



Dept. of Florida VFW Auxiliary Scholarships Program September 2026

Plant the Seeds. Inspire the Voice. Create the Future.
September Focus: Follow Up. Build Momentum.
Turn Interest into Entries.

September is the month to move from sharing information to helping applicants finish. Reconnect with every school, teacher, counselor, youth group and student contacted in August. A personal reminder can be the difference between interest and a completed entry.

September Action Challenge: Make Five Follow-Ups

- Revisit at least five August school or community contacts.
- Secure one classroom visit, school announcement, newsletter item or youth-group presentation.
- Ask each contact to identify students who are interested in entering.
- Schedule two reminder dates before the October 31 deadline.
- Confirm applicants have official forms and the local VFW Post's exact submission instructions.

The October 31 Countdown

Voice of Democracy Grades 9-12

3-5 minute recorded audio essay
plus a written copy
National first prize: \$35,000

Patriot's Pen Grades 6-8

300-400 word written essay
National first prize: \$5,000

2026-2027 Theme: "What a Veteran Taught Me About America"

Student entries are due by midnight October 31, 2026, to a participating local VFW Post through the submission method approved by that Post.

SPORT CLIPS

VFW HELP A HERO SCHOLARSHIP

Spring 2027 application window: Aug. 1 - Nov. 15
Up to \$5,000 for qualified service members and veterans

Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship Spotlight

Spring 2027 applications are being accepted August 1 through November 15, 2026. Applications are online only.

- Scholarships of up to \$5,000 are available for tuition and fees and are paid directly to the accredited school.
- Eligible applicants include qualified active-duty, Guard/Reserve, retired or honorably discharged service members and veterans who completed initial training and hold or separated at the rank of E-5 or below.
- Applicants must demonstrate financial need and be accepted to or enrolled in a VA-approved program at an accredited post-secondary school.

Share it with: Post members, student veterans, local colleges and trade schools, veteran service offices, transitioning service members and military families.

Apply and learn more: vfw.org/Scholarship

Help Students Finish Strong

- Coordinate with the VFW Post Scholarship Chairman before distributing submission directions.
- Use the current official entry forms and verify the grade, format, word or time limits, signatures and deadline.
- Encourage students to begin now, proofread carefully and submit original work in their own voice.
- Follow up around October 10 and again during the final week - do not wait until deadline day.
- Plan how every participant will be recognized, not only the winners.

Keep Every Scholarship Seed Growing

Continuing Education: Applications remain open for eligible Auxiliary members, spouses, sons and daughters age 21 or older. Four \$2,250 scholarships are awarded; applications are due February 15, 2027.

Patriotic Art: Reconnect with high school art teachers now. Original 2-D and 3-D entries for grades 9-12 are due to a participating Auxiliary by March 31, 2027.

Recognition and Reporting

Begin a participant list and save copies of flyers, emails, school announcements and photos. Reports may include follow-up contacts, presentations, forms shared, social media promotion, Help A Hero outreach, entries in progress and Red Carpet recognition plans. Department and National Red Carpet entries are due March 31, 2027.

Build Your Scholarship Story File Now

- Names of contacts and dates of follow-up
- Copies of flyers, forms, emails and social posts
- Photos of displays, presentations and school visits
- Number of students interested or working on entries
- Plans for certificates, invitations and Red Carpet recognition

Every follow-up, every application shared and every student encouraged helps Florida grow stronger for our veterans.

Approved by:
Dept. of Florida President
Kathy Wright



Please reach out to me if you have any questions!

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