we can do much more by ***Banding Together for Our Veterans.***

### **Celebrating Non-Traditional Holidays**

While our veterans have come to enjoy special days like Christmas and Valentine's Day for Veterans, I would like to shake it up and celebrate the little-known special days of the year. With this innovative way to entertain our hospitalized or long-term care patients, they are sure to have some good times between the traditional holidays we celebrate yearly. Always be a month ahead on the special days that you want to celebrate. Some facilities still do not allow visitors nor volunteers to deliver and

hand out any giveaways or decorations, so contact each facility to confirm their current protocol.

Did you know:

- January 19 is National Popcorn Day
- March 4 is National Hug a G.I. Day
- June 2 is National Doughnut Day
- July 7 is World Chocolate Day
- August 7 is Left Handers Day

Don't forget about the staff and doctors. While all facilities and hospitals were on lockdown, it was the staff that stepped up to support the needs of veterans. Just like our veterans, the staff has seen the repetition of the traditional celebrations year after year so, please include the doctors and staff in all your new celebration plans.

Here is a great link for you to start planning:  
[calendar.com/united-states/observances-2023](https://calendar.com/united-states/observances-2023).

### **Community Care**

Please visit: [va.gov/communitycare](https://va.gov/communitycare).

Veterans may be eligible for care through a provider in their local community, depending on their health care needs or circumstances, and if they meet specific eligibility criteria. Even if a veteran is eligible for community care, they generally still have the option to receive care from a VA medical facility.

In most cases, veterans must receive approval from VA before receiving care from a community provider to avoid being billed for the care. VA staff members generally make all eligibility determinations for community care. Through the community care system, the veteran can utilize an in-network physician under the following systems or circumstances:

- General Community Care
- Urgent Care
- Emergency Care
- Foreign Medical Care
- Home Health & Hospice Care
- Indian/Tribal Health Services
- In Vitro Fertilization
- State Veterans Homes
- COVID & Flu Shots

The VA Community Care Network is a connection for veterans to access community providers that will assist with timely and high-quality care.

### **Telehealth & Compassionate Contact Corps**

Clinical Video Telehealth (CVT) services are health-related services which allow contact between long distance patients and clinicians to quickly provide veterans convenient and secure access to health care services from remote facilities and homes. These services provide veterans with better self-management of chronic health conditions from the comfort of their own homes.

Did you know that the VA has a YouTube Channel? They also have many apps for Apple and Android devices. All these tools are available so veterans can connect in real-time video appointments with VA providers. For more information, refer to the VA App Store at [mobile.va.gov/appstore](https://mobile.va.gov/appstore).

Compassionate Contact Corps trains volunteers and matches them with veterans who are experiencing loneliness or may be socially isolated. Volunteers typically call on veterans and family members to assist with socializing and providing companionship via phone or video calls.

### **Women's Health Care**

Women veterans are the fastest growing group within our veteran population and the VA is working towards meeting their health care needs. If one qualifies for VA health care, they can access these high-quality women's health services as part of their benefits.

- General services, like disease prevention and nutrition counseling.
- Reproductive health services, such as birth control, preconception counseling and menopausal support including hormone replacement therapy.
- Screenings, including cervical cancer screens (pap smears) and breast cancer screens (mammograms).
- Mental health services for depression, post-traumatic stress (PTS) and substance abuse problems.
- Free, confidential counseling and treatment for mental and physical health conditions related to military sexual trauma (MST).



# HOSPITAL PROGRAM

## Volunteer Recruitment, Recognition and Support

### Valentines for Veterans • Women Veterans Health Care • Honors Escort

VFW Auxiliary members have been volunteering in hospitals and medical facilities since the organization's inception in 1914. The Hospital Program was one of the first nationally adopted Programs for the organization.

#### Where can we serve?

Members, non-members and youth can volunteer in many different types of facilities under this Program.

- Local hospitals
- Veterans' homes
- Nursing homes
- Domiciliaries
- Both VA and non-VA medical facilities and clinics

#### Who can serve?

- Members
- Non-members
- Youth
- Families

#### What can we do?

Volunteer opportunities are based on the facility where you are volunteering. Some facilities will have a volunteer program in place with specific jobs, events and needs. Many facilities will have varying types of opportunities to suit different ages and abilities. Be sure you follow all the guidelines given by that facility and regularly ask how you can assist them.

#### What can we earn?

Members can earn Hospital Volunteer Service Pins from National Headquarters for their volunteer hours. More information on hours needed and the proper forms to use can be obtained from Department Hospital Chairmen or in MALTA Member Resources. Hospital Chairmen should track total hours (both VA and non-VA) and submit an application for the pins. Members can also be named an Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of the Year in their Program Division. Applications are available from the Department Hospital Chairmen.

Non-members can also earn a one-time-only volunteer pin for 100 hours. See the Hospital Program Guide or ask the Department Hospital Chairman for more information.

#### Volunteer Recruitment, Recognition and Support

New volunteers are needed every day across the country. Volunteers offset millions of dollars in expenses in health care. They help create a friendly and caring atmosphere no matter where they volunteer. Here are tips for recruiting and keeping volunteers:

- Monthly sign-up sheet for regular events.
- Emails and phone calls for special events.
- Public recognition of current volunteers.
- Be specific about what volunteers will be doing, including the time commitment.
- Find out how each person best communicates, whether by phone, email, Facebook or texting.
- If someone says "no" to the first invitation, be sure to ask again!

For more information about being a volunteer, how to handle a Department Hospital Fund and other topics about this Program, download the Hospital Program Guide and VAVS Guide in MALTA Member Resources.

#### Valentines for Veterans

Share the love we have for our veterans and service members this Valentine's Day by sending a store-bought or handmade valentine, hosting a party, recognition event or dinner in their honor. Fellow members, individuals and groups in your community can use their creativity to show compassion for our veterans and service members.

#### Women Veterans Health Care

Women have served our nation for generations and are the fastest growing group within the veteran population. Comprehensive health services are available and tailored to the unique needs of women veterans. Learn about the resources and health care services available and help them receive the benefits and services they deserve.

#### Honors Escort

The Honors Escort Program is an opportunity to honor each veteran in a respectful and open manner and provides an opportunity for a veteran's family and friends, other veterans and medical facility staff to participate in a display of high regard and reverence for the individual at the time of death.

# HOSPITAL AND VAVS PROGRAMS

The VFW Auxiliary provides volunteers and resources to VA facilities across the country and saves the Department of Veterans Affairs millions of dollars a year.

The table below illustrates how the VFW Auxiliary Hospital Program supports the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) Program.

## **HOSPITAL PROGRAM**

VFW Auxiliary establishes relationships with:

- Hospitals
- Nursing homes
- Veterans homes
- VA facilities
- Other medical facilities where veterans are served

### **PROVIDES NEEDS**

How VFW Auxiliary members participate:

- Participate in projects voted on and accepted by the Auxiliary.
- Make items such as lap robes, hats, quilts, cards, etc.
- Fundraise for the Department's Hospital fund.
- Encourage volunteers in ALL medical facilities.
- Promote projects and volunteer opportunities to all members and the community.
- Present Hospital Volunteer Appreciation certificates.
- Order VFW Auxiliary Hospital Pins for total hours earned from all facilities.
- Hours are earned in ALL VA and non-VA facilities.

**HOURS earn VFW Auxiliary Awards!**

## **VAVS PROGRAM**

The Department of Veterans Affairs created the Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) Program for organizations to serve in VA medical facilities:

- Members participate in this VA partnership with Veterans Service Organizations.
- In addition to Auxiliary recognition, the VA National Advisory Council awards a Volunteer of the Year award. For more information, contact either the Voluntary Services personnel or the VAVS National Representative or Deputy Representatives.

### **COMMUNICATES NEEDS**

How VFW Auxiliary members participate:

- Be a Regularly Scheduled (RS) or Occasional volunteer.
- Regularly Scheduled (RS) volunteers:
  - Comply with VAVS Guidelines.
  - Participate on a regularly scheduled basis.
  - Are supervised by a VA employee.
  - Are appointed by the Department President as VAVS Representative or Deputy Representative.
- Occasional volunteers:
  - Do not meet the requirements of RS volunteers.
  - Volunteer with a group or organization occasionally.

**HOURS earn VAVS AND VFW Auxiliary Awards!**

**TOTAL HOURS FROM BOTH PROGRAMS  
EQUAL OUR REPORTED HOSPITAL VOLUNTEER HOURS.**

For more information on the VFW Auxiliary's participation in Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) Program, please see the VAVS Participation Guide or contact the Department Hospital Chairman.

The VAVS Participation Guide is available behind MALTA login in MALTA Member Resources.

# HOSPITAL PROGRAM AWARDS

## Awards for Members

1. Citation to one VFW Auxiliary member in each of the 10 Program Divisions who recruits the most Hospital (VA and non-VA facilities) volunteers from July 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024. Entry form required available on MALTA Member Resources. Citations to be mailed directly to winners after National Convention.
2. "Hospital Volunteer Recruiter of the Year" plaque awarded to one Auxiliary member in the nation who recruits the most Hospital (VA and non-VA facilities) volunteers from July 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024. Entry form required available in MALTA Member Resources. Plaque to be mailed directly to winner after National Convention.
3. Citation to the Outstanding Hospital Volunteer of the Year in each of the 10 Program Divisions. Entry form required available on MALTA Member Resources. Citations to be mailed directly to winners after National Convention.

## Awards for Auxiliaries

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event that recognizes veterans on non-traditional holidays.
  - Citation to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event that recognizes veterans on non-traditional holidays. Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Hospital Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging.

The Department Hospital Chairman must email National Headquarters by April 30, 2024 at [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org) a total combined list of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event recognizing veterans on non-traditional holidays.

The Department Hospital Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Hospital Ambassador by April 30, 2024 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

## Awards for Departments and Department Chairmen

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Hospital Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion that recognizes veterans on non-traditional holidays at any Hospital (VA and non-VA facilities). Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.
2. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of the Program Goals listed at the top of Page 33. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

# LEGISLATIVE AMBASSADOR



## SHERRY HOWLAND

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As members of the VFW Auxiliary, we can celebrate and appreciate the legislative victories that we, as an organization, helped bring about to better serve all veterans. Much has been accomplished, yet there is so much more to do.

I have attended Auxiliary meetings where legislative matters were brought up for discussion only to find that the understanding and knowledge of legislation benefiting veterans and service members was very little to nil. Many of our members lack an understanding of benefits recently gained through passage of legislation and the legislative goals being pursued by the Auxiliary and VFW and may not know what our organizations consider Legislative Priorities. For more information on Legislative Priorities, visit [vfw.org/advocacy/national-legislative-service](http://vfw.org/advocacy/national-legislative-service). The more our members know and understand legislative matters, the better they can support the veterans, service members and their families.

### Priority Goals

It is important to not only set our goals and display a united front, but also to make sure our members understand what the impact will be for the men and women and their families that we support. Collaborate to increase your own knowledge and understanding. Being visible in our legislative communities, both state and federal, is important and is a responsibility each of us should share and undertake. It should be a part of the mission of our Legislative Chairmen to ensure our members fully understand.

### Working together. What can we do?

- Create good relationships with our elected officials and their staff to understand their positions for specific legislation and their reasons for taking that position.
- When communicating with elected officials and candidates for election, deliver a brief, concise message, but make your questions or statements clearly understood. Identify yourself, who you represent and why you are calling.
- If you communicate by email or by telephone the same holds true; brief, to-the-point, clearly understood messaging. Identify who and why.
- If asked by a candidate or elected official to either endorse either them or their bill, politely explain that the Auxiliary does not permit such endorsements.
- Ensure that members realize that state legislation passed often impacts the veterans and service members of their home state and should be understood as well.
- Encourage members to attend town hall meetings held by legislators.
- Host a town hall meeting at which all candidates are invited to attend and comment on veterans' issues.
- Develop questions for candidates and elected officials to ensure they provide answers to the questions most important to our members. It will add to our knowledge of how each bill under consideration will impact our veterans, service members and their families.
- Do not allow your Auxiliary to appear to endorse or support an individual candidate in local, state or federal elections.
- When conducting Auxiliary business, you must avoid displaying any partisan politics.
- Develop a chain of information within your Auxiliaries, Departments and with the National Ambassador.
- Ensure that our members know about the resources available to them in MALTA Member Resources.

#### Examples:

- o VFW Action Corps Weekly
- o VFW Auxiliary Guide to Contacting Your Legislators
- o VFW Auxiliary Guide to the Legislative Process

## **Guidelines for Auxiliary involvement in the election process**

- It is important to remember that in all Auxiliary political activities, we must remain neutral.
- Use legislative websites for U.S. Congress and Senate to track pieces of legislation.
- The White House and nearly every one of our elected officials have websites that provide information and options for contacting their offices.
- In addition, state legislators often introduce legislation that impacts the veterans and service members in our states. They introduce laws and resolutions that impact the veteran community. Learning about and using your state resources is important as well.

MALTA Member Resources provides a means of assuring our organization is on the same page as the VFW in our support or opposition to pending legislative matters.

Among those are:

- VFW Legislative Priorities
- VFW Priority Goals
- VFW Fact Sheet

Auxiliary Presidents should require their Auxiliary Legislative Chairman to present a report at each meeting regarding current priority legislation, how it affects our veterans, service members and their families and the status of the bills. It's recommended that the Auxiliary Legislative Chairmen reach out to their Department Chairman and/or National Ambassador should they have questions, and by all means file the necessary reports as required by Auxiliary policy.

# LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

## Be An Advocate • Be Informed • Be Engaged

One of the main objectives of the Legislative Program is to improve the lives of our veterans, service members and their families through advocacy. Your efforts, combined with nearly 1.5 million other VFW and Auxiliary members, can influence lawmakers whose decisions affect veterans and their families every day. Join the chorus of voices that will ring out in legislators' offices this year.

Study the issues laid out clearly in the VFW Priority Goals. A copy can be found in MALTA Member Resources.

The Priority Goals reflect the resolutions passed by the VFW to strengthen and ensure an adequate VA system for millions of current and future veterans.

They call for much-needed attention to crises such as veteran homelessness and suicide. They request fully funding research on traumatic brain injuries, reducing the claims backlog, fighting veteran unemployment and improving timely transition assistance for veterans after leaving military service. The goals are grouped under six areas of concern:

- Budget
- Health Care
- Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs
- Education, Employment and Transition Assistance
- Military Quality of Life
- National Security, Foreign Affairs and POW/MIA

These goals are released in January of each year by the VFW. Be sure you check the VFW website or MALTA Member Resources for the current Priority Goals.

### **VFW Action Corps Weekly**

It's free and it's full of news about what's happening on Capitol Hill, with veteran and service member issues and with our national security. Subscribe at the National website at [vfwauxiliary.org](http://vfwauxiliary.org) by selecting "What We Do" then clicking on "Legislative."

Contact your legislators: find out who's who. To identify your congressional representatives, visit the VFW website at [votervoice.net/VFW/register](http://votervoice.net/VFW/register).

### **Step by Step—A Bill**

To follow the progress of a bill through the stages of the legislative process, visit [congress.gov](http://congress.gov), where you may find a specific bill by its number or by a key word or phrase.

### **VFW in D.C.**

One of the most crucial responsibilities of the VFW Washington, D.C. office is to actively lobby Congress and the administration on behalf of veterans. The office monitors all legislation affecting veterans and alerts VFW and Auxiliary members about key legislation under consideration.

By testifying at committee hearings and interacting with congressional members, the VFW played an instrumental role in nearly every piece of veterans' legislation passed in the 20th Century, as well as bills developed in the 21st Century.

To contact the D.C. office:  
Website: [vfw.org/advocacy](http://vfw.org/advocacy)  
Phone: 202-543-2239  
Mail: 200 Maryland Ave., N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002

# LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM AWARDS

## **Awards for Auxiliaries**

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community on veteran Legislative issues.
  - Citation to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event that educates their community on veteran Legislative issues. Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Legislative Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging.

The Department Legislative Chairman must email National Headquarters by April 30, 2024 at [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org) a total combined list of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community on Legislative issues.

The Department Legislative Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Legislative Ambassador by April 30, 2024 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

## **Awards for Departments and Department Chairmen**

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Legislative Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion of education of veteran Legislative issues. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.
2. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of the Program Goals listed at the top of Page 38. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

# MEMBERSHIP AMBASSADOR



**ANSJE LANSING**

**Executive Producer**

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Wapiti, WY 82450-0017  
307-899-3046  
ansjel3391@gmail.com

## CONFERENCE COACHES



**BIG TEN STATES**  
**MICHAEL MARUSZAK**  
**Director - The Incredibles**  
7423 Terrace Drive  
Justice, IL 60458-1186  
(708) 935-6610  
michael-j-maruszak@outlook.com



**EASTERN STATES**  
**CYNTHIA DAVIS**  
**Director - Million Dollar Baby**  
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Randallstown, MD 21133-6028  
(443) 629-3270  
vfwandcm3@gmail.com



**SOUTHERN STATES**  
**EVAN SMILEY**  
**Director - Grease**  
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(270) 945-9016  
smileyevan13@gmail.com



**WESTERN STATES**  
**VALORIE WRINKLE**  
**Director - True Grit**  
3855 NW Montgomery Avenue  
Redmond, OR 97756-8174  
(541) 678-3894  
vjwrinkle@gmail.com

### Lights, Camera, Action!

Membership is the lifeblood of our organization. Without new and existing members, we would cease to exist. We use the words Invite, Include and Invest when talking about recruiting and retaining new members. This Program Year, I'd like to include Invite, Include and Invest while making our Membership Program fun for all members. Do you remember how much fun it was to go to the movies? Did you ever attend a movie premier? This year, we are going to incorporate movies into our Membership Program. Will you be the talent scout, director, cameraman or even a key grip? Every member is important to getting the job done.

### Invite & Recruit

Recruiting up-and-coming stars is a cornerstone of our Auxiliary mission. Keep scouting for that talent in our new recruits. It's so important to keep the organization alive with action. Witnessing how seasoned actors can encourage and motivate newbies is intriguing. The seasoned members can offer sound advice and in turn, they can learn from the newbies about using new technology. For example, as members, you are the talent scouts for your Auxiliary. It's up to you to chat up a storm about our organization and show enthusiasm about who we are, what we do and why we do it. Invite more members to be those talent scouts.

Always carry a couple of applications with you and a Fact Sheet or two. Fact Sheets help solidify what you are promoting and may come in handy! You never know when the perfect opportunity arises to recruit. Think about asking your potential members to come to an event and help in some capacity. Most importantly, put on your happy face and SMILE for the camera!

Bazinga! See how easy it is to get people involved and connect?

### **Include Everyone**

Get all cast & crew members involved in your Auxiliary. No matter how small or how large the jobs are in your Auxiliary, there is always something for everyone to do. Don't become a clique and make someone feel as if they aren't needed. That's a great way to lose a member quickly! Again, let me remind you that we all started as newbies and learned as time went on. New members need encouragement so stay positive.

This also means to shine a light on all members in your Membership production. Did the Auxiliary President appoint a five-person membership team, to include the producer (Treasurer), to contact all members during the Program Year for payment of dues?

### **Follow Up!**

Before every movie progresses to Lights, Camera, Action!, you need a read through with the cast. This is when you need to follow up with these new members. It's when you need to call them about the upcoming meeting. Do they need a ride? Could you meet them for coffee before the meeting? It would be a great time to explain the Ritual so they don't feel in the dark. Sit with them at their first meeting and make them feel welcome! Always make potential members aware of the importance of the goals of our organization.

### **Encourage Participation**

Everyone is important to making a great award-winning movie. The same holds true for your Auxiliary. From the key grip to the cameraman to the director, it's up to each and every one of us to encourage ideas from all members. Remember, all ideas are important and maybe with some slight modification, they can work in your Auxiliary.

Don't shoot down an idea because it has been tried before. Give it a shot and try it with a different approach and just maybe, it could work into a star-worthy project. Everyone has different strengths and skills. Find out who excels in certain skills and encourage them in that field. Always be positive and appreciate all that members do. A simple thank you goes a long way and it helps reinforce that ALL members are important to the Auxiliary.

### **Resources**

There are a ton of Membership resources for everyone to use. Check out MALTA Member Resources. It has everything you need to garner your potential new member. Just log in to MALTA and click on Member Resources, Membership. Everything you need is there for the picking.

- VFW Auxiliary Applications
- VFW Auxiliary Brochure Order Form
- New Member Engagement Guide
- New Member Orientation Checklist
- New Member Packet
- Retention Tools
- And much more

Our directors (Conference Coaches) were chosen for their knowledge of the Membership Program, their strong leadership traits and their great imagination. They pay attention to details as you can see with their taste in movies.

They work well with others and are striving to help their Conference earn the coveted "Golden MALTA." It is the dream of every director to have their Membership story win the prestigious award for Best Picture of the 2023-2024 Program Year. Let's all work together to help make this happen for your director.

### **Invest**

By investing in the future of your Auxiliary, you can grow into a successful franchise. With Lights, Camera, Action!, not only are we having fun, but we're also

### ***Banding Together for Our Veterans.***



# MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

## Invite New Members • Include Current Members • Invest in the Future of the Organization

The VFW Auxiliary started with a small group of women who wanted to serve veterans; it has grown exponentially and now includes both males and females as members. There is only one way to add members: ask someone to join. And once they join, ask them to participate.

### Ask Someone to Join

There are numerous places and times to ask someone if they want to join the VFW Auxiliary. Your approach will look different depending on who your audience is. In all cases, the potential member should have some knowledge of what the VFW Auxiliary is and what we do before they ever receive an application.

### Important tools:

- Fact Sheet, available for free from National Headquarters.
- Business card with contact information. (Order yours from the VFW Store, [vfwstore.org](http://vfwstore.org).)
- MALTA Member Resources.

### Follow Up!

Most likely, the first time you talk to someone new about the organization, that person may not be ready to commit. It's important to ask for their contact information and then follow up within a week.

### Ask Them to Participate

The key to keeping members is getting them involved. Call or email a new member within a week with the next meeting date and time, or the next possible event or project. Offer to pick them up, or invite them to get coffee before or after a meeting.

Put a team of members in charge of contacting new members or members who haven't been to a meeting recently. The team should be friendly and knowledgeable about the Auxiliary.

### Ways to Encourage Participation

- Monthly sign-up sheet for regular events.
- Emails and phone calls for special events.
- Public recognition of current volunteers. (Consider posters at your VFW Post Home, if permitted, that spotlight member involvement.)
- Be specific about what they will be doing, including the time commitment.
- Find out how that person best communicates, whether by phone, email, Facebook or texting.
- Have another member stay with them for the entire length of the activity or event.
- If they say "no" to the first invitation, be sure to ask again!
- Plan family-friendly events! Members with children in the home want opportunities to do things with their family.

### Have a Plan

Every Department and Auxiliary should have a Membership Plan. This plan should include:

- Contacting current members.
- Outreach to former members.
- Recruiting events for new members.
- Picking a mentor for a new member.
- Before a membership year begins, set your calendar for these events:
  - Make it as easy as possible for members to renew their dues. They can renew online in MALTA!
  - Plan recruiting events in your community each year. This can be done by just the Auxiliary or in conjunction with your VFW Post.

# MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM AWARDS

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES, DEPARTMENTS AND CONFERENCES WILL BE BASED ON THE PAID TOTAL LISTED ON THE CMR-PAID, CANCELED & DECEASED REPORT IN MALTA.

## Awards for Members

1. **Lights, Camera, Action!** pin to each VFW and VFW Auxiliary member who recruits five (5) new members to the VFW Auxiliary from July 1, 2023 through May 31, 2024. Department Treasurer must enter membership in MALTA with credit given to the recruiter by June 10, 2024. Lights, Camera, Action! pin will be mailed directly to the member from National Headquarters.
2. **National Membership Achievement Award** to each VFW and VFW Auxiliary member who recruits twenty (20) new members to the VFW Auxiliary from July 1, 2023 through May 31, 2024. Department Treasurer must enter membership in MALTA with credit given to the recruiter by June 10, 2024. NMA Award to be presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. If a member is not in attendance, the award to be mailed directly to the member from National Headquarters after National Convention.
3. **Lights, Camera, Action! VFW Auxiliary Recruiter Drawing.** Each VFW Auxiliary National Membership Achievement Award recipient will be entered into a drawing to receive a \$500 Visa Gift Card. (VFW Recruiters are not eligible).  
Recruiter Award Forms are no longer needed for VFW Auxiliary members. Reports are compiled by VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters from information entered in MALTA.  
VFW members who recruit new VFW Auxiliary members will need to fill out the required VFW members-only form that is available on MALTA Member Resources. Completed form must be received at VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters and Department Treasurer must enter membership in MALTA by June 10, 2024.

## Awards for Auxiliaries

1. \$25 to each Auxiliary that reaches 98% Plus in Membership by March 31, 2024\*.
2. \$25 to each Auxiliary that reaches 100% Plus in Membership by June 30, 2024\*.
3. Lights, Camera, Action! VFW Auxiliary Drawing. Each VFW Auxiliary that reaches 101% Plus by June 30, 2024\* will be entered into a onetime drawing to receive \$500.

## Awards for Department Chairmen

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Membership Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the most outstanding training and promotion of the Membership Program.
2. Outstanding Performance Award to one Department Membership Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of the Program Goals listed at the top of Page 42. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky

## Award for Conference Coaches

1. Keepsake to each of the four (4) Conference Coaches for their hard work and dedication to this Program.

\*Based on the June 30, 2023 year-end membership numbers.

## **Awards for Departments**

1. Bronze Department Award #1: \$200 to each Department that reaches 95% Plus in Membership by November 30, 2023\*.
2. Silver Department Award #2: \$250 to each Department that reaches 98% Plus in Membership by March 31, 2024\*.
3. Gold Department Award #3: \$300 to each Department that reaches 100% Plus in Membership by June 30, 2024\*.
4. Platinum Department Award #4: \$400 to each Department that reaches 101% Plus in Membership by June 30, 2024\*.

Departments that receive the Platinum Department Award #4 \$400 will still receive Gold Department Award #3: \$300 for a combined total of \$700.

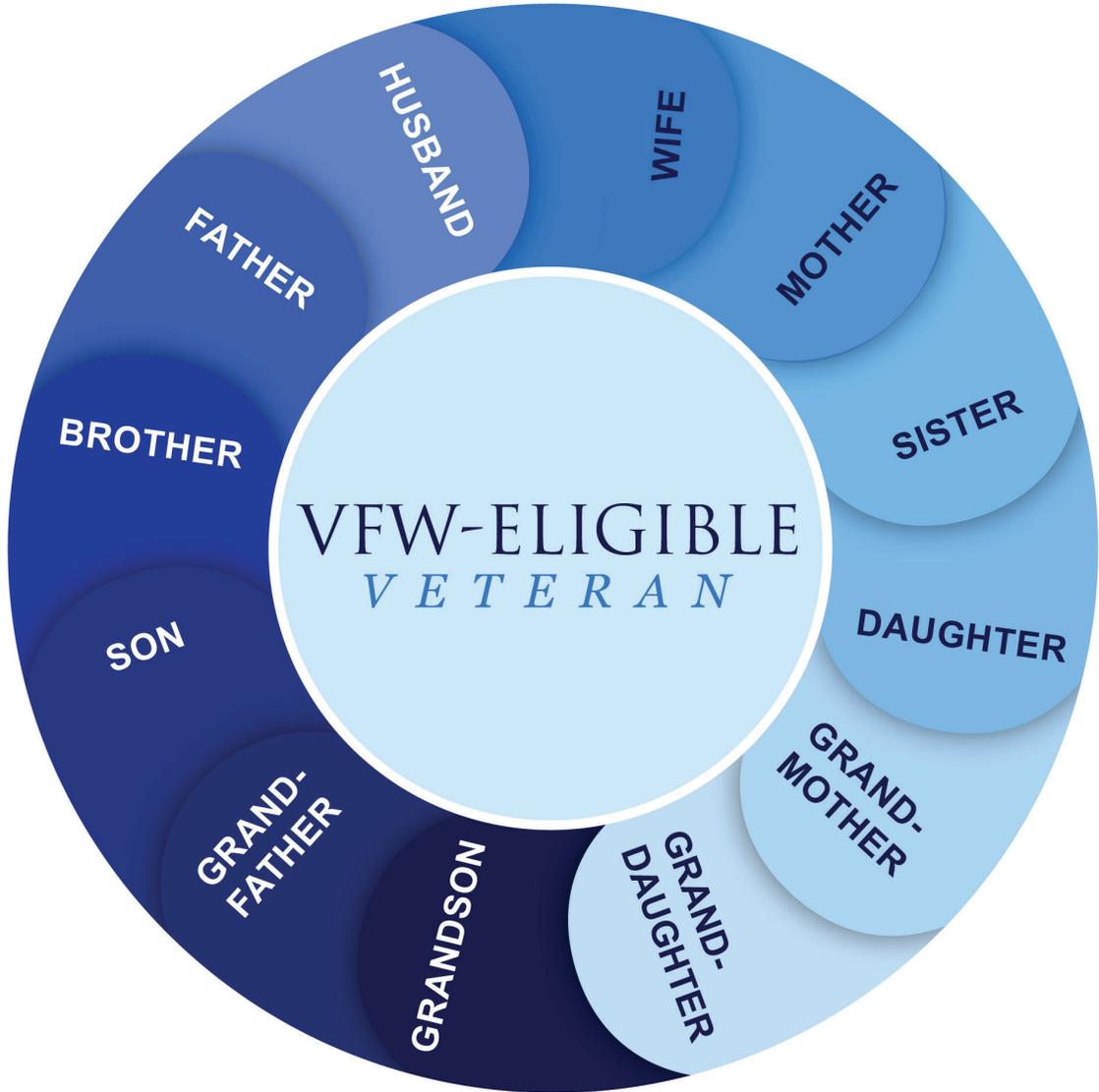
## **Conference vs. Conference**

- a. \$50 to each Department within the Conference with the highest total percentage by January 31, 2024\*.
- b. \$50 to each Department within the Conference with the highest total percentage by June 30, 2024\*

## **Award for Conference Coaches**

1. Keepsake to each of the four (4) Conference Coaches for their hard work and dedication to this Program.  
\*Based on the June 30, 2023 year-end membership numbers.

# VFW AUXILIARY ELIGIBILITY WHEEL



*\*Step- and adopted parents, children, siblings (and half-siblings), grandparents and grandchildren are considered the same as biological parents, children, siblings, grandparents and grandchildren and may join the VFW Auxiliary under their VFW-eligible veteran.*

# VFW AUXILIARY MEMBERSHIP / MEMBER TRANSFER APPLICATION

An incomplete application could delay your membership start date.

**Applicant completes sections A, B, C or D and F. Auxiliaries/Departments complete section E.**

**A** Recruited/Recommended by: \_\_\_\_\_ Recruiter Member ID \_\_\_\_\_  
 Auxiliary No. \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Member ID (If already a member) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Annual Membership  Rejoin  
 Life Membership  Transfer  
 Member at Large in Department of \_\_\_\_\_  Member at Large - VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters  
*(If not a transfer, skip to B.)*  
 **LIFE MEMBER TRANSFER** Previous Auxiliary \_\_\_\_\_  
 **ANNUAL TRANSFER**  Previous Auxiliary \_\_\_\_\_  Paying  Nonpaying  
 **ANNUAL TRANSFER CONVERTING TO LIFE** (Fill out Life Membership information below.) Previous Auxiliary \_\_\_\_\_

**B** *THESE FIELDS REQUIRED*  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  Female  Male  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**C**  **POST-AFFILIATED** (\*Must be a current member of the VFW Post affiliated with the Auxiliary to which you are applying.)  
 Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ to Eligible Veteran\* \_\_\_\_\_ VFW Membership ID \_\_\_\_\_

**D** *THESE FIELDS REQUIRED*  
 **NON-AFFILIATED** (\*Veteran is not a current member of the VFW Post affiliated with the Auxiliary to which you are applying.)  
 Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ to Eligible Veteran\* \_\_\_\_\_ VFW Post (If applicable) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of campaign ribbons or medals: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dates of Service: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**E** Investigating Committee Signatures  
 1  \_\_\_\_\_ 2  \_\_\_\_\_ 3  \_\_\_\_\_  
 Per Section 102 of the National Bylaws.  Rejected  Accepted Meeting Date \_\_\_\_\_ Obligated Date \_\_\_\_\_

**F** *By signing this, I agree to the stated charges for a Life Membership fee.*  
**OBLIGATION** *In the presence of Almighty God and the members of this organization here assembled, I do of my own free will and accord, solemnly promise that I will never wrong or defraud this organization nor a member thereof nor permit either to be wronged if in my power to prevent it. I will never propose for membership any person not eligible, according to our Bylaws. I further state that I believe in God. I will be faithful to the United States of America, obedient to the laws and loyal to the Flag. Should my membership with this organization cease in any way, I will consider this obligation as binding outside of the organization as though I had remained a member. I do so promise. I attest that I am at least 16 years of age. I pledge to comply with the National Bylaws of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary. I attest I am not eligible for membership in the VFW. I further attest that the above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, including my stated relationship to the Veteran.*  
 Signature  \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Must be signed by all members.)*

**LIFE MEMBERSHIP FEES**  
*Life Membership fees are not refundable.*  
 Attained age at 12/31 of year applying for Life Membership.

Through 20	\$253
21-25	\$242
26-30	\$230
31-35	\$219
36-40	\$213
41-45	\$201
46-50	\$196
51-55	\$184
56-60	\$173
61-65	\$161
66-70	\$150
71-75	\$132
76-80	\$109
81-85	\$86
86-90	\$69
91 and over	\$58

**LIFE MEMBERSHIP ONLY**  Check here if this is a gift.  
*Credit cards may NOT be used for initial payment of Annual Dues.*  
 Cash  Check  Visa  MasterCard  Discover  AMEX \_\_\_\_\_ Life Membership Fee  
 Name on credit card \_\_\_\_\_  
 Billing address for card \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 Credit Card No. \_\_\_\_\_ CVV Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature  \_\_\_\_\_

Revised May 2022

# MENTORING FOR LEADERSHIP AMBASSADOR



## FRANCINE CORNISH

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Through most of our experiences with families, careers and other pursuits, we have been inspired by others. We have also encouraged and nurtured others to do their best. This is the basis for the VFW Auxiliary Mentoring for Leadership Program. The Auxiliary attracts members who want to support veterans, service members, their families and communities. When they join, they are usually enthusiastic and willing to serve. We need to channel that enthusiasm into a willingness to serve in leadership positions.

We can encourage members to participate by:

- Creating a welcoming atmosphere at meetings and activities.
- Showing a genuine interest in members
- Closely listening to what they are saying.
- Recognizing their strengths and interests in order to match them with Auxiliary leadership goals.

Mentoring is essential to good leadership. Mentoring can be successful by anyone in a position of experience. We look to Auxiliary Officers and Program Chairman as natural mentors since they have experiences within the Auxiliary that can benefit mentees. We should also consider members who bring skills from other experiences that can help the Auxiliary. Remember, although we may be longtime members, there is much to be learned from nurturing and interacting with members of all ages and experience levels. Good leaders are also good followers.

### Training

Training is also essential to good leadership. The rules and traditions of the Auxiliary were established more than 100 years ago. Revisions are made to improve the organization. The Auxiliary is one of the best examples of "you were not born knowing this." Remember when you were a new member? Now you see what I mean!

The good news is that there are so many resources available to help members, new and old, to understand the organization. Starting with the *Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual*, a member should continually be made aware of and use these valuable resources and tools. *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation* includes the *Mentoring Guide: Relationship Building for the Future* which is a tremendously helpful guide to help you understand how to get started. Many useful resources are also available in MALTA Member Resources.

### Ask yourself these questions:

Do I want to be a mentor?

Answer: Yes, if you care about veterans and their families and you are willing to lend a helping hand to this organization that is very important to you for many reasons.

Do I want a mentor?

Answer: Yes, if you have questions about how things work and what to do.

- Take the initiative to get to know those you would like to know better.
- Accept offers and invitations to do things and to spend time with others.

Should the Auxiliary organize their Mentoring Program?

Answer: Yes. You need a process in place to get those new members involved and included as soon as possible. Create a timeline to help engage new members and develop a team approach.

- Welcome new members by phone or email.
- Invite new members to the next Auxiliary activity. Make them feel comfortable at their first Auxiliary meeting.
- Be prepared to answer questions and offer support along the way.

These are a few ways to build a healthy Auxiliary relationship with a new member.

Keep in mind, this process can also be used to encourage current members to become more active and to consider a leadership role. Host a Department Mentoring Program training day. If an Auxiliary has more than one mentee, bring them together for a Mentoring Program social hour. There are so many opportunities to support the Mentoring for Leadership Program.



# MENTORING FOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

## Ensure a Positive Member Experience • Engage in Learning and Training Opportunities Develop and Empower Members for Leadership Roles

Mentoring helps broaden leadership skills and leadership provides guidance for mentoring members; they work hand in hand.

### Mentoring

A stronger membership on every level of our organization will be accomplished through mentoring. Mentoring for Leadership will enhance all types of Program activities. Vigilance in mentoring will make the difference in obtaining and maintaining members; since a large number of other organizations are vying for our members' time and talents.

Through the mentoring process, extending the hand of friendship to a new member or even a tenured member who has been inactive for a while can create a strong and vibrant organization. Providing a positive and organized meeting experience will leave members wanting to come back, especially when good communication and respect for each other is demonstrated.

By engaging in mentoring activities you will build a stronger relationship amongst new and tenured members. Whether you create a formal or informal mentoring program, every Auxiliary should have a type of resource to assist in communicating and motivating members to better understand the organization. Utilizing the *Mentoring at VFW Auxiliary: Relationship Building for the Future* document will help you get started in creating a Program for your Auxiliary. Through this Program you will be encouraged to embrace and promote the CARE concept.

**C** - Catch the member when they first join.

**A** - Ask them to participate.

**R** - Remember what it felt like to be new.

**E** - Engage them in a Program that fits them.

Some individuals may be hesitant to take on the task of being a mentor; however, keep in mind there are also silent mentors amongst our members.

A mentor who is able to communicate, energize interest and is patient will enrich the member experience. The majority of our members have had someone who took an interest in them, is knowledgeable about the Auxiliary, willing to explain meeting proceedings, the *Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual* and National Programs.

Over time, the mentee may express interest in going beyond just attending meetings. They may even realize they have gained confidence to take the next step in entering a leadership role. This may consist of holding an Officer position, Chairmanship or becoming a committee member.

### Leadership

Leadership can be difficult in any organization. Through mentoring, willingness to listen to the suggestions of others and following the guidelines set in place for the office or position held, leadership is easier.

A mentor who uses the *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation* is the key to creating a successful leader. This resource should be shared on each level of the organization. The guidebooks provide suggestions and examples for Officers, Chairmen and members to understand their duties according to the National Bylaws and the best practices discovered during the 100-plus year history of the organization.

The goal of the guidebooks is to develop and maintain consistent practices across the organization, to train and equip leaders of today and tomorrow, and to strengthen the basic building blocks of the organization: the foundation.

Mentoring for Leadership resource materials may be found in MALTA Member Resources.

- *2023-2024 National Program Book*
- *Mentoring at VFW Auxiliary: Relationship Building for the Future*
- *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation*

Please be aware the Mentoring for Leadership and Extension & Revitalization Programs utilize many of the same tools and resources. Reviewing and sharing the various member materials available will create dialogue and interest to the mentee and future leaders.

### **Listed within the Extension & Revitalization Resources:**

- VFW Auxiliary Acronyms and Common Terminology
- Healthy Auxiliary Tool Kit
- Auxiliary Meeting Checklist
- Communication Phone/Text Tree
- Healthy Auxiliary Checklist – Auxiliary To-Dos and Deadlines
- VFW Auxiliary Meeting Challenges & Solutions
- VFW Auxiliary Member Questionnaire

### **Utilize the various Membership Recruitment and Retention Tools:**

- Membership Engagement Packet
- Membership Moments
- VFW Auxiliary Fact Sheet

- Member Benefits One-Sheet
- Cultivate Engagement by Asking “How would you like to contribute?”
- Matching Member Talents to Leadership Success
- Engaging Existing Members
- Know your National Bylaws
- *Understanding Auxiliary Traditions* video
- VFW Auxiliary National Programs Overview

### **Additional beneficial resources for the mentor, mentee and leader may be found at the Online Auxiliary Academy.**

- MALTA (Membership Auxiliary Leadership Technology Access)
- Administrative & Instructional
- Social Media (Facebook)
- Membership & Leadership

### **Goals + Mentoring + Leadership = Healthy Auxiliaries**

# MENTORING FOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM AWARDS

## **Awards for Members**

1. Citation awarded to the first, second and third place VFW Auxiliary members in each Department with the most unique and/or creative way to mentor a member to become a leader. Three nominations from each Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman are due to the National Mentoring for Leadership Ambassador by April 30, 2024.

Citations will be mailed directly to winners from National Headquarters after National Convention.

## **Awards for Auxiliaries**

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event that educates their Auxiliary members about how to find and train mentees while using and promoting VFW Auxiliary resources and learning materials.

- Citation to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or training that educates their Auxiliary members on how to find and train mentees while using and promoting Auxiliary resources and learning materials. Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging.

The Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman must email National Headquarters by April 30, 2024 at [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org) a total combine list of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or training that educates their Auxiliary members on how to find and train mentees while using and promoting Auxiliary resources and learning materials.

The Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Mentoring for Leadership Ambassador by April 30, 2024 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

## **Awards for Departments and Department Chairmen**

1. \$25 VFW Store Gift Certificate to one Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion to educate their Auxiliary members on how to mentor future leaders for a specific position within the Auxiliary. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

2. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of the Program Goals listed at the top of Page 48. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

# SCHOLARSHIPS AMBASSADOR



**TINA HICKS**

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Orma, West Virginia  
25268-8019

(304) 761-4040  
tinascholarship2324@  
yahoo.com

As VFW Auxiliary members, we are honored to make available scholarships to help offset the cost of further education for Auxiliary members, their immediate family and our youth. See that they get every chance available to achieve their dreams and grow their future as tomorrow's leaders.

## **Continuing Education Scholarship**

- This scholarship is available to Auxiliary members, their spouses and children.
- Qualifying Auxiliary members must have been members for one year by the application submission in order to apply.
- Applicants must be in financial need to continue/return to college or vocational/technical/trade schools.
- Must be 21 years of age by February 15, 2024.

The Continuing Education Scholarship is \$1,250 and is awarded to one winner in each of the four Conferences. The scholarship will be paid directly to the American college or vocational/technical school of the awardee's choice.

Let's make Auxiliary members aware on Department/Auxiliary websites, in newsletters, at Post Homes and on social media. Reach out in our communities and inform other Veteran Service Organizations to assist in getting our Continuing Education Scholarship information. Brochures and applications are available at [vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships/continuing-education/](http://vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships/continuing-education/) and in MALTA Member Resources. Let's work to see that National Headquarters receives more than 100 applications to judge.

## **Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest**

The Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest has been promoted by the Auxiliary for almost half a century. The Auxiliary is proud to offer this two-dimensional art contest to all patriotic young artists in grades 9-12. The Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest now offers 19 National Scholarships ranging from \$500 to \$15,000. All scholarships are paid to the college or vocational/technical/trade schools of winners' choice. Brochures and applications are available at [vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships/young-american-creative-patriotic-art-contest/](http://vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships/young-american-creative-patriotic-art-contest/) and in MALTA Member Resources.

## **3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest**

3-Dimensional Patriotic Art is the Auxiliary's "new kid" in the Scholarships Program. We are proud to offer this contest to all patriotic young artists in grades 9-12. Offering four National Scholarships: \$2,500 for first place, \$1,500 for second place, \$1,000 for third place and \$500 for fourth place. Paid to the college of winners' choice. Three-Dimensional art accepts paper, papier-mâché, fabric, metalwork, pottery, wood, etc. Brochures and applications are available at [vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships/young-american-creative-patriotic-art-contest/](http://vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships/young-american-creative-patriotic-art-contest/) and in MALTA Member Resources.

As Auxiliary members, we need to circulate information about our two Patriotic Art contests through Auxiliary/Department newsletters, websites, social media and at Post Homes. We need to think outside the box and reach out in our communities. Promote at locations where parents/guardians and grandparents take their children such as the library, sporting complex, bowling alley, skating rink, etc. Our young artists are very talented and imaginative. Let's help them express their feelings of patriotism through art. Help them use their artistic talents to climb to the most amazing future.

## **Young American Creative Patriotic Art and 3-Dimensional Art contest Escrow Fund**

Young American Creative Patriotic Art and 3-Dimensional Art Contest escrow funds need more funding so that we may acknowledge and reward more of our young patriotic artists at the National level. We all need to get the word out and work together with our Posts, Districts and in our communities to raise funds. Hold fundraisers, distribute collection jars and provide information at various community events, businesses and churches.

## **Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy**

Auxiliaries are here to honor and respect our veterans and service members. One way we do that is by helping promote and participate in rewarding all Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy Scholarship contest participants. Students from public, parochial and home study programs compete through written and oral essays. Students learn patriotism, to communicate better, to express themselves and to excel, making them strong, confident and ready to be future leaders. Get out and promote these scholarships in your schools and communities and provide all those interested with rules and guidelines. Visit [vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships](http://vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships) for more information.

Celebrate and recognize all participants, students, teachers, parents, members and local media who support the Scholarships Program. The VFW store offers certificates and items for awards. Shop the VFW Store online at [vfwstore.org](http://vfwstore.org). Hold events at your Post and invite all those who have helped promote the contests including youth group leaders, community leaders, businesses and teachers. Invite your local media to attend and cover award events. We want everyone to know what scholarships the Auxiliary and the VFW have to offer.

# SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAM

**Student Participation • Recipient Recognition • Community Awareness • Increasing the Fund**

Each of our scholarships encourage patriotism, assist students in attaining an education and help students reach their full potential. This increases VFW and Auxiliary recognition while supporting our communities, students and members.

## **Continuing Education Scholarship**

Open to any Auxiliary member (who has been a member for at least a year), their spouse, son or daughter with a financial need. Entrant must be at least 21 years old, complete the application and submit an essay of 300 words or less. **The application must be received at National Headquarters by February 15:**

Program Awards Administrator  
VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters  
406 W. 34th Street, 10th Floor  
Kansas City, MO 64111

Or email it to [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org)  
\$1,250 will be awarded to an applicant in each of the four Conferences. Applications are available from Department Scholarships Chairmen or in MALTA Member Resources.

## **Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest AND 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest**

Open to any student in grades 9-12 by the March 31 deadline who is enrolled in a public, private or parochial high school or home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions; or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application for which has not been denied) and intend to become a U.S. citizen. Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or older, GED and adult education students, or national winners of previous Patriotic Art Contests are ineligible. Entries will be judged on patriotic theme and technique. One Department winner will be forwarded to Auxiliary National Headquarters. Please see the student brochure in MALTA Member Resources for more details on requirements and contest rules.

## **Deadlines for Young American Creative Patriotic Art and 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art:**

### **Entries received by:**

**Participating VFW Auxiliary – March 31  
(District Judging is OPTIONAL)**

**VFW Auxiliary Department – April 15**

**VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters – May 5**

## **National Scholarships: Young American Patriotic Art**

First Place – \$15,000

Second Place – \$7,500

Third Place – \$3,500

Fourth Place – \$2,500

Fifth and Sixth Place – \$1,500

Seventh and Eighth Place – \$1,000

Ninth through Nineteenth Place – \$500

## **National Scholarships-3-Dimensional Patriotic Art**

First place - \$2,500

Second place - \$1,500 NEW!

Third place - \$1,000

Fourth place - \$500

Scholarships are paid directly to the American college, vocational, technical or trade school of the winners' choice. Please promote this contest in your area. We have talented and creative artists waiting to be discovered.

Please note that the 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest is an additional scholarship and separate from the Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest. See the official rules for art forms that are accepted for this contest.

## Recognition Is Key

It is important that scholarship winners receive recognition at every level.

Ways to Recognize Winners:

- Present a certificate and/or gift.
- Ask the winner to give a speech or lead the Pledge of Allegiance at an Auxiliary event.
- Host an awards ceremony.
- Present awards at a school assembly.
- Contact local media to feature winners in the news.
  - Sample press releases available online in MALTA Member Resources.
- Invite winners to participate in a Conference.
- Don't forget to recognize the parents and teachers!

## To Donate to the Patriotic Art Escrow Fund

Log in to MALTA. Click on "Make a Gift."  
Select Patriotic Art

or

Mail checks earmarked Patriotic Art to:  
VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters  
Attn: Patriotic Art Scholarship Fund  
406 W. 34th St., 10th Floor Kansas City, MO 64111

## 2023-2024 Voice of Democracy Audio-Essay Contest

Theme: What Are the Greatest Attributes of Our Democracy?

Open to students in grades 9-12 by the October 31 deadline who are enrolled in a public, private or parochial high school or home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions; or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or older, previous Voice of Democracy first place state winners, GED or adult education students are ineligible. One Department winner will be forwarded to VFW National Headquarters.

## Deadlines:

**Entries to VFW Post – Midnight, October 31**  
**Post Judging Complete – November 15**  
**Department Judging Complete – January 10**  
**Department Winner to VFW National Headquarters – January 15**

## National Awards:

First Place – \$35,000 scholarship  
Second Place – \$21,000 scholarship  
Third Place – \$15,000 scholarship  
Fourth through 36th Place – \$7,000 to \$1,500 scholarship  
37th - 53rd Place – \$1,000 scholarship

## 2023-2024 Patriot's Pen Essay Contest

Theme: How Are You Inspired by America?

Open to students in grades 6-8, by the October 31 deadline who are enrolled in public, private or parochial school or home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions; or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. (Foreign exchange students and former winners that placed in the National contest are excluded from the contest.) One Department winner will be forwarded to VFW National Headquarters.

## Deadlines:

**Entries to VFW Post – Midnight, October 31**  
**Post Judging Complete – November 15**  
**Department Judging Complete – January 10**  
**Department Winner to VFW National Headquarters – January 15**

## National Awards:

First Place – \$5,000  
Second Place – \$4,000  
Third Place – \$3,500  
Fourth through 53rd Place – \$2,750 to \$500

## Scholarship and Contest Resources

Complete list of all contest rules can be found in the following resources:

- VFW website:  
[vfw.org/community/youth-and-education](https://vfw.org/community/youth-and-education)
- MALTA Member Resources
- VFW Auxiliary National website:  
[vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships](https://vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships)
- Promotions from National Ambassador
- VFW Store: [vfwstore.org](https://vfwstore.org) or 1-833-VFW-VETS

## Get The Word Out!

The first step is to identify likely individuals with whom you can discuss scholarship opportunities. The following are a few suggestions of groups that might be interested in what you have to say:

- Schools and JROTC Units
- Faith-based youth groups
- Youth-focused organizations
- Home-school associations
- Parent-teacher associations
- Youth sports teams
- Financial aid offices
- Student veteran centers

# SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAM AWARDS

## **Awards for Auxiliaries**

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about scholarship opportunities through the VFW Auxiliary.
- Citation to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event that educates their community about scholarship opportunities through the Auxiliary. Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Scholarships Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging.

The Department Scholarships Chairman must email National Headquarters by April 30, 2024 at [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org) a total combined list of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about scholarship opportunities through the Auxiliary.

The Department Scholarships Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Scholarships Ambassador by April 30, 2024 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

## **Awards for Departments and Department Chairmen**

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Scholarships Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion of scholarship opportunities through the Auxiliary. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.
2. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of the Program Goals listed at the top of Page 53. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

# VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT AMBASSADOR



TESSA BUTCHER

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Newton, KS 67114-3538  
(316) 871-9637  
butchert@hotmail.com

*"We are all musicians in a great human orchestra. You are not required to play a solo, but you are required to know what instrument you hold and play it as well as you can. You are required to find your place in the score. What we love we must protect. That's what love means. From the right to know and the duty to inquire flows the obligation to act." – Sandra Steingraber.*

As members of this organization, we all have our parts to play. Some of us do this by taking on leadership roles within the organization. Others might do it by lending their time organizing or providing baked goods for events. The one thing we all have in common though is love for our veterans; we all strive to serve them and honor their service to our country in any way that we can.

This year we'll be **Banding Together for Our Veterans** by offering guidance to our veterans about acquiring VA benefits, working toward higher education with scholarship opportunities and providing helpful resources for when life gets rough.

Veterans & Family Support is the heart of our organization and a Program that every member can and should participate in. When thinking about this Program, one word often comes to mind: unity. We are united in our passion for this organization and at our core we are all here for the same purpose, to support our veterans, service members, their families and our communities!

Our veterans have sacrificed so much for us and it's time that we do all that we can for them. This year, the primary points of focus will be:

- Veterans and Military Support Programs
- National Veterans Service Suicide Prevention
- Mental Health Awareness

## Veterans and Military Support Programs and National Veterans Service

We can step up to ensure that our veterans and their family members are aware of the aid available to them in times of need such as financial assistance with mortgage or rent payments, vehicle expenses, utilities, food or clothing. Now more than ever, we need to guide our veterans and their family members in their efforts to obtain their VA benefits by pairing them with VFW Accredited Service Officers. Financial aid is also available to those service members and veterans who are looking to further their education and find a new career path in life.

As Auxiliary members, we are able to help provide the comforts of home when we adopt units and send care packages to our deployed troops. While it's important to remember them when they're away, it's equally as important to remember them and their family prior to and after deployment. The VFW has financial grants that are available to help with events held by our Auxiliaries and Posts to support and recognize our troops.

For more information, visit the VFW website at: [vfw.org/assistance/va-claims-separation-benefits](http://vfw.org/assistance/va-claims-separation-benefits) or [vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants](http://vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants).

## Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Awareness

Our veterans are our heroes and it's time we show them how much they mean to us. Many veterans returning home do so with heavy hearts and minds. By banding together with other organizations such as the Elizabeth Dole Foundation and Give an Hour, we'll be able to raise awareness and foster community engagement to change the stigma surrounding mental health. We need to be proactive in looking after our heroes. Be mindful of the characteristics associated with thoughts of suicide and be watchful of our veterans' mental health. One veteran lost to suicide is one veteran too many!

We can't pass up the time to honor our veterans' service to this great nation. One of the easiest ways to do this is by giving our time to serve in any way that we can to give back to those who've given so much for us. So, I ask, what will you do for our veterans, service members and their families this year?



# VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

## **VFW National Veterans Service • VFW Veterans & Military Support Programs** **Assist Veterans, Service Members and their Families** **Promote Veteran & Military Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Awareness**

### **Spread the Word about National Veterans Service (NVS)**

The VFW's National Veterans Service (NVS) helps veterans, service members and their families obtain the benefits they deserve – at no cost.

NVS provides a nationwide network of nearly 300 VFW Service Officers who help veterans navigate the Veterans Affairs system. Those VFW Service Officers recover more than \$1 billion annually in VA benefits for veterans and their dependents.

These highly skilled professionals assist all veterans, whether they are VFW members or not, in filing claims for:

- Disability compensation.
- Rehabilitation and educational programs.
- Pension and death benefits.
- Employment and training programs.

NVS also works to ensure veterans receive quality, timely and accessible VA health care, including:

- Hospital care.
- Outpatient care.
- Specialized health care for female veterans.
- Alcohol and drug dependency treatment.
- Medical evaluation for disorders associated with military service, exposure to Agent Orange, radiation or other environmental hazards.

Donations to NVS can be made online or by mail. Donate online at [vfw.org/ways-to-help](http://vfw.org/ways-to-help), select National Veterans Service, click "Contribute."

Donate by mail by sending funds to the VFW earmarked for NVS. Mail check to:

VFW National Headquarters  
Attn: NVS  
406 W. 34th Street, 11th Floor  
Kansas City, MO 64111

### **VFW Veterans & Military Support Program**

Veterans & Military Support contains programs initiated by the VFW: Military Assistance Program (MAP), Unmet Needs and the VFW "Sport Clips® Help A Hero Scholarship." These programs serve active-duty and recently discharged military.

Donations to Veterans & Military Support can be made online or by mail.

Donate online at [vfw.org/ways-to-help](http://vfw.org/ways-to-help), select Veterans & Military Support, click "Contribute."

Donate by mail by sending funds to the VFW earmarked for Veterans & Military Support.

Mail check to:

VFW National Headquarters  
Attn: Veterans & Military Support  
406 W. 34th Street, 9th Floor  
Kansas City, MO 64111

### **Military Assistance Program (MAP) Funds** **Ways to Connect with Troops**

MAP helps VFW and Auxiliary members give more of their local military units. It helps forge and nurture bonds with those units by providing financial assistance for Posts, Districts and Departments to sponsor morale-boosting send-offs, homecomings and casual get-togethers.

Post and Auxiliaries participating in Adopt-a-Unit and Family Readiness Group events can also receive assistance. MAP keeps care packages circulating by covering postage costs.

For guidelines to apply for MAP funds, contact the VFW Veterans & Military Support office at 816-756-3390.

## Unmet Needs Can Help in a Crisis

A soldier is serving on foreign soil, but the rent is due back home. A soldier is driving a tank on alert for IEDs, and the family car needs a new radiator the family cannot afford. These are the situations Unmet Needs can address. Grants of up to \$1,500 payable to a creditor can bridge the gap to make a mortgage or rent payment or to fund home and auto repairs, insurance, utility costs, food and clothing. To learn more, visit [vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants](http://vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants).

## VFW “Sport Clips® Help A Hero Scholarship” Program

The VFW and Sport Clips are giving the gift of scholarships to our nation’s heroes as a way of thanking them for their dedicated service to our nation. The VFW “Sport Clips® Help A Hero Scholarship” awards scholarships of up to \$5,000 to qualifying veterans and service members to help them complete their educational goals without incurring excessive student loan debt. To learn more, visit [vfw.org/student-veterans-support](http://vfw.org/student-veterans-support).

## Veteran & Military Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Awareness

Make a difference in the life of a veteran or service member in crisis by educating yourself and others about the warning signs of suicide.

The Veterans Crisis Line connects veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Veterans and their loved ones can:

- Call 1-800-MyVA411 to access all VA departments,
- Call 988 and Press 1,
- Chat online at [veteranscrisisline.net](http://veteranscrisisline.net), or
- Send a text message to 838255.

Confidential support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Support for deaf and hearing impaired individuals is available. Tip: Add the Veterans Crisis Line number as a contact in your cell phone for easy referral.

Purchase the Auxiliary Suicide Awareness Prevention Pin from the VFW Store. When someone asks you about your pin, tell them that the VFW Auxiliary is concerned about the rates of suicides among veterans and military service members; we want everyone to be aware of the unique stress they face.

## Mental Wellness Support and Resources

More than 16 veterans commit suicide each day, and the VFW and VFW Auxiliary are committed to helping change the conversation and stigma surrounding mental health in the United States.

Change the stigma, improve research, support your community and explore treatment options at the resources below:

- **VFW Mental Wellness Campaign**  
[vfw.org/assistance/mental-wellness](http://vfw.org/assistance/mental-wellness)
- **The Campaign to Change Direction**  
[changedirection.org](http://changedirection.org)
- **Give An Hour**  
[giveanhour.org](http://giveanhour.org)
- **Patients Like Me**  
[patientslikeme.com/join/vfw](http://patientslikeme.com/join/vfw)
- **One Mind**  
[onemind.org](http://onemind.org)
- **The Elizabeth Dole Foundation**  
[elizabethdolefoundation.org](http://elizabethdolefoundation.org)
- **Help Heal Veterans (Therapeutic Craft Kits)**  
[healvets.org](http://healvets.org)
- **Veterans Voices Writing Project**  
[veteransvoices.org](http://veteransvoices.org)

## Other Resource

The VFW and VFW Auxiliary helped pass the Deborah Sampson Act that will enhance and improve VA programs and health services for women veterans and ensure they receive the care and support they need and have earned. It includes an expansion of the Women Veterans Call Center to include text messaging capability.

## Women Veterans Call Center

Call or text: 855-829-6636 or 1-855-VA-WOMEN

## Women Veterans Health Care

[www.womenshealth.va.gov/WOMENSHEALTH/index.asp](http://www.womenshealth.va.gov/WOMENSHEALTH/index.asp)

# VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM AWARDS

## Awards for Auxiliaries

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event to increase awareness of military suicide and mental health.

- Citation to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event to increase awareness of military suicide and mental health. Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging.

The Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman must email National Headquarters by April 30, 2024 at [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org) a total combined list of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event to increase awareness of military suicide and mental health.

The Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Veterans & Family Support Ambassador by April 30, 2024 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

2. Most outstanding activity and/or event to increase the support of veterans, service members and their families.

- Citation to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event to increase support of veterans, service members and their families. Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging.

The Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman must email National Headquarters by April 30, 2024 at [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org) a total combined list of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event to increase support of veterans, service members and their families.

The Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Veterans & Family Support Ambassador by April 30, 2024 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

## **Awards for Departments and Department Chairmen**

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion of awareness of military suicide and mental health. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.
2. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Veterans & Family Support Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion of supporting veterans, service members and their families. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.
3. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of the Program Goals listed at the top of Page 58. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

# YOUTH ACTIVITIES AMBASSADOR



## JOYCE CALDWELL

1708 W. Vail Street  
Broken Arrow, OK  
74012-0202

(918) 407-6283  
jrcaldwell1@cox.net

How to define patriotism for youth: "...love for or devotion to one's country."

When was the first time you were introduced to our Flag? I remember my first encounter: I was 5 years old, very excited about going to school for the first time and beginning the first grade; Mrs. Kinlock was my teacher. The very first thing we did was learn the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. I was so excited that I could not wait to tell my mom and dad about this new accomplishment. That was my first introduction to PATRIOTISM. Do you remember yours?

Focusing attention on our youth beginning at a young age is vital in order for them to appreciate our history and our veterans' sacrifices who have fought and died to keep our freedoms. We, as members of the VFW Auxiliary, can start by reaching out to them as young as 5 years old. Our youth today are our leaders of tomorrow, our soldiers of tomorrow, our teachers and doctors, and yes, even our Auxiliary members of tomorrow. Education is key to helping our youth become who they will be tomorrow.

### **Patriotism through Literacy**

One of the easiest ways to promote patriotism is through reading among our youth. It is simple, fun and free (if using a library.) We need to educate our youth at an early age about who our historical figures were that helped to build this great country, the United States of America.

Beginning with our youngest youth, kindergartners, first- and second- graders, we can instill in them the importance of our Flag, how our country was formed, why we say the Pledge, who our first President was in addition to the many other historical images and facts. Introducing historical events through literature is

priceless. Libraries are important to every young person, whether it is their school library, their community library or their school room library available through their teacher. Teaching patriotism through literature is just one step toward understanding and learning about patriotism.

Examples of books for youth:

- America the Beautiful by Cholena Rose Dare (ages 3-6)
- The Night Before the Fourth of July by Natasha Wing (ages 3-5)
- Fourth of July (Holidays in Rhythm and Rhyme) by Emma Carlson Berne (ages 5-7)
- The Fourth of July Story by Alice Dalgleish (ages 4-8)
- Fireworks, Picnics, and Flags by James Cross Giblin (ages 10-12)
- What Does It Mean to be American? By Rana DiOrio (ages 4-8).
- Our White House: Looking In, Looking Out created by the National Children's Book and Literacy Alliance with 110 Renowned Authors and Illustrators
- A Patriot's Handbook, Songs, Poems, Stories, and Speeches Celebrating the Land We Love, illustrated and introduced by Caroline Kennedy

These books and other patriotic books are available at your nearest bookstore, or you can purchase from online retailers.

Benefits

- Books teach youth about various events in our American history.
- Books foster a love of lifetime learning through reading.
- Helps our youth to better understand our American history.
- Improves grammar, writing skills and concentration.

Participation:

- Volunteer to read historical fiction to youth at your local library.
- Donate historical fiction to your local school libraries, community libraries or shelters.
- Host a read-a-thon and award prizes for the number of books read. Prizes could be a book for them to take home or stickers or pins.

### **R.A.P. Cards**

Our youth love awards for a job well done, good grades, etc. and what better award to receive? None other than our very own VFW Auxiliary R.A.P. card! We can explain to those receiving the card what the acronym "R.A.P." stands for: RANDOM ACTS OF PATRIOTISM.

- Have you observed youth showing patriotism?
- Have you seen a child thanking a veteran?
- Have you witnessed a child or youth place their hand over their heart correctly?
- Have you seen a child or youth show respect to our American Flag?

If so, give them a R.A.P. card. These cards are so easy to give out to those youth demonstrating patriotism within your community. Go to MALTA Member Resources, Youth Activities, to locate a template to print out. Try this fun and unique way to engage youth and encourage their patriotism.

### **Supporting and Working with Youth Groups**

Now that we have established how we can start teaching patriotism to our smaller youth, let's not forget about our older youth. Those in middle or junior high school need us to continue guiding them to learn about patriotism. This can be accomplished by helping to create and support youth groups within our community. Activities that assist and work with veterans and their families provide a vital source of community involvement for youth groups. The Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, church youth groups, Boys and Girls Clubs of America and school-sponsored clubs are just a few groups that can benefit from our involvement.

Show these youth that we care. Invite a group to participate in some of our Auxiliary activities:

- Deliver groceries to a disabled veteran.
- Help a veteran with yard work.
- Take trash out for curbside pickup.
- Visit nursing homes or hospitals.
- Reading to youth.

These activities will not only teach young people to learn about community service, but they may also receive participation hours for badges or other awards from their youth group. Encourage youth to talk to a veteran and ask about that veteran's service to our country thereby learning about patriotism through a

veteran's perspective. We must continue to show our love and respect for our veterans and our country, and we can do so by emphasizing patriotism to the youth of tomorrow.

Honoring individual youth for their patriotism and/or their support of veterans, service members and their families can be accomplished by presenting them with a patriotic youth award. A fillable, printable version of this award is available in MALTA Member Resources, Youth Activities.

### **Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue!**

It is so inspiring to listen to our youth sing our national anthem. The Auxiliary sponsors a singing contest for youth in grades K-12 that is divided into two grade divisions: K-8 and 9-12. Entries will be judged on vocal ability, mastery of lyrics, originality or interpretation and entertainment value.

The first-place winner from each Department in each grade division will be forwarded to Auxiliary Headquarters. There will be one National winner in each grade division with awards for first, second and third place in each division. Entry forms are located in MALTA Member Resources, Youth Activities and contains eligibility requirements, contest rules and deadlines.

### **Illustrating America**

Another way to encourage patriotism in youth is to participate in Illustrating America. The contest is open to any student in grades K-8 who is enrolled in public, private or parochial school or a home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions; or who are dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools. However, foreign exchange students and students 15-years or older are ineligible. There are three grade divisions: K-2, 3-5 and 6-8. National grade division winners of previous Illustrating America contests may enter the next grade division but are ineligible for the same grade division of which they are a previous winner.

The Department first-place winner in each grade division will be sent to National Headquarters. For more details on requirements and contest rules and the student brochure and entry form, consult MALTA Member Resources, Youth Activities.



# YOUTH ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

## Sponsoring and Working with Youth Groups

### Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans Citations • Patriotic Youth Award

#### Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue! • Patriotism through Literacy • Illustrating America

The VFW Auxiliary is in a unique position to help teach our youth the skills to become responsible adults through serving our country, communities and veterans. We have a new generation of veterans who need the support of family, friends and country as they serve overseas and when they come home from conflicts abroad. Today's youth are the future of our nation.

### Sponsoring and Working with Youth Groups

As part of the Auxiliary Youth Activities Program, an Auxiliary can sponsor a youth group and engage youth in any one of our Programs, including activities to honor our veterans or assist our service members and their families.

Take advantage of the service aspects some youth groups require. Many youth-focused organizations require various types of community service or activities to earn merits in their units. College-bound seniors earn school credit for some of these same activities. Remember that involving youth in service to veterans in conjunction with your Auxiliary can bring new membership to your Auxiliary. When youth and the whole family are included, members feel more invested in your Auxiliary. Sponsorship of a youth group can create a bright future for your Auxiliary, veterans and the community as a whole.

### Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans Citations

The Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans Citation is one way for Auxiliaries to recognize youth groups for their efforts and service projects honoring our veterans, and assisting service members and their families. The Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans Citation is available in MALTA Member Resources under Youth Activities.

### Patriotic Youth Award

The Patriotic Youth Award is designed to recognize individual youth for their patriotism and/or support of our veterans, service members and their families. A fillable, printable version of The Patriotic Youth Award is available in MALTA Member Resources under Youth Activities.

### Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue!

Open to youth in grades K-12 at the time of local entry and a U.S. citizen or U.S. national. Entry will be judged on vocal ability, mastery of lyrics, originality or interpretation and entertainment value. The contest consists of two grade divisions: K-8 and 9-12. The Department first-place winner in each grade division will be forwarded to Auxiliary National Headquarters. There is one National winner in each grade division, with awards for first, second and third place in each grade division. Please see entry form in MALTA Member Resources under Youth Activities for eligibility requirements and contest rules.

Deadlines:

Entries received by:

Participating Auxiliary – March 31

Department – April 15

National Headquarters – May 5

Contest Rules:

- Video of contestant's solo vocal performance of "The Star-Spangled Banner" must be recorded between July 1, 2023 and March 31, 2024.
- Performance must be saved as a YouTube video.
- Contestant may sing a cappella, with backing tracks or instruments.
- Contestant may sing in the arrangement and style of their choice.
- Contestant may NOT change the words.

### Patriotism through Literacy

Promote and support reading among youth with this simple, fun and potentially free (use your local library) initiative. Introduce youth to historical figures and teach them about events in our nation's history while fostering a love of reading that can lead to a lifetime of learning.

Benefits of Patriotism through Literacy:

- Teach kids about various times in American history. Promote empathy and expose students to experiences unlike their own.
- Foster a love of books that leads to a lifetime of learning.
- Spend time with kids in the community in new, creative ways.

- Help youth gain better understanding of American history through nonfiction.

How can I participate in Patriotism through Literacy?

- Volunteer to read a historical or creative nonfiction picture book to kids at your local library.
- Donate historical fiction or creative nonfiction books to local schools, shelters or libraries.
- Host a read-a-thon and award small prizes (stickers, pins) for number of books or hours read.
- Run a writer's workshop for aspiring teen and tween authors at your Post Home.
- Invite an author of historical fiction or creative nonfiction to do a book talk/signing in your area.

Reading has many benefits, including improved grammar and writing skills, improved focus and concentration, and it helps children to understand and share the feelings of others; reading stretches our imagination. As Dr. Seuss said, "Reading can take you places you have never been before."

### Illustrating America

Open to any student in grades K-8 by the March 31 deadline who is enrolled in a public, private or parochial school or home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions; or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application for which has not been denied) and intend to become a U.S. citizen. Foreign exchange students and students age 15 or older are ineligible. National grade division winners of previous Illustrating America contests may enter the subsequent grade division but are ineligible for the same grade division of which they are a previous National winner.

Entries will be judged on patriotic theme and technique. The contest consists of three grade divisions: K-2, 3-5 and 6-8. The Department first-place winner in each grade division will be forwarded to Auxiliary National Headquarters.

There are National awards for first, second and third place in each grade division. The first, second and third place entry in each grade division will be displayed at National Convention. Please see the student brochure and entry form in MALTA Member Resources or on the VFW Auxiliary website for more details on requirements and contest rules.

Deadlines:

Entries received by:

Local Auxiliary – March 31

Department – April 15

National Headquarters – May 5

Contest Rules:

- Art must be two-dimensional.
- Art must be on canvas or paper.
- Watercolor, pencil, pastel, charcoal, tempera, crayon, acrylic, pen, ink, oil, marker or other media may be used.
- Submit canvas entries on a stretcher frame or canvas board. Other entries, if matted, must be matted in white or reinforced with heavy paper.
- The art should be no smaller than 8" x 10" but no larger than 18" x 24", not including mat.
- **Coloring sheets, digital art and photography are not accepted.**

### Involve Youth in ALL Auxiliary Programs

Youth play such an important role in our future. Encourage involvement from an early age in all Auxiliary Programs. Every young person can find their place to serve when they are presented with a variety of opportunities to serve their communities and veterans.

Teach youth about Auxiliary efforts to:

- Respect and take pride in our country.
- Serve hospitalized veterans.
- Elect leaders who appreciate our military.
- Pass legislation that secures benefits for our veterans. And many other worthy efforts!

### Project Examples

- Visiting and volunteering in VA and non-VA facilities. Raising funds for a community veterans memorial. Marching in patriotic holiday parades.
- Volunteering to help veterans and service members and their families with yard work or household repairs. Sending cards or small gifts to the VFW National Home to support families.
- Planning a card- and letter-writing campaign in local schools to send mail to our troops overseas or veterans in VA facilities.
- Organizing assembly, collection and delivery of care packages for troops.
- Teaching computer skills to veterans.

### Youth Group Examples for VFW Auxiliary Sponsorship

- Youth sports teams
- Church youth groups
- After-school programs
- Youth-focused organizations
- School clubs
- Home-school associations
- Youth community service groups
- Nonprofit organization youth advisory councils
- Service learning and civic engagement departments in high schools and colleges

## **Make Your Auxiliary Accessible to Today's Youth**

It has never been so easy to communicate your cause and events to the world. Social media as teaching and information tools have natural collaborative elements allowing our youth to view and comment on each other's activities. They are tweeting on Twitter, posting on Facebook, instantly sending pictures on Instagram and subscribing to YouTube channels. If you don't know what any of this is – **LEARN**.

## **POPULAR SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS.**

Facebook | Twitter | LinkedIn | YouTube  
Pinterest | Instagram | Snapchat  
**Get online and see what's new!**

Visit MALTA Member Resources for publicity tips, social media guidelines and other helpful information.

# YOUTH ACTIVITIES PROGRAM AWARDS

## Awards for Auxiliaries

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about Patriotism Through Literacy and utilizing the Random Act of Patriotism card (R.A.P.)
- Citation to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event that educates their community about Patriotism Through Literacy and utilizes the Random Act of Patriotism card (R.A.P.) Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Youth Activities Chairman by March 31, 2024 for judging.

The Department Youth Activities Chairman must email National Headquarters by April 30, 2024 at [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org) a total combined list of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event that educates their community about Patriotism Through Literacy and utilizes the Random Act of Patriotism card (R.A.P.)

The Department Youth Activities Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Youth Activities Ambassador by April 30, 2024 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

## Awards for Departments and Department Chairmen

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Youth Activities Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion of Patriotism Through Literacy and utilizes the Random Act of Patriotism card (R.A.P.) Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.
2. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of the Program goals listed at the top of Page 64. Winners will be announced and awards presented at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

**2023-2024**

# YEAR-END REPORTS

# Americanism Year-End Report Worksheet

This form is for statistical purposes only.  
Department Chairman must submit this report form to their Department President by May 1.  
Report to be processed in MALTA by May 10.

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of participating Auxiliaries: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Number of Auxiliaries that utilized any of the Americanism materials/resources available in MALTA Member Resources.
2. Number of Auxiliaries that promoted, participated in, recognized, any patriotic day and/or branch of service birthdays.
3. Number of Auxiliaries that distributed and/or presented American Flags and/or POW/MIA flags.
4. Number of American Flags and/or POW/MIA flags distributed and/or presented by Auxiliaries.
5. Number of Patriotic Appreciation Citations, Certificate of Appreciation or Respect for the Flag Citations presented to citizens and/or businesses in recognition of their displaying the American Flag, POW/MIA flag and/or other displays of American pride.

# Auxiliary Outreach Year-End Report Worksheet

This form is for statistical purposes only.  
Department Chairman must submit this report form to their Department President by May 1.  
Report to be processed in MALTA by May 10.

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of participating Auxiliaries: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Number of Auxiliaries that utilized any of the Auxiliary Outreach materials/resources available in MALTA Member Resources.
2. Number of Auxiliaries as a group that volunteered/partnered with another organization not affiliated with the VFW or VFW Auxiliary.
3. Number of organizations that Auxiliaries volunteered/partnered with during the year.
  - a. First Responders
  - b. Churches
  - c. Towns
  - d. Disaster relief
  - e. Cancer, Heart, ALS Association, etc.
  - f. Other
4. Number of combined member and/or Auxiliary hours volunteered with another organization not affiliated with the VFW or VFW Auxiliary.

# "Buddy"<sup>®</sup> Poppy & VFW National Home Year-End Report Worksheet

This form is for statistical purposes only.  
Department Chairman must submit this report form to their Department President by May 1.  
Report to be processed in MALTA by May 10.

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of participating Auxiliaries: \_\_\_\_\_

## "Buddy"<sup>®</sup> Poppy

1. Number of Auxiliaries that utilized any of the "Buddy"<sup>®</sup> Poppy materials/resources available in MALTA Member Resources.
2. Number of Auxiliaries that held "Buddy"<sup>®</sup> Poppy drives with their VFW Post.
3. Number of Auxiliaries that held "Buddy"<sup>®</sup> Poppy drives without their VFW Post.
4. Number of combined "Buddy"<sup>®</sup> Poppies that were distributed.
5. Number of Auxiliaries that participated in the VFW "Buddy"<sup>®</sup> Poppy Display contest.

## VFW National Home

1. Number of Auxiliaries that utilized any of the VFW National Home materials/resources available in MALTA Member Resources.
2. Number of Auxiliaries that promoted the VFW National Home.
3. Number of Auxiliaries that promoted the VFW National Home Helpline.
4. Number of Auxiliaries that purchased at least one VFW National Home Life Membership.
5. Number of Auxiliaries that purchased at least one VFW National Home Tribute Brick.

# Extension & Revitalization Year-End Report Worksheet

This form is for statistical purposes only.  
Department Chairman must submit this report form to their Department President by May 1.  
Report to be processed in MALTA by May 10.

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of participating Auxiliaries: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Number of Auxiliaries that utilized any of the Extension & Revitalization materials/resources available in MALTA Member Resources.
2. Number of Auxiliaries that utilized their Department Chief of Staff for help, suggestions and direction for Auxiliary/member issues.
3. Number of Auxiliaries that were presented with a Healthy Auxiliary Certificate.
4. Number of new Auxiliaries instituted by date of report.
5. Number of Auxiliaries canceled by date of report.

# Historian & Media Relations

## Year-End Report Worksheet

This form is for statistical purposes only.  
Department Chairman must submit this report form to their Department President by May 1.  
Report to be processed in MALTA by May 10.

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of participating Auxiliaries: \_\_\_\_\_

### Historian

1. Number of Auxiliaries that utilized any of the Historian materials/resources available in MALTA Member Resources.
2. Number of Auxiliaries that created a Historian's book documenting the previous year by any means.

### Media Relations

1. Number of Auxiliaries that utilized any of the Media Relations materials/resources available in MALTA Member Resources.
2. Number of Auxiliaries that sent a monthly or quarterly newsletter to each of their members via printed mail or email.
3. Number of Auxiliaries that have their own Auxiliary Facebook page.
4. Number of Auxiliaries that have their own Auxiliary website.
5. Number of Auxiliaries that have a joint Facebook page with their VFW Post.
6. Number of Auxiliaries that have a joint website with their VFW Post.
7. Number of Auxiliaries that held a Media Relations "how to" training to educate their members (example: how to log in to MALTA, email, navigate Facebook and other social media.)

# Hospital Year-End Report Worksheet

This form is for statistical purposes only.  
Department Chairman must submit this report form to their Department President by May 1.  
Report to be processed in MALTA by May 10.

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of participating Auxiliaries: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Number of Auxiliary members that volunteered at any VA and/or non-VA medical facility.  
(Auxiliary member to be counted one time only per year.)
2. Total number of hours that Auxiliary members volunteered at any VA and/or non-VA medical facility.
3. Total number of hours that Sponsored Volunteers and/or students volunteered under the VFW Auxiliary sponsorship and supervision at any VA and/or non-VA medical facility.
4. Number of Auxiliaries that promoted, participated or hosted any activity listed below.
  - Honors Escort
  - National Salute to Veteran Patients-Valentines for Veterans
  - Veterans Health Care (VHA)
  - Women Veterans Health Care Program
5. Number of Auxiliaries that promoted, participated or co-hosted with their VFW Post, any activity listed below.
  - Honors Escort
  - National Salute to Veterans Patients-Valentines for Veterans
  - Veterans Health Care (VHA)
  - Women Veterans Health Care Program
6. Total dollar amount spent on all Hospital Program related items and/or projects.

# Legislative Year-End Report Worksheet

This form is for statistical purposes only.  
Department Chairman must submit this report form to their Department President by May 1.  
Report to be processed in MALTA by May 10.

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of participating Auxiliaries: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Number of Auxiliaries that utilized any of the Legislative materials/resources available in MALTA Member Resources.
2. Number of Auxiliary members who are subscribed to VFW's *Action Corps Weekly* E-Newsletter.
3. Number of Auxiliaries that promoted, participated and/or hosted activities regarding the VFW Priority Goals.
4. Number of Auxiliaries that promoted, participated or co-hosted with their VFW Post, activities regarding the VFW Priority Goals.
5. Number of Auxiliary members who contacted their legislators on veteran issues by any means (example: emails, letters, postcards, phone calls, etc.)
6. Number of Auxiliary members who attended events where they could interact with legislators (example: legislative conferences, town halls, meet-and-greets, etc.)

# Membership

## Year-End Report Worksheet

This form is for statistical purposes only.  
Department Chairman must submit this report form to their Department President by May 1.  
Report to be processed in MALTA by May 10.

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of participating Auxiliaries: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Number of Auxiliaries that utilized any of the Membership materials/resources available in MALTA Member Resources.
2. Number of Auxiliaries that promoted, participated, hosted or co-hosted with their VFW Post, activities regarding VFW and/or VFW Auxiliary education and Membership Recruitment.
3. Number of Auxiliaries that regularly educate their members on the benefits of their membership (Example: insurance plans, travel benefits, cancer grants, hearing plans, etc.)
4. Number of Auxiliaries that educate their members on the National Membership Program Awards.
5. Number of Auxiliary Members that participated in any recruiting event on any level.
6. Number of Auxiliaries that recruited at least one new member.

# Mentoring for Leadership Year-End Report Worksheet

This form is for statistical purposes only.  
Department Chairman must submit this report form to their Department President by May 1.  
Report to be processed in MALTA by May 10.

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of participating Auxiliaries: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Number of Auxiliaries that utilized any of the Mentoring for Leadership materials/resources available in MALTA Member Resources.
2. Number of Auxiliaries that educated their members on the National Mentoring for Leadership Program Awards.
3. Number of Auxiliaries that had members who stepped up to the role of mentor.
4. Number of Auxiliaries that held a special recognition for their mentors in their Auxiliary.

# Scholarships

## Year-End Report Worksheet

This form is for statistical purposes only.  
Department Chairman must submit this report form to their Department President by May 1.  
Report to be processed in MALTA by May 10.

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of participating Auxiliaries: \_\_\_\_\_

### Continuing Education Scholarship Contest

1. Number of Auxiliaries that promoted the Continuing Education Scholarship Contest.  
(example, distributed applications, publicized or promoted the scholarship)
2. Number of Auxiliaries that made a monetary donation to the Continuing Education Scholarship fund.

### Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest

1. Number of Auxiliaries that promoted the Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest.  
(example, distributed applications, publicized or promoted the scholarship)
2. Number of students that submitted art entries to Auxiliaries for judging.
3. Number of art entries submitted to the Department for judging.
4. Number of Auxiliaries that made a monetary donation to the Young American Creative Patriotic Art Scholarship fund.

### 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest

1. Number of Auxiliaries that promoted the 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest.  
(example, distributed applications, publicized or promoted the scholarship)
2. Number of students that submitted art entries to Auxiliaries for judging.
3. Number of art entries submitted to the Department for judging.
4. Number of Auxiliaries that made a monetary donation to the 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest Scholarship fund.

### VFW Scholarships

1. Number of Auxiliaries that assisted their VFW Post in promoting or conducting the Patriot's Pen Essay Contest.
2. Number of Auxiliaries that assisted their VFW Post in promoting or conducting the Voice of Democracy Audio Essay Contest.

### Recognition

1. Number of Auxiliaries who hosted an awards ceremony to recognize awardees and participants in any/all contests.
2. Total dollar amount and/or value of awards presented by Auxiliaries, Districts and Department in any/all contests.

# Veterans & Family Support Year-End Report Worksheet

This form is for statistical purposes only.  
Department Chairman must submit this report form to their Department President by May 1.  
Report to be processed in MALTA by May 10.

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of participating Auxiliaries: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Number of Auxiliaries that utilized any of the Veterans & Family Support materials/resources available in MALTA Member Resources.
2. Number of Auxiliaries that promoted, participated, hosted or co-hosted with their VFW Post activities for any VFW Program listed below.
  - a. Disaster Relief
  - b. Military Assistance (MAP)
  - c. National Veterans Service (NVS)
  - d. Unmet Needs
  - e. Veterans & Military Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Awareness
3. Number of Auxiliaries that provided direct aid to veterans, service members and/or their families (example, meals, transportation, cards, packages, donations, etc.)
4. Approximate number of veterans, service members and/or their families assisted.
5. Total monetary donations and/or value of donations and goods/services provided to veterans, service members and/or their families.

# Youth Activities

## Year-End Report Worksheet

This form is for statistical purposes only.  
Department Chairman must submit this report form to their Department President by May 1.  
Report to be processed in MALTA by May 10.

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of participating Auxiliaries: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Number of youth groups that Auxiliaries worked with during the Program Year.
2. Number of youth that Auxiliaries worked with during the Program Year.
3. Number of Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans Citations awarded.
4. Number of Auxiliaries that participated in Patriotism through Literacy.
  - Number of books donated.

### ***Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue!* National Anthem Singing Contest.**

1. Number of Auxiliaries that promoted the *Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue!* National Anthem singing contest.
2. Number of students that submitted entries to Auxiliaries for judging.
3. Number of entries submitted to the Department for judging.
4. Number of Auxiliaries who hosted an awards ceremony to recognize awardees and participants in this contest.
5. Total dollar amount and/or value of awards presented by Auxiliaries, Districts and Department.

### **Illustrating America Art Contest**

1. Number of Auxiliaries that promoted the Illustrating America Art Contest.
2. Number of students that submitted art entries to Auxiliaries for judging.
3. Number of art entries submitted to the Department.
4. Number of Auxiliaries who hosted an awards ceremony to recognize awardees and participants in this contest.
5. Total dollar amount and/or value of awards presented by Auxiliaries, Districts and Department.



