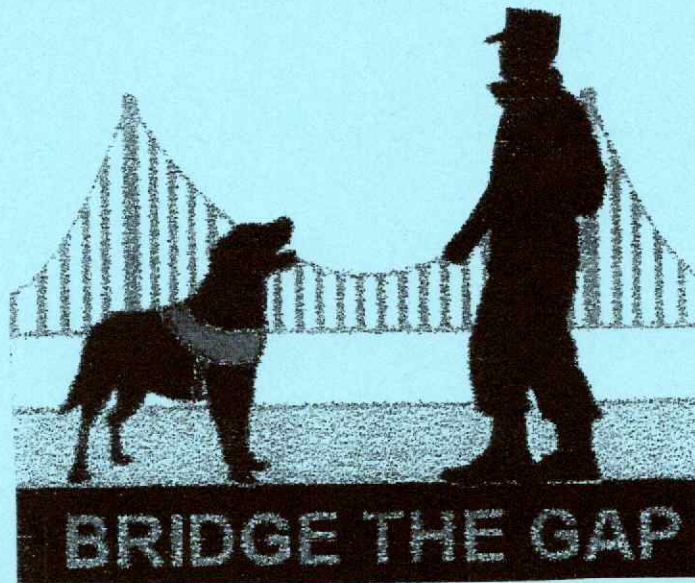


**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES
AUXILIARY
DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS**



2025-2026 PROGRAM KICKOFF



Saturday, August 23, 2025

Theresa Logue, Department President

**Patricia Folino, PDP
Chairman**

**Sheila Layton, PDP
Co-Chairman**

SCHOLARSHIPS

Betty Mae Tenney, PDP, Chairman
PO Box 328; Townsend MA 01469
978-597-6495 or 978-665-4026(w)

The Young American Creative Patriotic Art, 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art, Patriot's Pen Written Essay, and Voice of Democracy Audio Essay Contests, which each give young people the opportunity to receive recognition and earn awards at various levels of competition by demonstrating their patriotism through their artistic or writing talents, are all part of our Scholarships Program. The National VFW Auxiliary also provides scholarships for Auxiliary members and adult members of their immediate family through its Continuing Education Scholarship Program. It is the goal of the VFW Auxiliary Scholarships Program to assist students in attaining an education, reaching their full potential, and making their dreams come true.

Let's promote participation in all of these programs by strongly publicizing them within our communities and, in doing so, educating the public about the values of the VFW and its Auxiliary and the scholarship opportunities our organization provides. Announce your Scholarships Programs through social media, in area newspapers, on local cable channels, in area libraries, in the newsletters of area churches and civic groups, on bulletin boards and electric sign boards in public buildings and local businesses, and especially at locations frequented by young people.

The VFW Auxiliary awards one **Continuing Education Scholarship** each year to a selected candidate in each of the four VFW Auxiliary Conferences to assist those who wish to further their education by pursuing a college degree or career direction at a vocational/ technical school. Only current VFW Auxiliary members, their spouse, daughter, or son with a financial need are eligible to apply. The applicant must be twenty-one years of age or older and the qualifying member must have been a member of the VFW Auxiliary for one full year prior to the application submission deadline.

This Scholarship must be used in the academic year following completion of the contest. The Scholarship will be paid directly to the American college/university or vocational/technical school of the awardee's choice.

To apply for this \$1,250 scholarship, a completed VFW Auxiliary National Continuing Education Scholarship Application form, typed answers on a separate piece of paper to all questions listed on that application, and an essay of 300 words or less describing their commitment to their goals and how this scholarship will help them attain these goals must all be emailed to info@vfwauxiliary.org or mailed directly to the Program Awards Administrator, VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters, 406 W. 34th Street 10th Floor, Kansas City MO 64111 in time for them to be received no later than 15 February 2026.

Students who are enrolled in a public, private, or parochial school or a home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions, or are dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools **may enter our youth Scholarships Contests**. 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 at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. Foreign exchange students, students aged 20 or over, GED or Adult Education students, or previous Department winners of one these contests who received a National award in that contest are ineligible to enter that same contest.

Students in grades nine through twelve by the 31 March 2026 deadline **who meet the criteria listed above** should be encouraged to enter an original, two-dimensional art entry done on canvas or paper into our **Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest**. Acrylic, watercolor, oil, chalk, charcoal, ink, marker, pencil, mixed or other media may be used. Canvas entries should be submitted on a stretcher frame or canvas board. The piece should not be framed. Mats, including mounted and floating mats, may be used. Paper entries must be reinforced with heavy paper. The art should be no smaller than 8 inches by 10 inches nor larger than 18 inches by 24 inches, including the mat.

Our first place Department winning Young American Creative Patriotic Art piece will be entered into the National VFW Auxiliary competition where scholarships of \$15,000 for first place, \$7,500 for second place, \$3,500 for third place, \$1,500 each for fourth and fifth places, \$1,000 each for sixth and seventh places, and \$500 each for eighth through nineteenth places will be awarded to the winners.

Eligible students in grades nine through twelve should also be encouraged to enter an original, three-dimensional art piece into the separate patriotic art contest called the **3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest**. The three-dimensional art can be stone, clay, metal, wood, fabric, papier-mâché, pottery, mixed and other media, etc. Entries should not be larger than 18 inches in any direction nor weigh more than 5 pounds.

The 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest has its own scholarship amounts. The National Awards are \$2,500 for first place, \$1,500 for second place, \$1,000 for third place, and \$500 for fourth place.

The VFW Auxiliary National Scholarships in both Patriotic Art Contests will be paid directly to the American university, college, vocational, technical, or trade school of the winner's choice.

Digital art, photography, weapons, art generated by 3-D printer, and jewelry are not acceptable in either patriotic art contest.

If the American Flag is used in the entry in either contest, it must conform to the Federal Flag Code as far as colors, number of stars and stripes, and other pertinent rules of the code. Federal Flag Code information is available at <https://www.military.com/flag-day/us-flag-code.html> .

Each art entry should have been done during the current (2025-2026) school year. Both the proper, completed, typed or printed legible Official Patriotic Art Contest Scholarship Entry Form bearing information about the artist, the signature of his parent/guardian, the source of the idea for his artwork, and the media used in the entry and a typed or printed legible artist statement (250 words or less) must be submitted with each entry. Two photos of the completed 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest entry and a typed or printed legible explanation of the steps taken to create it should be submitted with that entry. The student's name should be on the back of the Young American Creative Patriotic Art entry.

Those selected to be judges of the Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest or the 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest entries on all levels of competition should be teachers, professionals, and persons knowledgeable about art. Comments of the judges should be attached and forwarded with the art. Each entry will be judged on the originality of concept, presentation, and patriotism expressed; content of how it relates to patriotism and clarity of ideas; design technique; and total impact of work.

Students entering one or both of the Patriotic Art Contests must submit their entry to a local Auxiliary Scholarships Chairman by Tuesday, 31 March 2026.

There is no District level of judging for either art scholarship contest. I must receive the winning Auxiliary first place entries no later than 15 April 2026 for them to be included in the Department level of competition. I shall submit our Department first place winning entry in each contest into the National level of competition.

National winning entries in each Patriotic Art Contest may be announced on VFW Auxiliary social media pages and an image may be shown at the VFW Auxiliary National Convention.

"How Are You Showing Patriotism and Support for Our Country?" is the 2025-2026 theme of our VFW and VFW Auxiliary Patriot's Pen Written Essay Competition which is open to students in grades six through eight who meet the eligibility requirements for all our youth Scholarships contests. This competition is approved by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

Essay contest entries should be typewritten in English with no color or graphics and cannot be less than 300 words nor more than 400 words in length (+ or - 5 words max). Every word is counted regardless of length. The essay title (theme) or added footnotes do not contribute to the word count. The essay must be the contestant's original work and a product of the contestant's own thinking. The approach to the Patriot's Pen theme should be positive and clearly focused. Poetry is not acceptable. Quotations

may be used sparingly if plainly identified wherever used. Contestants should not include their name, address, school name, or other personal identifiers within their essay. References to the student's race, sex, religion, national origin or other specific personal characteristics that would reveal their identity should be avoided. General references to nationality or patriotic identity (Such as being an American or referencing American values) are permitted if they are relevant to the essay theme. Personal identifiers tied to one's individual background or experience should be avoided.

Contestants should not put their name on their essay. A completed 2025-2026 Official Patriot's Pen Entry Form should be stapled to the top of the essay. Patriot's Pen Essay Competition entries should be submitted to the Patriot's Pen Chairman of a VFW Post no later than midnight on 31 October 2025. Contestants will be judged on the basis of their essay alone and are not required to present the essay orally. Patriot's Pen judging will be based on knowledge of the theme (30%), theme development (35%), and clarity of ideas (35%).

"How Are You Showing Patriotism and Support for Our Country?" is also the 2025-2026 theme of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and its Auxiliary Voice of Democracy Scholarship Program. Students in grades nine through twelve who meet the eligibility requirements for our youth Scholarships contests should be encouraged to enter this wonderful patriotic audio essay competition which is also approved by the NASSP.

To enter the competition students should write and then record their original three-to-five minute (+ or – 5 second max) audio essay on a flash drive or other electronic device and submit it along with a typed copy of their essay with a completed 2025-2026 Official Voice of Democracy Competition Entry Form attached to a VFW Post by midnight on Friday, 31 October 2025. An emailed entry form, essay, and attached audio file may be submitted to a VFW Post with prior approval from that Post. The flash drive/USB and typed essay should be labeled with the entrant's name, but the entrant cannot be identified in any way within the recording including his name, address, school, or other personal identifiers. To ensure fairness and impartiality in judging, essays must be anonymous. References to race, sex, religion, national origin, or other specific personal characteristics or individual background or experience that could reveal the entrant's identity should be avoided. General references to nationality or patriotic identity (such as being an American or referencing American values) are permitted if they are relevant to the essay theme. No music, singing, poetry, or sound effects are permitted on the recording. Judging of Voice of Democracy entries will be based on originality (35%), content (30%), and delivery (35%).

Inappropriate use of ChatGPT or other AI tools is not allowed in either contest.

Rules of both the Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy Competitions allow a Post with its Auxiliary to advance one (1) winning entry to District for every fifteen (15) entries or fraction thereof received in their local competition. Only one (1) winning District entry

with a head and shoulders photo of the District winner is to be submitted to the Department VFW.

The first place Department winning entry in each competition will be submitted into the National VFW Competition. There are fifty-three National Patriot's Pen Awards totaling \$55,500. Those range from \$5,000 for first place down to \$500 for fifty-third place. There is a total of \$175,500 in National Voice of Democracy Scholarships ranging from \$35,000 for first place down to \$1,000 for fifty-third place. The Voice of Democracy scholarships are paid directly to the recipient's American university, college, or vocational/technical school. Therefore, each Department winner in these two contests will receive a National award.

Young American Creative Patriotic Art, 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art, Patriot's Pen, and Voice of Democracy Competition rules state that a student may submit only one entry into each competition. **Be sure to thoroughly read all Scholarships Program materials in this book for additional details and requirements of each contest.**

The Department of Massachusetts VFW Auxiliary presents monetary awards to the state winners in each of these contests. The awards come from the **Bessie Hanken Youth Awards Fund**, so all Auxiliaries are asked to **donate as generously as you possibly can to this fund**. Individual contributions would also be greatly appreciated. In memoriam donations and donations in lieu of birthday, holiday, and congratulatory gifts traditionally given to family, friends, or co-workers contributed to the Bessie Hanken Youth Awards Fund will not only serve to reward young people for their accomplishments but also honor those in whose name the donation is made.

A \$200 first place award and a \$100 second place award will be given to the state winners in each of our Auxiliary sponsored Young American Creative Patriotic Art and 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contests.

In addition to the prizes awarded by the Department of Massachusetts VFW to the state winners in the Patriot's Pen Competition, the Department Auxiliary presents \$200 for first place, \$150 for second place, \$100 for third place, \$75 for fourth place, and \$50 for fifth place. Our awards to the state winners in the Voice of Democracy Competition are \$500 for first place, \$300 for second place, \$200 for third place, \$150 for fourth place, and \$100 for fifth place.

Donations through National to the Patriotic Art and the Continuing Education Scholarship Escrow Funds are needed. The goals of these funds are to increase the number and amounts of the Young American Creative Patriotic Art and 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Scholarships awarded at the national level and to increase the award amount of the Continuing Education Scholarship, respectively. National VFW Auxiliary President Lois Callahan has selected Continuing Education Scholarships to be her 2025-2026 Special Project. Auxiliaries and individual members are asked to **make donations to these two scholarship escrow funds** to make these goals realities. To donate by mail, send a check earmarked either **Patriotic Art** or **"National President's**

2025-2026 Special Project to: VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters, Attn.: Scholarship Fund, 406 W. 34th Street 10th Floor, Kansas City MO 64111. Donations may also be made online in MALTA by selecting "Make a Gift" and then entering the amount you choose to donate in the field next to the fund to which you choose to donate, followed by your payment information.

The National VFW Auxiliary will present Scholarships Program Awards to Auxiliaries that host the most creative/unique activity and/or event educating their community about the scholarship opportunities in the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary. To be considered for this award, an Auxiliary should send a completed Scholarships National Program Awards 2025-2026 Entry Form to me by 31 March 2026 for judging. I shall sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Scholarships Ambassador. The one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions that hosts the most creative/unique activity and/or event educating their community about scholarship opportunities in the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary will receive a citation and \$25.

Scholarships Program Points to be earned in the Auxiliary of the Year Awards Program

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Promote the National Continuing Education Scholarship Contest | 1 Point |
| 2. Donate to the Continuing Education Scholarship Fund through National | 1 Point |
| 3. Promote / Participate in the Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest | 2 Points |
| 4. Promote / Participate in the 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest | 2 Points |
| 5. Donate to the Patriotic Art Scholarship Fund (for both art contests) through National | 2 Points |
| 6. Assist Post by Promoting or Conducting the Patriot's Pen Essay Contest | 2 Points |
| 7. Assist Post by Promoting or Conducting the Voice of Democracy Audio Essay Contest | 2 Points |
| 8. Donate to the Bessie Hanken Youth Awards Fund (through Department office) <i>(Note: This fund covers the prize money for all youth contests.)</i> | 2 Points |
| 9. Donation of \$50.00 or more to Bessie Hanken Youth Awards Fund | 5 Points |
| 10a. Submit required ½ year report by 12/31/25 | 1 Point |
| b. Submit required year-end report by 4/15/26 | <u>1 Point</u> |
| | 21 Points |



VFW Auxiliary National Scholarship Continuing Education 2025-2026

The VFW Auxiliary is pleased to present this National Scholarship to assist VFW Auxiliary members and their families who wish to further their education by pursuing a college degree or a career direction at a vocational/technical school.

Each year, one (1) recipient will be selected from each of the four (4) VFW Auxiliary Conferences and will be awarded a \$1,250 scholarship to be used within the academic year following completion of the contest. The scholarship will be paid directly to the American college/university or vocational/technical school of the awardee's choice upon the completion of the scholarship activation requirements.

Eligibility:

- VFW Auxiliary member for at least one full year by the application submission deadline of February 15.
- The spouse, son and/or daughter of a VFW Auxiliary member that has been a member at least one full year by the application submission deadline of February 15.
- Applicants must be 21 years of age or older by the application submission deadline of February 15.
- Previous National Continuing Education Scholarship winners are not eligible.

Applicant Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Applicant Address: _____
City State Zip

Applicant Email: _____

Relationship to VFW Auxiliary Member: (please ☒ one) ☐ Self ☐ Spouse ☐ Son/Daughter

VFW Auxiliary Member Name: _____

VFW Auxiliary Membership No.: _____ VFW Auxiliary No.: _____

I hereby grant permission to publish my name and photo in VFW Auxiliary E-magazine, website, social media and to be used for any and all promotional purposes by the VFW Auxiliary and/or the VFW if named a winner of a national award. I hereby verify that the entry/essay was done by the applicant listed above.

Applicant Signature: _____ Age: _____ Date: _____

On a separate piece of paper, provide typed answers to each question listed below.

1. What is the name of the college/university or vocational /technical school you plan to attend?
 2. Have you been accepted?
 3. What is your intended major or course of study?
 4. What is the adjusted gross income from the family's Federal Income Tax return for the prior year?
 5. How many dependents are in the household?
 6. What are your financial reasons for applying for the VFW Auxiliary National Continuing Education Scholarship?
 7. Have you been awarded Financial Aid from any other sources? Please list/specify.
 8. Write a brief essay (**300-word limit**) describing your commitment to your goals and how this scholarship will help you attain these goals. Essays longer than 300 words will be disqualified.
- All questions must be answered for the application to be considered.

This completed form, answers and essay may be emailed to info@vfwauxiliary.org or mailed to VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters 406 W. 34th Street 10th Floor Kansas City MO 64111
Attn: Program Awards Administrator

Application submission deadline: February 15, 2026.



VFW Auxiliary National Scholarship Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest 2025-2026

VFW Auxiliary National is pleased to present this National Scholarship to assist students who wish to further their education. This scholarship contest recognizes young artists and encourages patriotism in youth. Entries will be judged on the originality of concept, presentation and patriotism expressed, content of how it relates to patriotism and clarity of ideas, design technique and total impact of work.

VFW Auxiliary National Scholarships

First place - \$15,000
Second place - \$7,500
Third place - \$3,500
Fourth place and Fifth place - \$1,500
Sixth place and Seventh place - \$1,000
Eighth place through Nineteenth place - \$500

Contest Eligibility

- Students do not have to be related to a VFW or VFW Auxiliary member to participate.
- Students in grades 9-12 by March 31 deadline who are enrolled in a public, private, parochial or home school 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 resident (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen.
- Foreign exchange students, students aged 20 or older, GED and adult education students are **not** eligible.
- Previous winners of VFW Auxiliary National Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contests are **not** eligible.

Contest Rules

- Entry must be completed during the current school year.
- Entry must be two dimensional.
- Entry must be on canvas or paper.
- Canvas entries must be submitted on a stretcher frame or canvas board.
- Paper entries must be reinforced with heavy paper.
- Do **not** frame art with wood, metal, plastic or glass.
- Mats may be used, including mounted and floating mats.
- Entries may **not** be smaller than 8"x10" and **not** larger than 18"x24" **including** mat.
- Acrylic, watercolor, oil, chalk, charcoal, ink, marker, pencil, mixed or other media may be used.
- If the American Flag is used, it must conform to the Federal Flag Code in relation to colors, numbers of stars and stripes and other pertinent rules of the code.
- Digital art and photography are **not** accepted.
- Completed typed or printed legible entry form including student and parent and/or guardian signatures.
- Typed or printed legible artist statement (250 words or less).
- Student name on back of art entry.

VFW Auxiliary National reserves the right to modify these rules and eligibility without notice.



VFW Auxiliary National Scholarship Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest Contest Entry Form 2025-2026

Please print or type, incomplete and/or illegible entry forms will disqualify the entrant.

Student Name: _____ Age: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Email: _____ Phone: _____
School Name: _____ Grade: _____
Title of entry: _____ Date completed: _____
Media used: _____

Source: _____
State the source of your idea for entry: person, website, magazine, newspaper, TV, etc. To comply with copyright laws, all artworks must be original to the entrant. Artwork may be inspired by another artist's/photographer's work, but not to the degree that the new piece of artwork is easily recognized as being derivative of another artist's work. If another artist's/photographer's work is used as a source of inspiration or reference, a copy of the artist's/photographer's work must be provided along with the name and date of publication in which it was found. Any artwork that is recognized as being in violation of these rules will be disqualified.

*Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

*Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

*I hereby grant permission for my artwork to be published in the VFW Auxiliary National E-magazine, website and social media and to be used for any and all promotional purposes by the VFW Auxiliary National organization.

VFW Auxiliary is not responsible for entries which are lost, late, illegible, damaged, incomplete, misdirected, stolen, or reproduced. All scores are final as received from the judges. All contestants must agree to abide by the contest rules. Falsifying information on the entry form or any violation of these rules shall cause immediate disqualification and forfeiture of scholarship.

Participating/Sponsoring VFW Auxiliary contact information

Contact Name: _____ Contact Phone: _____
Contact Email: _____ Auxiliary No. _____

To avoid entrant disqualification, this section is to be filled out completely by VFW Auxiliary at each judging level.
VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters only accepts Department level first-place winning entries.

Participating/Sponsoring VFW Auxiliary Name & No.: _____ Dept. of: _____

March 31: Student entries due to participating/sponsoring VFW Auxiliary for judging. Date: _____
Authorized VFW Auxiliary verification signature: _____
Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed above if not advancing to the next level.

April: (Optional) First place winner from each participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary VFW Auxiliary due to VFW Auxiliary District judging. Date: _____
Authorized VFW Auxiliary District verification signature: _____
Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed above if not advancing to the next level.

April 15: First place winner from each participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary or optional VFW Auxiliary District judging due to the VFW Auxiliary Department judging. Date: _____
Authorized VFW Auxiliary Department verification signature: _____
Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed above if not advancing to the next level.

May 5: First place winner from each VFW Auxiliary Department must be received at VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters for judging.

July/August: All students will be notified of entry status via email provided on entry form. Selected winning entries may be announced on VFW Auxiliary National social media pages and an image may be shown at the VFW Auxiliary National Convention.

August/September: All art entries received at VFW Auxiliary National will be returned to students to the address provided on the entry form.

VFW Auxiliary National reserves the right to modify these rules and eligibility without notice.



VFW Auxiliary National Scholarship 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest 2025-2026

VFW Auxiliary National is pleased to present this National Scholarship to assist students who wish to further their education. This scholarship contest recognizes young artists and encourages patriotism in youth. Entries will be judged on the originality of concept, presentation and patriotism expressed, content of how it relates to patriotism and clarity of ideas, design technique and total impact of work.

VFW Auxiliary National Scholarships

First place - \$2,500
Second place - \$1,500
Third place - \$1,000
Fourth place \$500

Contest Eligibility

- Students do not have to be related to a VFW or VFW Auxiliary member to participate.
- Students in grades 9-12 by March 31 deadline who are enrolled in a public, private, parochial or home school 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 resident (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen.
- Foreign exchange students, students aged 20 or older, GED and adult education students are **not** eligible.
- Previous winners of VFW Auxiliary National 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contests are **not** eligible.

Contest Rules

- Entry must be completed during the current school year.
- Entry must be three dimensional.
- Entry may **not** be larger than 18" in any direction.
- Entry may **not** weigh more than 5 pounds.
- Stone, clay, metal, wood, fabric, papier mâché, pottery, mixed and other media may be used.
- Digital art, photography, weapons, art generated by a 3-D printer and jewelry are **not** accepted.
- If the American Flag is used, it must conform to the Federal Flag Code in relation to colors, numbers of stars and stripes and other pertinent rules of the code.
- Completed typed or printed legible entry form including student and parent and/or guardian signatures.
- Typed or printed legible explanation of the steps taken to create the 3-Dimensional art entry and artist statement (250 words or less).
- Submit at least 2 photos of completed art entry.

VFW Auxiliary National reserves the right to modify these rules and eligibility without notice.



VFW Auxiliary National Scholarship 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest Contest Entry Form 2025-2026

Please print or type, incomplete and/or illegible entry forms will disqualify the entrant.

Student Name: _____ Age: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Email: _____ Phone: _____
School Name: _____ Grade: _____
Title of entry: _____ Date completed: _____
Media used: _____

Source: _____
State the source of your idea for entry: person, website, magazine, newspaper, TV, etc. To comply with copyright laws, all artworks must be original to the entrant. Artwork may be inspired by another artist's/photographer's work, but not to the degree that the new piece of artwork is easily recognized as being derivative of another artist's work. If another artist's/photographer's work is used as a source of inspiration or reference, a copy of the artist's/photographer's work must be provided along with the name and date of publication in which it was found. Any artwork that is recognized as being in violation of these rules will be disqualified.

*Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

*Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

*I hereby grant permission for my artwork to be published in the VFW Auxiliary National E-magazine, website and social media and to be used for any and all promotional purposes by the VFW Auxiliary National organization.

VFW Auxiliary is not responsible for entries which are lost, late, illegible, damaged, incomplete, misdirected, stolen, or reproduced. All scores are final as received from the judges. All contestants must agree to abide by the contest rules. Falsifying information on the entry form or any violation of these rules shall cause immediate disqualification and forfeiture of scholarship.

Participating/Sponsoring VFW Auxiliary contact information

Contact Name: _____ Contact Phone: _____
Contact Email: _____ Auxiliary No. _____

To avoid entrant disqualification, this section is to be filled out completely by VFW Auxiliary at each judging level.
VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters only accepts Department level first-place winning entries.

Participating/Sponsoring VFW Auxiliary Name & No.: _____ Dept. of: _____

March 31: Student entries due to participating/sponsoring VFW Auxiliary for judging.
Authorized VFW Auxiliary verification signature: _____ Date: _____
Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed above if not advancing to the next level.

April: (Optional) First place winner from each participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary VFW Auxiliary due to VFW Auxiliary District for judging.
Authorized VFW Auxiliary District verification signature: _____ Date: _____
Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed above if not advancing to the next level.

April 15: First place winner from each participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary or optional VFW Auxiliary District judging due to the VFW Auxiliary Department for judging.
Authorized VFW Auxiliary Department verification signature: _____ Date: _____
Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed above if not advancing to the next level.

May 5: First place winner from each VFW Auxiliary Department must be received at VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters for judging.

July/August: All students will be notified of entry status via email provided on entry form. Selected winning entries may be announced on VFW Auxiliary National social media pages and an image may be shown at the VFW Auxiliary National Convention.

August/September: All art entries received at VFW Auxiliary National will be returned to students to the address provided on the entry form.

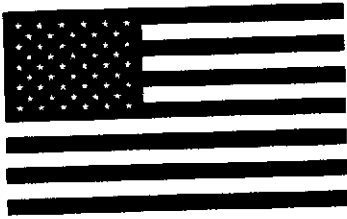
VFW Auxiliary National reserves the right to modify these rules and eligibility without notice.

Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest &

3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest

COMMON MISTAKES & HELPFUL HINTS

The VFW Auxiliary's Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest & 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest provide an incredible scholarship opportunity for young artists while promoting patriotism throughout schools and home school associations. Follow the advice below to ensure that every student who enters the contest has the best possible chance of realizing his or her dreams.



USING THE U.S. FLAG

As a powerful symbol of our country, the U.S. Flag is often used in art entries. It can also be a source of problems for judges and Auxiliary Chairmen. When notifying schools, homeschool associations and students about the contest, give them a copy of the Federal Flag Code and encourage participants to closely examine the U.S. Flag before using it in their art.

COMMON MISTAKES:

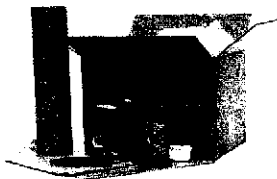
- Not enough stars or stripes.
- Stripes in the wrong order or place.
- The Flag appearing to have someone standing on it, or something written or lying on it.

HINT: It is always best to portray the Flag as waving freely.

APPLICATION (One application for each contest)

When a student submits an art entry and contest application, check for the following:

- Print or legible writing. If you can't decipher the writing, chances are we can't either.
- Address with city, state and ZIP code.
- Phone number with area code.
- Email address. This is used for all notifications.
- Signature of both student and parent or guardian.
- Source- this must be complete even if it states "original idea."
- Media used.
- Title of art entry.
- An artist statement, essay and detailed description of the art entry and how it was made.
- Signatures of participating/sponsoring VFW Auxiliary Scholarships Chairman and Department Scholarships Chairman.
- Art entries not sponsored by a VFW Auxiliary will not be judged and will be returned to the student.



PACKING THE ART

VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters is not responsible for art lost or damaged during shipment. Please take in consideration that the art entry may be very fragile and will be shipped over many miles and encounter weather condition's.

- Use the correct size packaging.
- Use paper, bubble wrap, air pillows, cushioning and/or foam shippers.
- Label the package clearly to insure deadline arrival.

Visit www.vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships for contest eligibility requirements, rules and an application.

may be used for all art contest on all levels of judging

Grade:

Entrant Name:	Criteria	
	Patriotic Expression	
	Total of 30 points possible	Points
	1. Concept	
	2. Presentation	
	3 Patriotism Expressed	
	Patriotic Expression Total	
	Content	
	Total of 30 points possible	Points
	1. Clarity of idea	
	2. Elicitation of emotion	
	3. Does it stand on its own	
	Content Total	
	Design	
	Total of 40 points possible	Points
	1. Technique	
	2. Creativity	
	3. Contrast	
4. Total impact of work		
Design Total		
Total all points		

Judge's Comments:

Date:

PATRIOT'S PEN



2025-2026 Theme

“How Are You Showing Patriotism And Support For Our Country?”

Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2025

Patriotic Written Essay Competition Grand Prize: \$5,000 Award

What is the Patriot's Pen Program?

Conducted nationwide, this VFW-sponsored youth essay competition gives students an opportunity to write essays expressing their views on an annual patriotic theme. We invite you to join the more than 60,000 students who participated last year in this contest.

Why Should I Enter?

Prizes and scholarships can be awarded at the Post, District, State and national level. Department (State) winners receive a portion of \$55,000 in national awards. National Winners will receive at least \$500. **The first-place national award is currently \$5,000.**

The Internal Revenue Service requires a recipient awarded more than \$599 be given Form 1099 identifying the proceeds as taxable income. This may require the winner to provide their social security number.

How Does the Contest Work?

All entries begin at the VFW Post level. The only exception is where schools/classes/youth groups have large numbers of students and wish to conduct their own competition, submitting one winner for each 15 students to the VFW Post. Individual students may submit their entry directly to the Post.

The contest consists of four levels. The first level (entry) is sponsored by VFW Posts. Post winners advance, one for every 15 entries, to the VFW District (regional) level where one first-place winner is advanced to the VFW Department (state) level. The first-place winner at the Department level is then advanced into the VFW national competition.

Who Can Enter?

Patriot's Pen is open to 6th, 7th and 8th-grade students enrolled by the Oct. 31 deadline in public, private or parochial schools in the U.S., its territories or its possessions; or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools. Home-schooled students also are eligible. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application which has not been denied) and intend to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. (Foreign exchange students are ineligible.)

How Do I Get Started?

- Ask a teacher or youth group/club adult leader to supervise the Patriot's Pen writing contest.
- Contact a participating VFW Post and indicate your interest in participating.

- Establish a contact person who is a member of that VFW Post or its VFW Auxiliary.
- Make sure that your essay is submitted to the VFW Post before the contest deadline of Oct. 31. You can submit your essay and entry form electronically by email upon the Post's approval. Entries sent to the VFW National Headquarters directly will be returned.

How Am I Judged?

Knowledge of the theme is worth 30 points:

You must show a thorough knowledge of the theme in your work. Demonstrate you have researched the issue extensively.

Theme development is worth 35 points:

Answer all relevant facts about the theme such as the who, what, where, when and why. Relate the theme to your own experiences.

Clarity of ideas is worth 35 points:

Write your essay in an easy-to-understand format. Leave your reader with a clear understanding of your explanation of the theme.

What Is the Theme?

VFW's Commander-in-Chief annually chooses the year's theme. The 2025-2026 theme is:

How Are You Showing Patriotism And Support For Our Country?"

Deadline Information.

To qualify, all entries must be submitted to a sponsoring VFW Post by midnight Oct. 31.

Note:

If you need help finding a participating VFW Post, follow these instructions:

First, visit vfw.org/FindaPost to "Find a VFW Post."

If you don't have success in finding a Post, or if you have trouble contacting them, you can contact your VFW Department (state) headquarters office to see if they can offer any information or assistance. You can visit vfw.org/contactus to look for "Find a State Contact" to get your VFW state office's phone number and email.

**For assistance contact
the VFW National Headquarters
at 816.968.2787
Email: youthscholarships@vfw.org**

2025-2026 Official Entry Form Patriot's Pen Competition

Must Be Completed by All Contestants

Name: First, M.I., Last

Address

City, State, Zip

() Phone Email

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy)

Grade in School

Essay Word Count

School Name, City, State

Teacher's name and Email (if applicable)

To Be Completed by Student's Parent/Guardian
(Required even if student is 18 or over)

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

() Parent/Guardian's Daytime Phone

Parent/Guardian's Email

What Are the Rules?

• You must write your own essay.

• All essays should be typed in English with no color or graphics. 300 - 400 words in length (+ or - 5 word max). Every word is counted regardless of length. The essay title (theme) or added footnotes do not contribute to the word count.

• To ensure fairness and impartiality in judging, essays must be anonymous. Please do not include your name, address, school name, or any other personal identifiers in the body of your essay. Additionally, avoid references to your race, sex, religion, national origin, or other specific personal characteristics that could reveal your identity. General references to nationality or patriotic identity (such as being an American or referencing American values) are permitted if they are relevant to the essay theme. However, personal identifiers tied to your individual background or experience should be avoided.

• Do not put your name on the essay. The entry form is your essays cover sheet. Secure the Official Student Entry Form with a staple or other fastener on top of your essay. Contestants are allowed to enter only once each year if otherwise eligible (one Post competition).

• The essay must be contestant's original work and a product of the contestant's own thinking. Inappropriate use of ChatGPT or other AI tools is not allowed. The approach to the Patriot's Pen theme should be positive and clearly focused. Poetry is not acceptable. Quotations may be used sparingly if plainly identified wherever used. A contestant's teacher, counselor or parent may check the essay for punctuation, grammar and/or spelling, but the content must remain the contestant's. Contestants will be judged on the basis of their essay alone and are not required to present the essay orally. All essays become the property of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The VFW retains non-exclusive rights to the use of your essay and likeness in the promotion and execution of the organization's programs and activities.

• At any time during the contest additional participant personal information (i.e. SSN, photo, etc.) could be requested by the VFW.

I Have Read and Understand the Contest Rules

Signature of Student Participant

Date

To Be Completed by the VFW Post

I certify that this student has an authorized entry in our VFW Post level Patriot's Pen Competition.

Post Commander/Chairperson Signature

Post#

VFW Auxiliary President/Chairperson Signature (If applicable)

Post Address

City, State, Zip

VFW Post Email

No. of participants

No. of winners

Amt. of Post/Aux. scholarships awards \$

Amt. of Post/Aux. additional expenses (Banquet, Pins, etc.) \$

To Be Completed by the VFW District

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected winner of the Patriot's Pen Contest District Competition and is our sole entry into the Department.

District Chairperson Signature

Dist. #

Address

City, State, Zip

() Phone Email

To Be Completed by the VFW Department Chairperson

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected first-place winner of the Patriot's Pen Department Competition and is our sole entry into the National Judging.

Department Chairperson Signature

() Daytime Phone Email

The winner ☒ has been ☐ will be (check one) notified that they are the first-place Department winner on _____.

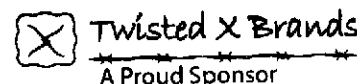
Local VFW Post Information:

Contact: _____

Phone: _____ Best Time To Call: _____

Alternate Contact: _____

Phone: _____ Best Time To Call: _____





Clarity of Ideas: Provides a clear explanation of the writer's interpretation of the theme.

TOTAL (0-100)[illegible]**TOTAL (0-100)**[illegible]**TOTAL (0-100)**[illegible]

Date and Location of Judging

2025-2026 Theme

“How Are You Showing Patriotism And Support For Our Country?”

Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2025

Patriotic Audio Essay Competition Grand Prize: \$35,000 Award

What is the Voice of Democracy Program?

Since 1947, the Voice of Democracy has been the Veterans of Foreign Wars' (VFW's) premier scholarship program. Each year, nearly 26,000 high school students compete for more than \$2 million in scholarships and incentives. Students compete by writing and recording an audio essay on an annual patriotic theme. This year's theme is, “How Are You Showing Patriotism And Support For Our Country?”

Why Should I Enter?

Prizes and scholarships can be awarded at the Post, District, state and national level. National winners will be notified of their scholarship & placement.

The Rules

Who can enter?

The Voice of Democracy is open to students in grades 9-12 by the Oct. 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 intend to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or over, GED or Adult Education Students are ineligible.

What do I need to enter?

Record your original 3-5 minute (+ or - 5 second max.) audio essay on a flash drive, or other electronic device. You will submit the recording, typed essay and this completed entry form. Provide these items to your school/group competition or VFW Post for judging. In addition you can submit your emailed entry form, essay, and audio file to the VFW Post upon approval. You must be the sole author of your essay. Inappropriate use of ChatGPT or other AI tools is not allowed. The recording must be in your own voice and in English. Hearing/speech impaired students should email the Voice of Democracy National Office at youthscholarships@vfw.org for special instructions. No music, singing, poetry or sound effects are allowed. To ensure fairness and impartiality in judging, essays must be anonymous. Please do not include your name, address, school name, or any other personal identifiers in the body of your essay. Additionally, avoid references to your race, sex, religion, national origin, or other specific personal characteristics that could reveal your identity. General references to nationality or patriotic identity (such as being an American or referencing American values) are permitted if they are relevant to the essay theme. However, personal identifiers tied to your individual background or experience should be avoided.

You may enter only one competition at one Post (if otherwise eligible) per year. At any time during the contest, additional participant personal information could be requested by the VFW, including but not limited to a photograph, SSN, or biographical information.

Where Do I Submit My Entry?

All entries begin at the VFW Post level. The only exception is where schools/classes/youth groups have large numbers of students and wish to conduct their own competition, submitting one winner for each 15 students to the VFW Post. Individual students may submit their entry directly to the Post. Entries sent to VFW National will be returned. One winner for every 15 entries from each Post advances to District and one District winner advances to the state (Department) competition. If you need help finding a participating VFW Post, follow these instructions: First, visit this website vfw.org/FindaPost to “Find A VFW Post.” If you do not have success in finding a Post, or if you have trouble getting in touch with them, you can contact your VFW Department (state) office to see if they can offer any information or assistance. You can visit this link <https://www.vfw.org/ContactUs/> and look for “Find a State Contact” to get your VFW state office's phone number and email. If you still need assistance, please email us at VFW National Headquarters at youthscholarships@vfw.org

What Is the Deadline for My Entry?

All entries competing at the Post level must be in the hands of that VFW Post by midnight, **Oct. 31, 2025**. It is the responsibility of the student to meet this deadline by submitting their entry to the proper location by ensuring it is a participating Post.

What Are the Judging Criteria?

Originality is worth 35 points:

Treatment of the theme should show imagination and human interest.

Content is worth 30 points:

Clearly express your ideas in an organized manner. Fully develop your theme and use transitions to move smoothly from one idea to another.

Delivery is worth 35 points:

Speak in a clear and credible manner.

2025-2026 Official Entry Form

Voice of Democracy Competition

Must Be Completed by All Contestants

Name: First, M.I., Last

Address

City, State, Zip

()

Phone

Email

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy)

Grade in School

Age

Jacket Size

School Name, City, State

Teacher's name and Email (if applicable)

To Be Completed by Student's Parent/Guardian

(Required even if student is 18 or over)

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

()

Parent/Guardian Daytime Phone

Parent/Guardian Email

Participant Agreement for Students Advancing to National Level

If selected as a first-place state winner, I have the consent of my parent/guardian and school to attend the Founding Forward Spirit of America Leadership trip to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania as a guest of the VFW National Organization. In consideration for permission to participate in the National Voice of Democracy Competition ("Competition") I do hereby, for myself, for my heirs, executors, administrators and assignees, waive, release and discharge all rights and claims which I have or which may hereafter accrue against the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and/or the Departments (state organizations) of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and their respective officers, agents, successors and assigns from any damages which may be sustained by me in connection with my participation in or association with the Competition and/or arising out of any travel related to the Competition. In the event of sickness, accident or injury in connection with the Competition, I consent to and accept the services of a duly licensed medical, surgical or dental specialist selected on my behalf and for such treatments, as they may deem necessary. I understand that VFW will not be liable for such treatment. I further understand that the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States retains non-exclusive rights to use my audio file, essay, name and likeness in the promotion and execution of the organization's programs and activities.

I Have Read and Understand the Rules and Participant Agreement

I certify that I am the sole author of the enclosed audio/essay entry and that I have not inappropriately used any AI tools or Chat GPT. I have only entered the competition once yearly if otherwise eligible. I understand that if it is found that I have entered any other Post's competition or used this essay for another VFW competition, I face elimination from the competition and will return any and all prizes or incentives awarded.

Signature of Student Participant

Date

To Be Completed by the VFW Post

I certify that this student has an authorized entry in our VFW Post Level Voice of Democracy Competition.

Post Commander/Chairperson Signature

Post #

VFW Auxiliary President/Chairperson Signature (if applicable)

Post Address

City, State, Zip

VFW Post Email

No. of students participating

No. of winners advanced to District

Amt. of Post/Aux. scholarship awards \$

Amt. of Post/Aux. additional expenses (banquet, plns, etc.) \$

To Be Completed by the VFW District

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected winner of the Voice of Democracy Contest District Competition and is our sole entry into the Departments.

District Chairperson Signature

Dist. #

Address

City, State, Zip

()

Phone

Email

To Be Completed by the VFW Department Chairperson

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected first-place winner of the Voice of Democracy Department Competition and is our sole entry into the National Judging.

Department Chairperson Signature

()

Daytime Phone

Email

The winner ☒ has been ☐ will be (check one) notified that they are the first-place Department winner on _____.

For assistance contact:

816.968.2787

Email: youthscholarships@vfw.org

Local VFW Post Information:

Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Best Time To Call: _____

Alternate Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Best Time To Call: _____



Revised 04/2025



Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary Scholarships Program



2025 SPECIAL PROJECT~AMERICA'S VET DOGS

Jeri Rumsis, Chairman

Thank you Madam President, Theresa Logue, for choosing me for this Project. We've had great success sponsoring a puppy with America's Vet Dogs a few years ago, under PDP Jen Taylor & were able to name our Veterans Service Dog, "Taylor", and followed his training to graduating to live with his Veteran.

Back then, it was \$5,000 to sponsor & name a puppy. Now, it's \$6,000. After speaking with them, they have agreed to let us sponsor and name a puppy for \$5,000 again.

I know it's a lot of money, but we've done it before & we can do it again. We have 50 + Auxiliaries, & if each one contributes \$100, we will succeed.

BUT, I'm going to need your help & we'll need to work together for President Theresa, so that she, too, will be able to name a Service Pup.

I hope to make this project fun and competitive & *I am going to rely on our District Presidents who have the duty to visit every Auxiliary in their District, and will have the opportunity to promote the Special Project & hopefully raise \$100 from each Auxiliary for our Service Dog.*

Each Aux, or their Special Project Chairperson, can do their own fundraiser to raise the \$100 for the project. *Try to involve the Post! This Service Dog is for a Veteran!!*

Here's how we can make this work: Remember, your "Service Dog/s" will be with you at all meetings. The object is for the Dist. Pres. to get rid of her puppies & not have a bunch of them sitting in front of him/her at all of the Council Meetings.

Here We Go!

- A. Each District President will receive a little "Service Dog" for each Auxiliary in their District, and they MUST bring them to ALL of their Visits & Dept. meetings. The little dog will be given to each Aux. that donates \$100 or more. Checks should note "Special Project".

Presidents who successfully raised \$100 from each Aux in their District, will be awarded their *Special Project Yellow Lab* to bring to the Dept. Meetings. A symbol of their success!

- B. At the end of the year, the District whose Auxiliaries raised the most funds, will receive a special prize.**

Support your District Presidents ~ it's up to all of you!!

Let's make the competition fun, and let's have a good time doing it.

NOW FOR THE SPECIAL PROJECT SWAG! *ROYAL BLUE IS THE COLOR!*

Two Choices ~ One for the warmer weather & one for the colder weather.

SOMETHING VERY NEW !

A. CREWNECK SWEATSHIRT ~ WITH THE HOODIE POCKET!!

B. V-NECK POLO SHORT SLEEVE FOR LADIES & REGULAR POLO SHIRT FOR GUYS.

ALL SHIRTS WILL HAVE THE PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL PROJECT LOGO EMBROIDERED ON THEM. EACH SHIRT WILL BE \$35. Plus sizes will be \$2 More (all orders prepaid)

LET'S ALL HAVE FUN WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE IT HAPPEN FOR OUR PRESIDENT THERESA!!

If you have any questions, feel free to call me at: 508 451 3606, or Email: jrumsis@gmail.com





SPECIAL PROJECT SHIRT ORDER FORM:

NAME: _____ TELEPHONE: _____
DISTRICT: _____ AUXILIARY: _____

ALL ORDERS MUST BE PREPAID BY CASH OR CHECK BEFORE PLACED.

ALL SHIRTS ARE \$35 EACH. ADD \$2.00 EACH FOR 2X; \$3.00 FOR 3X, 4X

SWEATSHIRT: ROYAL BLUE with Embroidered Logo

SIZE: _____ NO.: _____ PRICE: \$35 EA. + Total: \$ _____

V-NECK POLO SHIRT: ROYAL BLUE with Embroidered Logo

SIZE: _____ NO: _____ PRICE: \$35 EA. + Total: \$ _____

MEN'S POLO SHIRT: ROYAL BLUE with Embroidered Logo

SIZE: _____ NO: _____ PRICE: \$35 EA + Total: \$ _____

ORDER TOTAL..... \$ _____

DATE: _____ AMOUNT: \$ _____ PAID BY _____ CHECK _____ CASH

Checks must be made out to MA VFW AUXILIARY & noted Special Project.

Signed:

Received:

Mail to: Betty Rosa, 93 Church St., Fairhaven, MA 02719-3703

VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT
Mary Dobbins, Chairman
86 Westwood Drive
Whitman, MA 02382
781-974-3037

On the next page is the QR code for this program for you to view in MALTA. There are many materials and resources there to give ideas for your auxiliary to participate in this program.

This year, our President Theresa's motto is "Bridge the Gap for Our Veterans and Families." Every Auxiliary in Massachusetts is expected to do and or support at least one of our many programs.

Here is a sampling of some programs and services the VFW and Auxiliary have to offer:

- "American VetDogs"
- Veterans & Military Support Programs and National Veterans Service
- Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Awareness
- Employment Assistance for Veterans (and Families)

Please go to VFW.org/assistance for more information.

Every year, we are asked to vote on our obligations, such as State President's Special Project, Hospital Pledge, Massachusetts House Fund, VFW Veterans & Military Support Programs, Veterans Voices Writing Project, Inc., and Wreaths Across America. Keep in mind that all these programs could earn points for your Auxiliary.

I truly hope that each auxiliary does their part! Hopefully, our Auxiliaries will lift up and touch the hearts of many Veterans and their families.

If by chance, you do not have a computer, you can visit your local libraries. There you can use computers, printers, and even get some assistance on how to access these sites. If I can help or assist in any way, please let me know.

God Bless.



Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary
Veterans & Family Support Program

Beth Barrett, PDP
Website/ZOOM Administrator
25 Hatch Street
Everett, MA 02149
beth.sobel@comcast.net
617-389-3859

www.vfwauxma.org

HOME ABOUT PROGRAMS RESOURCES NEWS LOGIN

The Department of Massachusetts VFW Auxiliary website is a source of information that links you to both National and Department information and resources and every form you will need to have a successful program year.

Just type the website name, **www.vfwauxma.org**, in your browser search bar and hit enter. Then select what you want to see from the dropdown list in each category.

Website Contents

HOME PAGE

Welcome to the Dept. of Mass VFW Auxiliary
State President's Theme
Announcements of upcoming meetings and important information highlights
News highlights including current Membership standings

ABOUT

ABOUT US – general information about the VFW Auxiliary
MISSION – VFW Auxiliary Mission Statement
OFFICERS – National President's and Dept. Officers' name, photo, and bio and name and photo of District Presidents
PAST DEPARTMENT PRESIDENTS – a listing by year of all who have served as Dept. President
JOIN US – eligibility rules and membership application

PROGRAMS

Information on each National Program and the State President's Special Project with links to the National Program book, the program QR codes, contest applications, and information for each program
List of Current Dept. Chairmen for each program
Content of the Dept. Program Kick Off Books (when available)
Points for the Auxiliary of the Year Contest
Auxiliary Listing by Division

RESOURCES

DEPT. OF MASS VFW WEBSITE access
DISTRICT INFO – A map of where each District is located in the state
A listing of Auxiliaries by District, address, President's name and day and time of meeting
NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION – how to request the Dept. Newsletter

RESOURCES (cont.) MISC. RESOURCES–

Cancer grant application
Guide to using technology
VFW Foundation Grant information
Sample Meeting Agenda
Tips for the Auxiliary Secretary
Auxiliary Treasurer's Guide
990 e-postcard user guide from IRS
IRS Form 8822B (to file when Treasurer changes)
Relief Fund Guide
Audit Form
How to print Dues Renewal Letter in MALTA

REPORTS – Period 1 Reporting forms by Program will be added after Kick Off
Period 2 will be added after Mid-Winter Conference
Year End Report Forms – Chaplain Report of Deceased Members
RU Healthy Checklist
Auxiliary of the Year Extra Credit Form
2025-2026 National Program Award Entry Forms

NEWS

CALENDAR – tentative Dept. dates for meetings and events
NEWS – all Dept. mailings and Newsletters
Current District Membership Standings (including deceased members)
Any information of interest to all members

CONTACT

Have a question? Need information? Cannot find your Roster! Send an email through the website and we will pass it on to the appropriate person to get you what you need

LOGIN

FOR USE BY WEBSITE ADMINISTRATOR ONLY
any member can access all of the information included on the website simply by clicking on it - **NO SIGN IN NECESSARY BY MEMBER**

ZOOM

Our primary meetings – Council of Administration meetings and Conferences – are scheduled to be held in person but we maintain a ZOOM account for certain Department meetings and for member access when WiFi is available in the location that we are holding a meeting. Instructions on how to obtain the ZOOM link will be sent in the Department mailing when ZOOM is available for attendance.

If your Auxiliary or District cannot meet in person and the Dept. ZOOM account is not in use, I can host your meeting – email me to inquire on usage.

Please contact me with questions about the website or ZOOM or to share any suggestions for content on the website.

Mary Margaret Christian
Youth Activities Chairman
13B Liberty Lane
Oxford, MA 01540
marge524@hotmail.com

The VFW Auxiliary works to teach our nation's youth the skills to become responsible adults through serving our veterans, service members, and communities. We engage in positive volunteer experiences and believe every young person can find a place to serve that will improve their lives, as well as the lives that they touch.

The Youth Activities Program sponsors and works with youth groups such as:

- Youth sports teams
- School groups: After school programs, school clubs, and Service Learning and civic departments
- Youth focus organizations
- Home-school Associations
- Youth community service groups
- Nonprofit organization youth advisory councils

- Promote and participate in the **Illustrating America Art Contest**

The Illustrating America Contest is an amazing way to get youth involved with patriotism and introduce them to the Young American Creative Patriotic Art contest.

- Promote **Patriotism through Literacy**

Patriotism through Literacy introduces youth to historical figures and teaches them about events in our history of our Nation while fostering a love of reading that can lead to a lifetime of learning. See our **Patriotism Through Literacy Suggested Books for 2025** broken down by grade.

- Recognizes **Random Acts of Patriotism (R.A.P.)**

If you see a child thanking a veteran, properly placing their hand over their heart during the Pledge of Allegiance, or involved in some other activity that promotes patriotism, give them a **R.A.P. Card** or a **Youth Act of Kindness Certificate**. These are fun and unique ways to encourage and reward patriotism in children of elementary age and younger.

- Award a **Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans Citation**

Recognize youth groups and youth for their efforts and service projects honoring veterans, service members and their families. By doing so, these activities may become a regular part of their daily lives.

- Be a **Reading Buddy** for the young and encourage them to read

REPORT what you do by the deadline. Mid-Year deadline is 12/31/25 and Year End deadline is 4/15/26. All resources available under Member Resources behind **MALTA** and on **Dept. website**.



VFW Auxiliary National Art Contest

Illustrating America

2025-2026

VFW Auxiliary National is pleased to present this national art contest to introduce, encourage and recognize young artists with patriotism through art. Entries will be judged on patriotic themes and technique.

VFW Auxiliary National Level Awards

Grades K-2

First place: \$100 gift card
Second place: \$50 gift card
Third place: \$25 gift card

Grades 3-5

First place: \$100 gift card
Second place: \$50 gift card
Third place: \$25 gift card

Grades 6-8

First place: \$100 gift card
Second place: \$50 gift card
Third place: \$25 gift card

Contest Eligibility

- Students do not have to be related to a VFW or VFW Auxiliary member to participate
- Students in grades K-8 by March 31 deadline who are enrolled in a public, private, parochial or home school 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 resident (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen.
- Foreign exchange students, students aged 15 or older are **not** eligible.
- Previous winners of VFW Auxiliary National Illustrating America Art Contests are **not** eligible for the same grade division of which they are a previous national winner. However, the students may enter the subsequent grade division.

Contest Rules

- Entry must be completed during the current school year.
- Entry must be two dimensional.
- Entry must be on canvas or paper.
- Canvas entries must be submitted on a stretcher frame or canvas board.
- Paper entries must be reinforced with heavy paper.
- Do **not** frame art with wood, metal, plastic or glass.
- Mats may be used, including mounted and floating mats.
- Entries may **not** be smaller than 8"x10" and **not** larger than 18"x24" **including** mat.
- Acrylic, chalk, crayon, ink, marker, pastel, pen, pencil, tempera, watercolor, glitter or other media may be used.
- If the American Flag is used, it does **not** need conform to the Federal Flag Code in relation to colors, numbers of stars and stripes and other pertinent rules of the code.
- Coloring sheets, digital art and photography are **not** accepted.
- Completed typed or printed legible entry form including parent and/or guardian signatures.
- Students' name, age and grade level must be printed on back of art entry.

VFW Auxiliary National reserves the right to modify these rules and eligibility without notice.



VFW Auxiliary National Art Contest

Illustrating America

Contest Entry Form 2025-2026

Please print or type. Incomplete and/or illegible entry forms will disqualify the entrant.

Student Name: _____ Age: _____

School Name: _____ Grade: _____

Title of entry: _____ Date completed: _____

Media used: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

*Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

I hereby grant permission for the artwork of the student listed above to be published in the VFW Auxiliary National Magazine, website and social media and to be used for any and all promotional purposes by the VFW Auxiliary National organization. VFW Auxiliary is not responsible for entries which are lost, late, illegible, damaged, incomplete, misdirected, stolen, or reproduced. All scores are final as received from the judges. All contestants must agree to abide by the contest rules. Falsifying information on the entry form or any violation of these rules shall cause immediate disqualification and forfeiture of the award.

Participating/Sponsoring VFW Auxiliary contact information

Contact Name: _____ Contact Phone: _____

Contact email: _____ Auxiliary No. _____

To avoid entrant disqualification, this section is to be filled out completely by VFW Auxiliary at each judging level. VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters only accepts Department level first-place winning entries.

Participating/Sponsoring VFW Auxiliary Name & No.: _____ Dept. of: _____

March 31: Student entries due to participating/sponsoring VFW Auxiliary for judging. Date: _____

Authorized VFW Auxiliary verification signature: _____
Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed above if not advancing to the next level.

April: (Optional) First place winner from each participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary VFW Auxiliary due to VFW Auxiliary District for judging. Date: _____

Authorized VFW Auxiliary District verification signature: _____
Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed above if not advancing to the next level.

April 15: First place winner from each participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary or optional VFW Auxiliary District judging due to the VFW Auxiliary Department for judging. Date: _____

Authorized VFW Auxiliary Department verification signature: _____
Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed above if not advancing to the next level.

May 5: First place winner from each VFW Auxiliary Department must be received at VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters for judging.

July/August: All students will be notified of entry status via email provided on entry form. Selected winning entries in each grade division may be announced on VFW Auxiliary National social media pages and an image may be shown at the VFW Auxiliary National Convention.

August/September: All art entries received at VFW Auxiliary National will be returned to students and awards mailed to the address provided on the entry form.

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may be used for all art contest on all levels of judging

Entrant Name:

Grade:

Criteria	
Patriotic Expression	
Total of 30 points possible	Points
1. Concept	
2. Presentation	
3 Patriotism Expressed	
Patriotic Expression Total	
Content	
Total of 30 points possible	Points
1. Clarity of idea	
2. Elicitation of emotion	
3. Does it stand on its own	
Content Total	
Design	
Total of 40 points possible	Points
1. Technique	
2. Creativity	
3. Contrast	
4. Total impact of work	
Design Total	
Total all points	

Judge's Comments:

Judge's Signature:

Date:



Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary Youth Activities Program