

# MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Dept. Commander & President  
Joint Homecoming

March 13 - 14, 2026

Florida Hotel - Room rates \$139

1500 Sand Lake Rd.

Orlando, Fl.

Phone: 800-588-4656

(Must mention VFW Homecoming)

Hotel Reservations Cut-off

February 16, 2026

Reservations for Banquet on March 14, 2026

Must be sent to Debbie Tilley

904-460-9345 or cell 904-495-3622

[dktilley@comcast.net](mailto:dktilley@comcast.net)

cut-off February 27, 2026





**Department President**  
**VFW Auxiliary SHIRT ORDER FORM**  
**2026-2027**

**\$35 PER SHIRT      Small – 2X**  
**\$40 PER SHIRT 3X – 4X ( 4X is Mens Only)**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**District** \_\_\_\_\_

**Post/Auxiliary** \_\_\_\_\_

**Size:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Men's**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Women**

**OPTIONAL**

**\*\*\*Add \$5.00 for 3 lines of embroidery\*\*\***

**Personalization**

**(Please print clearly)**

**Line 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Line 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Line 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Paid Check#** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cash** \_\_\_\_\_

**Checks Payable to:**

**Kathy Wright**

**5867 111st St.**

**Jacksonville, Fl. 32244**

**Earmark for "SHIRTS"**

# AMERICANISM & PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR

October 2025

**\*Flag Education\*Promote Patriotism  
\*POW/MIA Recognition\*Star Family Recognition**

**National President's Theme:**

***"From Sea to Shining Sea Our Veterans Keep us Free"***

**Department President's Theme:**

***"Building Bridges for Our Veterans"***

- *Have you visited a Veteran today? Going to your local Sr. Centers Volunteering or just going to say we care. Children love making cards for them.*
- *Go to the local and National Cemetery to show respect for our fallen by placing Flags or Volunteering to clean up, Invite the community for a Veterans Day Ceremony*
- *Are you going to participate in a holiday parade The Patriotic Instructor may carry the Flag*
- *Now that the year is under way Refresh members on how and when to Stand at attention, parade rest...*
- *Interesting Fact did you know if a flag is flown upside down, it is a signal of distress.*

**"Veterans are a symbol of what makes our Nation great, and  
WE must never forget all they have done to ensure our  
Freedom"**

**-RODNEY FRELINGHUYSEN**

**Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Mike Yates**

**Michelle Butler  
Americanism/Patriotic Instr.  
American.Patriotic.2526@gmail.com**

**FOR  
NOVEMBER**

**NATIONAL  
VETERANS  
WARRIOR CARE  
AND  
MILITARY FAMILY  
MONTH**

**Holidays**  
ELECTION DAY 4th  
US MARINE CORPS  
BIRTHDAY 10th  
VETERAN'S DAY 11<sup>th</sup>  
WORLD KINDNESS  
DAY 13th  
NATIONAL FAMILY  
VOLUNTEER DAY  
22<sup>nd</sup>  
SMALL BUSINESS  
DAY 25<sup>th</sup>  
THANKSGIVING 27<sup>th</sup>





# AUXILIARY OUTREACH

October 2025

## **October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.**

**Have you considered a partnership with one of the many Susan G Komen events happening this month? You could register runners and/or walkers, hand out waters, assign numbers, any number of things. In many areas, they also have Remembrance Vigils and Ceremonies. Ask what you can do to “Shine your Light” and “Build Bridges for Our Veterans” into the Community. Also Fall is here! Do your community groups, churches, etc have Fall Festivals? Ask how you can help them!**

### **OCTOBER EVENTS**

**Oct 1 Columbus Day**

**Oct. 6 National Coaches  
Day**

**Oct 31 Halloween**

### **SUGGESTIONS:**

**Does your area have a parade, a public ceremony you could partner with ?**

**How about the local school sports teams, semi-pro or pro teams in your area?**

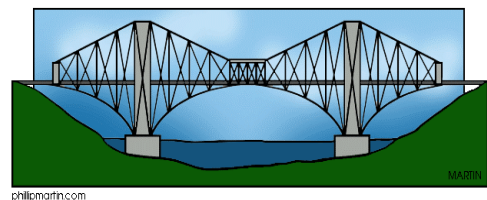
**Schools have parties, Towns have parades, Fire and Police stations have costume parties and hand out candy**

**Check with your local groups Ask them what you can do to help them achieve their goals! Look for those kids to recognize the R.A.P. (Random Acts of Patriotism) and reward them.**

**Take lots of pictures and/or videos of your Auxiliary Outreach program in action. Post them on social media such as Facebook, TikTok, etc. Send them to me with your report.**

**FLORIDA ROCKS!! Let's prove it to the world!**

**SHINE YOUR LIGHT ! BUILD THOSE BRIDGES!!**



**Approved by:**

**Dept. President  
Mike Yates**

**Becky Kieffer**

**Auxiliary Outreach Chair**

**[bkiso2012@gmail.com](mailto:bkiso2012@gmail.com)**





**October 2025**  
**Buddy Poppy/National Home**  
**Happy Fall Y'all**



**Looking for ideas on how to educate and promote the Buddy Poppy and help the VFW National Home? Share the story behind the Buddy Poppy and why it matters. Promote the VFW National Home by sharing their mission, how they support our veterans and families and encouraging donations.**



***"Pumpkin Patch Poppy" setup a table at a local pumpkin patch, farmers market or at a fall festival. This is a good way to reach the community enjoying the fall season.***

***"Lolly Poppy" wrap a Buddy Poppy around Lolly Pops and hand out during Halloween events at community "Trunk or Treats".***



***"Harvest for Heros" Host a Buddy Poppy distribution and the theme is to "Harvest Donations"***

***"Scarecrows for Service" Decorating contest using Scarecrows & Buddy Poppies. Auction them off for donations.***



***"Scare up Support" Whitmore's Warriors "Do More Stock The Store" Encourage a friendly competition among your District, whichever Post & Auxiliary donates the most they get a Trophy to take back to their VFW Post.***

**Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Mike Yates**

**Buddy Poppy/National Home  
Chairman  
Jennifer Holland  
[jenniferLholland72@comcast.net](mailto:jenniferLholland72@comcast.net)**

# Extension and Revitalization

## October 2025



### Successful Ideas to Maintain a Healthy VFW Auxiliary

Maintaining a vibrant and healthy Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Auxiliary is vital for supporting veterans, their families, and our local communities. In this newsletter, we share proven ideas and practical tips to help your Auxiliary thrive, increase membership, and foster a welcoming, engaged environment for all.

#### 1. Foster an Inclusive and Welcoming Atmosphere

Creating a sense of belonging is at the heart of a healthy Auxiliary. Encourage members to greet newcomers, introduce them to others, and provide information about upcoming events. Consider hosting regular “meet and greet” socials or coffee hours to help members connect and form lasting friendships.

#### 2. Encourage Active Participation

Involve members in planning and decision-making. Form committees for different activities—such as fundraising, community outreach, and event planning—and rotate leadership roles to give everyone a chance to contribute. Recognize and celebrate member achievements at meetings and in newsletters.

#### 3. Offer Engaging Programs and Events

- Educational Workshops: Host guest speakers on topics like veterans' benefits, mental health, and local history.
- Community Service Projects: Organize food drives, holiday care packages for deployed troops, and volunteer days at local shelters.
- Family-Friendly Activities: Plan picnics, movie nights, and holiday parties to engage members of all ages.

#### 4. Prioritize Communication

Keep members informed through regular newsletters, emails, and social media updates. Share meeting minutes, upcoming events, and highlights from past activities. Encourage feedback and suggestions to continuously improve communication channels.

#### 5. Promote Recruitment and Retention

Invite prospective members to attend events and meetings. Provide clear information about membership benefits and how to join. Ask current members to bring friends and family to Auxiliary gatherings. Offer incentives such as “Member of the Month” recognition or small tokens for recruitment efforts.

#### 6. Support Your Local Veterans

Partner with your local VFW post to identify veterans' needs and coordinate assistance. Offer transportation, organize appreciation dinners, or help with home repairs. Show gratitude for their service through personal outreach and recognition.

#### 7. Encourage Lifelong Learning and Leadership

Provide leadership training, mentorship opportunities, and skill-building workshops for members interested in taking on new roles. Encourage younger members to share new ideas and perspectives, ensuring the Auxiliary remains dynamic and forward-thinking.

#### 8. Celebrate Milestones and Successes

Acknowledge anniversaries, honors, and outstanding service at meetings and in newsletters. Share success stories and positive outcomes from community projects to inspire continued participation and pride in the Auxiliary's achievements.

### Together, We Bridge the Gap for our Veterans

A healthy VFW Auxiliary is built on respect, cooperation, and a shared commitment to service. By implementing these ideas, your Auxiliary can flourish—making a meaningful impact in the lives of veterans, their families, and the entire community.

Let's continue working together to keep our Auxiliary strong, supportive, and united!



Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Mike Yates

Sherri Golder  
Extension/Revitalization  
sherrigolder@gmail.com

## HOW WILL YOUR AUXILIARY CELEBRATE FALL



### Promote Your Upcoming Event

Do you have an event on the horizon? Reach out to your community! Connect with your local newspaper, radio station, or news channel to spread the word.

- **Master the 5 W's:** Use them like a pro to spotlight the Auxiliary mission.
- This is your cue to roll out those social media reels and get creative!
- Remember to report your activities and submit those reels for max exposure!

Reels offer a visual avenue for an organization to showcase its personality, values, and message. This enhances connections, cultivates loyalty among its members, and raises awareness among citizens who may not yet understand the mission and purpose of the Auxiliary.

### Ensuring Your Video is Accessible to All

- Make your video accessible to everyone by incorporating closed captions alongside your audio.
- To reach a broader audience, provide options that cater to different needs.
- Utilize clear and legible fonts for better readability, and opt for less trendy sounds that will suit your content.
- Focus on what works best for your reel rather than solely following popular trends.
- Continue using the few hashtags that you have been utilizing.

Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Mike Yates

Kathy Ingall  
Program Chair

[vfwauxflhistorian25.26@gmail.com](mailto:vfwauxflhistorian25.26@gmail.com)



## HOSPITAL OCTOBER 2025



Happy Halloween Department of Florida Hospital

### VOLUNTEER

### RECRUITMENT

### RECOGNITION

#### How the VFW Auxiliary members participate

- Fundraise for the Department Hospital fund.
- Participate in events and projects at VA facilities voted on by your Auxiliary
- Make up Halloween goody bags, snacks, cards, water etc.
- Volunteer hours earned can be reported to your Auxiliary and the VA. Recruit volunteers.....

**Making our Veterans Happy with, Kindness, Compassion & Comfort at....**

- VA clinics
- Domiciliary
- VA Hospitals
- Homeless Veteran Shelters

**November is creeping up do you already have your plans!!!!**



**November 11 Veteran's Day** – what a great way to show our Veterans how much we appreciate them with a luncheon – handout  
Thank You cards with little Flags.



**November 27<sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving Day**- maybe get with the Hospital & help serve Thanksgiving meals, they are always looking for Volunteers to help.

Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Mike Yates



Viki Stripling  
Department Hospital  
Vikiplottsdistrict11@yahoo.com





# LEGISLATIVE

OCTOBER 2025

## VFW PRIORITY GOALS

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

Turn Patriotism into  
Action



Scan the QR code  
to see how you can  
have a voice.

There is power in  
numbers when it  
comes to  
Legislation!

Be an Advocate  
Be Informed  
Be Engaged

- Challenge your members to see how many people they can sign up for Action Corps weekly. Reward the winner.
- Have a "Tap & Treat" table set up at all Veteran events.
- Give a VFW dinner discount to those who sign up for Action Corps weekly.
- Pick a priority veteran bill and challenge members at general meeting to report back on status of the bill. Award the winner.
- Be creative – make it fun!

**SCAN TO VIEW VFW-SUPPORTED BILLS  
INTRODUCED IN THE 119<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS**



Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Mike Yates



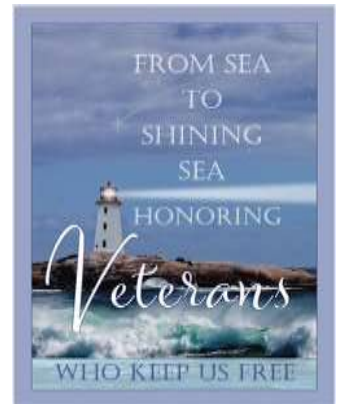
Pamela Monroe  
Legislative Chairman  
Anamcarax2@gmail.

# Membership/Mentoring

October 2025 FOCUS – Invite (Recruit)

## Message from our National President

Her motto continues... From Sea To Shining Sea  
Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free as well as be  
“The lighthouse in someone’s Storm.” Together we  
are the ocean, recruiting, retaining, reinstating, and  
navigating current and future re members.



As our Ocean continues to recruit New Members... please share these awards that our “Builders” can win as they build our Bridges for our Veterans through adding new members.

- 5 Member Recruiter Pin. Each VFW and VFW Auxiliary member who recruits five (5) new and/or rejoined members to the VFW Auxiliary will receive a 5 Member Recruiter Pin. Pin mailed directly to the recruiter.
- 5 Member Recruiter Drawing. Each VFW and VFW Auxiliary member who recruits five (5) new and/or rejoined members to the VFW Auxiliary will be entered into the 5 Member Recruiter Drawing to receive a \$100 Visa Gift Card.
- “National Membership Achievement” Recruiter Award. Each VFW and VFW Auxiliary member who recruits twenty (20) new and/or rejoined members to the VFW Auxiliary will receive a “National Membership Achievement” Recruiter Award. VFW Auxiliary Treasurers on all levels are not eligible for this award.
- “National Membership Achievement” Recruiter Drawing. Each VFW and VFW Auxiliary member who recruits twenty (20) new and/or rejoined members to the VFW Auxiliary will be entered in the “National Membership Achievement” Recruiter Drawing to receive a \$400 Visa Gift Card. VFW Auxiliary Treasurers on all levels are not eligible for this award.

You can find our National President’s Program book in M.A.L.T.A under member resources. This book is a wealth of information to help make this year a success. This was showcased at National Convention and can be downloaded on any phone, computer or iPad.

Taking advantage of learning our programs will help make our members feel educated and included.

Keep sending in your mentoring reports! I love reading these and seeing you make a difference in your Auxiliaries!



Holly Evans  
Membership/Mentoring  
Chairman 2025-2026

*Has your Auxiliary researched how many members were logged into M.A.L.T.A.? Let’s continue to focus on encouraging all our members to*

Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Mike Yates



# **President Special Project**

## **Veterans Village**

**October 2025**

### **VFW FLORIDA**



### **VETERANS VILLAGE**



### **Department Awards**

The Bridge of Lions \$100.00-\$499.00.

Dames Point Bridge \$500.00-\$999.00.

Seven Mill Bridge \$1000.00-\$1599.00.

The Sunshine Skyway Bridge-\$1600.00.

Awards go to any Auxiliary within the amount listed. Deadline is April 15th if you are unable to bring to Convention send to Cindy Estell. Write in the memo line Presidents Special Project or

**Lets fix the bridge by remembering,  
The Veterans at Veterans Village.  
Plan a Trick or Treat Day at the Village**



**10/13 Columbus Day**

**10/31 Halloween**

**11/11 Veterans Day**

**11/27 Thanksgiving**

These are great days to send Candy and Gift Basket not only if you adopted a Veteran, but for anyone of the Veterans at Veterans Village. Your auxiliary can call the main number at the Village and ask if your auxiliary can do a Thanksgiving dinner.

**Don't Forget The Parade of Checks  
Fall Convention**



Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Mike Yates

Kelly Barr  
Department PSP Chairmen  
flpresproject2526@gmail.com



# SCHOLARSHIPS

OCTOBER 2025



## Building Bridges for Our Veterans

## REPORTING!

- Keep up the great work you are doing to promote, recognize and report on the Five scholarships.
- **DETAILS MATTER:** Make sure your reports answer Who, What, Where, When and Why. Describe your event in detail.
- When reporting on donations to the scholarship program, identify which scholarship the donation went to. If for more than one, identify how the donation was split.

## VOICE OF DEMOCRACY - PATRIOTS PEN

- The deadlines are approaching.

- Post: **31 October**
- District **15 November**
- Department **15 December**

Post submits one entry for every 15 entries received

District submits one entry to the Department VFW Chair

**UPDATE:** National Recognition for Voice of Democracy winners change in location – Instead of going to Washington DC, the winners will go to Valley Forge, PA and attend the Founding Forward Spirit of America Leadership Program. Please highlight the benefits of this program when promoting. Details on Department website.

## YOUNG AMERICAN CREATIVE PATRIOTIC ART

- Have you already reached out to the schools, youth groups, Art organizations and groups to promote? Including 3-D art? Don't delay as these priceless masterpieces take time.
- Ask to put flyers in Art businesses, community centers, etc.
- **DEADLINES:** 31 MARCH to Auxiliaries. 15 APRIL to Department Chair (me) **SUBMIT:** only One Entry per Auxiliary.
- On the Entry form, enter your Auxiliary information and skip the district chairman.
- 3-D Art: make sure there are pictures with the artwork so judges can see the original if damaged in shipping.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

"Be the Lighthouse in Somone's Storm"



- BUILD THE FUND
  - PROMOTE WITHIN YOUR AUXILIARY
  - DEADLINE – 15 FEBRUARY to National
- Submit donations in MALTA – individuals or Treasurers: *In MALTA under duties, select "Make a Gift" then "National President's 2025-2026 Project"* -
- <https://vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships/continuing-education/>

## Program Goals

Student Participation  
Community Awareness  
Recipient Recognition  
Increasing the Fund

## \*\*Auxiliary Award\*\*

Most creative and/or unique activity and/or event educating their community about the scholarship opportunities in the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary. Look for the entry form on the National Website under MALTA, Member Resources, Scholarships. Entry form due to Department Chair by 31 March 2026.

<https://vfwauxfl.org/di/vfw/v2/default.asp?pid=133704>

National VFW Auxiliary Scholarship



Approved by:  
Department President  
Mike Yates



Carrie Messer  
Scholarships Chair  
[messerca@gmail.com](mailto:messerca@gmail.com)





# Veterans & Family Support Program

## Building Bridges for our Veterans

### STUDENT VETERAN SUPPORT: HELP A HERO

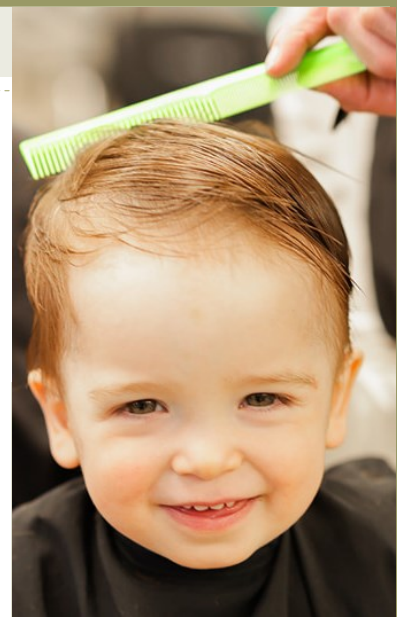
The VFW Help a Hero Scholarship program is a life-changing initiative designed to support America's service members and veterans as they transition to civilian life. Many veterans face challenges when pursuing higher education or vocational training, and financial barriers can make the journey overwhelming. This scholarship, funded through the generosity of Sport Clips Haircuts, customers, and other donors, provides up to \$5000 per semester covering tuition and fees, helping veterans focus on their studies and career goals instead of financial stress.

Since its launch, the program has awarded over \$15 million in scholarships, impacting thousands of veterans nationwide. These scholarships open the door to opportunities in higher education, trade schools, and certification programs, allowing veterans to gain the skills and training needed for meaningful careers after service. By investing in veterans' futures, the Help a Hero

**HELP A HERO**  
SCHOLARSHIP ★ PROGRAM  
OCTOBER 5 THROUGH NOVEMBER 15, 2025

Scholarship program not only honors their sacrifice but also strengthens communities across the nation.

The Help a Hero Scholarship continues to serve as a symbol of gratitude, ensuring that America's heroes have the resources they need to succeed in their next chapter of life. More information and applications can be found at [VFW.org/assistance/student-veterans-support](https://www.vfw.org/assistance/student-veterans-support)



### SPORT CLIPS' HELP A HERO SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT PROGRAM

Sport Clips' Help A Hero fundraiser supports VFW's scholarship program, providing financial assistance for veterans' education and career goals after military service. Donations are collected at any Sports Clips from October 5 through November 15. Every donation makes a difference.



Ryan M. Harris  
Program Chair

[Ryan.Harris.CISA@gmail.com](mailto:Ryan.Harris.CISA@gmail.com)

VFW Auxiliary  
Department of Florida



October 2025

#### SUPPORT SPOTLIGHT:

##### FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Florida's Department of Commerce actively supports veterans transitioning into civilian careers and entrepreneurship. They offer tools like the Employ Florida Vets portal, connecting veterans with job opportunities and providing resume assistance. Through initiatives like the Veterans Entrepreneurship Program (VEP) and partnerships with organizations like Veterans Florida, they provide training, resources, and mentorship for veterans looking to start or grow businesses, helping them leverage their skills for economic success. Their veterans resource page is at [floridajobs.org/Reemployment-Assistance-Service-Center/reemployment-assistance/job-assistance/for-veterans](https://floridajobs.org/Reemployment-Assistance-Service-Center/reemployment-assistance/job-assistance/for-veterans)

##### VFW ADOPT-A-UNIT PROGRAM

The VFW Adopt-a-Unit program builds strong connections between local VFW Posts or Auxiliaries and military units, providing vital support to service members and their families. By "adopting" a unit, volunteers can send care packages, host events, offer family assistance, and provide morale-boosting activities that remind our heroes they are not forgotten. With the holiday season approaching, this program becomes even more meaningful. Many service members spend the holidays away from loved ones, and Adopt-a-Unit helps bring comfort, joy, and a sense of home during that time. From organizing holiday gatherings for families to sending festive packages overseas, these efforts show gratitude for the sacrifices made. The Adopt-a-Unit program ensures service members and their families feel supported, appreciated, and connected throughout the year. More information is available on MALTA under Member Resources, then under Veterans & Family Support.

## Veterans Crisis Line



**DIAL 988** then  
**PRESS 1**



#### EVERY DAY IS A CHANCE TO HELP

Knowing the numbers can help save the life of a friend, a comrade, a family member, or a complete stranger. One life lost is one to many. Know the numbers and teach them to your circle.

**988  
THEN PRESS  
1**

**Ryan M. Harris  
Program Chair**

[Ryan.Harris.CISA@gmail.com](mailto:Ryan.Harris.CISA@gmail.com)

Approved by:  
Dept. President  
Mike Yates

# Youth Activities

“Be the Lighthouse in Somebody’s Storm”  
 “Bridging the Gap for our Veterans”



October 2025

## Program goal 4:

## Recognizes Random Acts of Patriotism (R.A.P.)

	<p>We encourage and reward patriotism through R.A.P. If a child is seen thanking a Veteran, properly placing their hand on their heart during the Pledge of Allegiance or involved in some other activity that promotes Patriotism, we suggest giving them a R.A.P. card. It's a fun and unique way to engage children elementary age and younger!</p>
<h3>Ways to get involved</h3>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Print R.A.P. Cards</b> - You could attach the card to an American Flag pen, a Patriotic pencil, or a piece of red, white, and blue candy.</li> <li>• <b>Give cards out</b> at the Library, Church, Festivals, Restaurants, Grocery Stores, or during youth sporting events. (school teams or local club teams: Football, Basketball, Soccer).</li> <li>• <b>Give cards to children</b> that Thank a Veteran for their service, stands for the Pledge with hand over their heart, and/or stands for the National Anthem. (Mission BBQ plays the National Anthem daily at Noon, Children stand and place their little hands over their heart, R.A.P. card moment!)</li> </ul>
<div> <h3>The Youth Activities Program</h3> <p>Sponsors and works with youth groups such as youth sports teams, Faith-based 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 departments in high schools and colleges, and more.</p> </div> <div> </div>	

Approved By:  
 Dept. President  
 Mike Yates

Lanaie Reed  
 Dept. of Fl. Youth Chair  
 lanwileth@gmail.com