

YOUTH ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

Program Goals:

- **Sponsoring and Working with Youth Groups**
 - **Supporting Our Veterans Citations**
- **Patriotic Youth Award**
 - **Patriotism through Literacy**
 - **Illustrating America**

National President's Theme:

*"From Sea to Shining Sea, Honoring Veterans
Who Keep Us Free"*

Department of Florida President's Theme:

"Building Bridges for Our Veterans"

Sponsoring and Working with Youth Groups: What better way to get involved with the youth in our communities than sponsoring and working with youth groups? In MALTA, there are nine (9) examples of different youth groups that you can sponsor and/or work with. Take advantage of the service aspects that some youth groups require. Many youth programs, especially for college-bound seniors, earn school credit for some of these activities. Involving youth in service to veterans in conjunction with your Auxiliary can bring new members to your Auxiliary! Give our youth an example of how to *Be the Lighthouse in Somebody's Storm!*

Citations/Awards: Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans Citations and Patriotic Youth Awards: We proudly recognize the outstanding efforts of youth groups who give back to veterans through the *Youth Groups Supporting Veterans* Citation. Whether it's through volunteering at VA facilities, hosting events, or sending care packages, these young people demonstrate compassion, leadership, and community spirit. By recognizing "Random Acts of Patriotism" (R.A.P.), we encourage our youth to show their love of our country and to "always do the right thing, even when no one may be looking". Patriotism and integrity should be rewarded by presenting our youth with a citation for acts such as: placing their hand over their heart during the National Anthem or Pledge of Allegiance, distributing US Flags or other patriotic items or insignia, and other patriotic acts.

Patriotism Through Literacy: The Patriotism Through Literacy initiative encourages the use of patriotic books to inspire a love for country in young readers. Whether through reading to children, donating books to schools and libraries, or hosting themed reading events, this program helps foster an appreciation for American values and history. It's a simple yet powerful way to make a lasting impact on youth through the power of storytelling.

Illustrating America Art Contest: The Illustrating America art contest encourages students in grades K through 8 to explore their artistic talents by creating original artwork that reflects patriotic themes. This national competition helps young artists gain confidence and recognition

while allowing them to express their love of country creatively. We should all be excited to see the world through the eyes of our youth!

** Forms, Citations, Score Sheets, etc. for all Youth Programs are available on the MALTA website, once you log in, under "Member Resources", then select "Youth Activities".



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DEPARTMENT AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES

One award in each membership group for the most creative and/or unique activity and/or event of the VFW Auxiliary working with a youth group.

Entry form is required and available in MALTA Member Resources. VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry form to the Department Youth Activities Chairman by March 31, 2026 for judging

DEPARTMENT AWARDS FOR YOUTH:

Illustrating America (3 Categories: K-2nd grade, 3rd-5th grade, and 6th-8th grade)

- 1st Place in Each Category: \$50 and a certificate
- 2nd Place in Each Category: \$25 and a certificate
- 3rd Place in Each Category: \$15 and a certificate

NATIONAL AWARDS:

Awards for Auxiliaries:

Most creative and/or unique activity and/or event of the VFW Auxiliary working with a youth group.

• Citation and \$25 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the most creative and/or unique activity and/or event of the VFW Auxiliary working with a youth group. Entry form is required and available in MALTA Member Resources.

VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry form to the Department Youth Activities Chairman by March 31, 2026 for judging. 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, 2026 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to the winning VFW Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into the winning VFW Auxiliary account after the 2026 VFW Auxiliary National Convention.