

HOSPITAL

Mary Risch
186 Columbia Street
Adams, Ma 01220

My Hospital Ambassador this year is Della Steege. She would like to draw our attention to the following points.

Volunteering at an actual group event because we can do more by

Banding Together for Our Veterans

Celebrating Non-Traditional Holidays. Some examples are:

January 19 is National Popcorn Day

March 4 is National Hug a G.I. Day

June 2 is National Doughnut Day

July 7 is World Chocolate Day

August 7 is Left Handers Day

Community Care: visit va.gov/communitycare

Telehealth & Compassionate Contact Corps

Women's Health Care

The Hospital Program is essential to veterans and is essential to veterans and equally rewarding to the volunteers who dedicate their time and efforts to this program.

This year the hospitals are opening up to us to put on our events. I am sure our veterans are looking forward to see us. As it has been quite a while since we have been able to put on our events.

Now is a great time to seek out new volunteers. Any member in good standing can volunteer at a facility in the name of the VFW Auxiliary as long as the Auxiliary approves it. You can volunteer in a group or singly. Many individuals do not realize that they do not have to be a member of the VFW Auxiliary to assist in the Hospital Program, so it is up to our own members to spread the word! It all begins with a conversation. Take a few minutes to explain how they can become involved. Remember they must be screened and interviewed the same as Auxiliary members. Non-members volunteers are sponsored under the Auxiliary and must adhere to Auxiliary protocol. Let's not forget our youth groups, they are good candidates for recruiting.

This year I would like to see 100% participation in this important program. A good start would be sending in your Hospital Pledge. Another way is bringing your donations to the Hospital Workshop

Remember Volunteer, Recruit, Recognition and Support

This years' Hospital Workshop will be held on October 7th. at the Medway VFW

VFW Auxiliary Hospital Program

Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) Volunteers



WHAT DOES A VAVS VOLUNTEER DO?

Volunteer assignments vary depending on the needs of the facility and at the direction of the facility's Voluntary Service Program Manager. Voluntary Service Program Managers place volunteers in assignments which permit them to utilize knowledge & skills, offer opportunities for learning, compliment their physical capabilities and contribute to the needs of the facility.

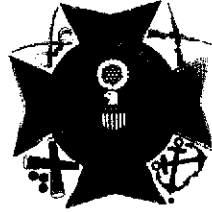
Once accepted, volunteers will be required to complete orientation and receive information concerning assignments, policies and procedures, infection control, fire and safety and liability. Each volunteer will be entered into the Voluntary Service System (VSS) which is used to record volunteer hours.

Volunteers should never discuss Veteran benefits eligibility information with a patient. Veteran benefits counseling is not a VAVS assignment.

TYPES OF VAVS VOLUNTEERS

- **Regularly Scheduled (RS) Volunteers:** RS volunteers are individuals who participate in the VAVS Program on a regularly scheduled assignment under VA supervision. Frequency of participation is determined by the local VA facility. RS volunteers are officially authorized to serve when the RS volunteer has:
 1. Signed the "Waiver of Claims to Remuneration and Appointment Agreement," as contained in VA Form 10-7055.
 2. Been approved for assignment by the Voluntary Service Program Manager or designee.
 3. Participated in required screenings, background checks, finger-printing, interviews, orientations and training prescribed by the VA facility.
 4. Completed a trial period as established by the VA facility.
- **Occasional/Episodic Volunteers:** Occasional or episodic volunteers are those individuals serving under the VAVS Program who do not meet the requirements of RS volunteers. Individuals frequently volunteer with a group or organization on an occasional basis.
- **Sponsored Volunteers:** Non-members of the VFW Auxiliary who wish to serve under the VFW Auxiliary sponsorship and supervision as volunteers at VA and non-VA facilities or in VA community-based programs. They must be interviewed and screened in the same manner as VFW Auxiliary members. Upon acceptance, sponsored volunteers are governed by the same ethics and rules prescribed for members.
- **Student Volunteers:** Student volunteers are under the age of 18 and must have written parental or guardian approval to participate in the VAVS Program. They must also have written authorization for diagnostic and emergency treatment if injured while volunteering. The minimum age for volunteers is determined by the facility.

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

Hospital Volunteer Service Certificate

This Certificate is Given To

In recognition of your dedication as a volunteer for the VFW Auxiliary Hospital Program,
for providing many hours of service, and for sharing your compassion and commitment in making
medical facilities a more caring environment for veterans, their family members and caregivers.

AUXILIARY PRESIDENT

DATE



LEGISLATIVE
Paul J La Porte, Chairperson
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I thank you for appointing me as the Legislative Chairperson for 2023-2024. I look forward to a new and exciting year with the Auxiliary Chairpersons and District Presidents.

It is imperative to fight for our nation's veterans through all of the veterans' benefits bills in the 20th and 21st centuries. At your district and auxiliary meetings, please encourage your members and their families to help support our veterans.

Please communicate to your auxiliaries and members to sign up for the *VFW's Action Corp Weekly* email. When you receive these emails, please read the email and see how it can help our veterans. You can contact me with any questions. To subscribe to the email: www.vfw.org/advocacy/grassroots-efforts. Click on the *Action Corps* button and enter your email and zip code; you will start receiving the email. Please utilize the information provided in the Action Corps Weekly. Additional tools are found online: www.vfwauxiliary.org/resources.

Please use our strength in membership to communicate with our elected officials (federal, state and local offices). Please meet with them via personal visits, send letters or emails, as well as contacting them via phone calls. Please ensure that your legislators understand what the VFW and Auxiliary want to see accomplished. Please use the resources in Malta. Please see examples listed below:

VFW Legislative Resources on Malta

- [U.S. Legislative Progress of a Bill](#)
- [VFW Fact Sheet](#)
- [VFW Legislative Priorities](#)
- [VFW Priority Goals](#)
- [VFW Voter Voice](#)

Thank you for all that you are doing to support our veterans and their families. I appreciate it. Please contact me with any questions at my cell number or via my email.



VFW Auxiliary Involvement in Elections and Political Activities

VFW Auxiliary members are encouraged to get involved in Congressional and Presidential elections, hold voter registration drives, town hall meetings and other events featuring candidates for public office. We view it as a positive and it shows veterans and those who support veterans issues to be a strong group of voters that most candidates want on their side.

As we approach the Congressional and Presidential campaign season, here are a few items to keep mind as you get involved and attend and/or host candidate functions and town hall meetings:

DO's

- Do attend candidate town hall Meetings and other events and ask candidates where they stand on veterans issues.
- Do set up voter registration drives/Get Out the Vote Campaigns on the local level.
- Do provide carpool service on Election Day to help the elderly and disabled get to the voting booth.
- Do support and work for your favorite candidates as a voting constituent.
- Do wear clothing/pins with the VFW Auxiliary emblem at public events such as town halls, rallies, forums and/or debates.

DON'Ts

- Don't endorse candidates on behalf of the VFW Auxiliary National Organization, Department, District or Auxiliary.
- Don't wear your VFW Auxiliary cap when actively campaigning for a candidate, such as soliciting donations or knocking on doors asking people to pledge their vote for a candidate.

It does not matter which candidate(s) you support as long as they know you are a VFW Auxiliary member and concerned about veterans, our military personnel and their families. The key is to stay informed on the issues and use your influence to urge new candidates and those up for reelection to support the VFW, VFW Auxiliary and veterans' issues.

VFW Auxiliary members can make a difference in any election by getting involved in the political process.

- Access the brochure "[Veterans Vote: A How to Guide to Getting Involved in the Election Process.](#)"
- Stay informed by reviewing the [VFW's Legislative Priority Goals.](#)
- If you have questions, please contact the VFW at vfwac@vfw.org.

MEMBERSHIP
MICHELLE PERRAS-SLOWICK
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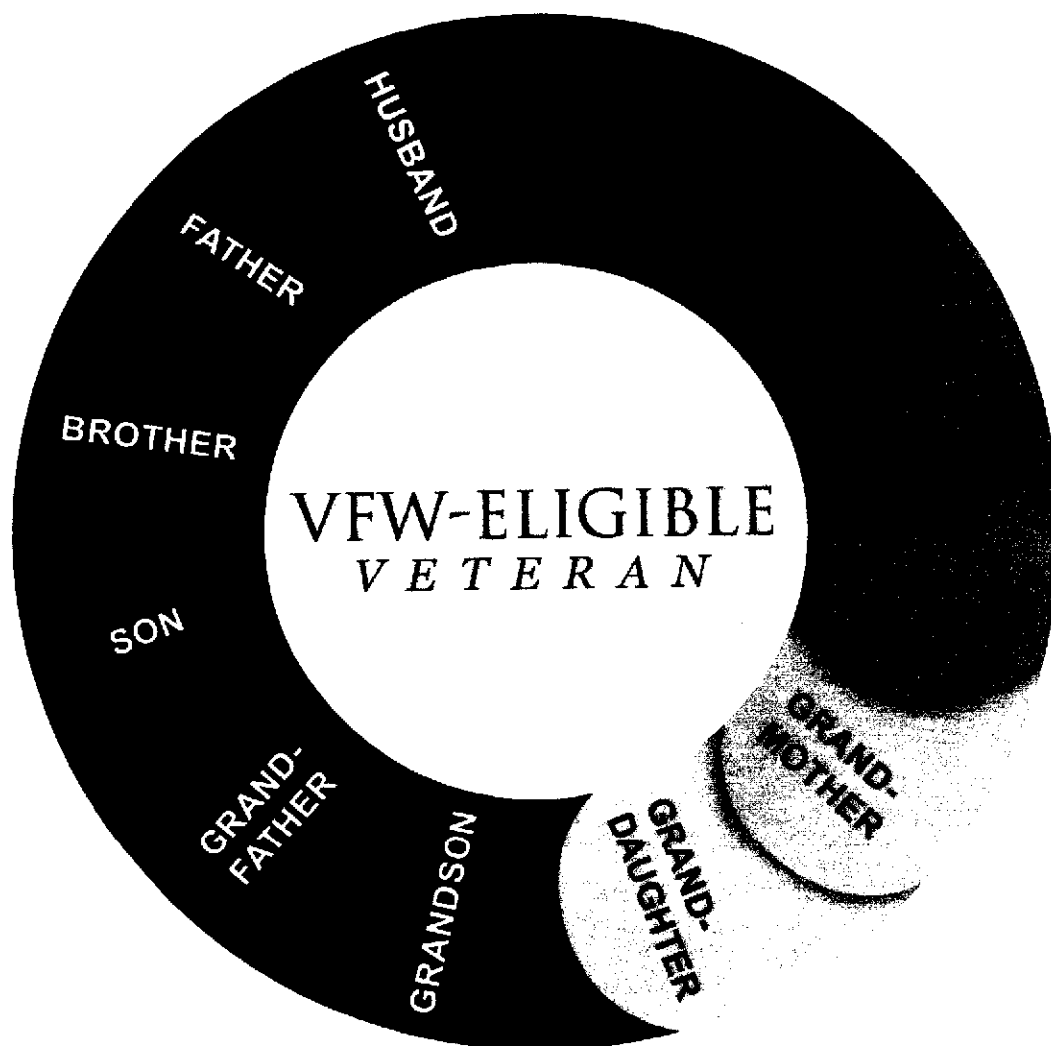
Membership this year has many of the same goals as in previous years, but the outlook is all different. We are still going to Invite, Include and Invest in our members. This year, however, our approach is WAY different. You are all going to incorporate movies and the experience of going to the movies into your membership endeavors. **Lights, Camera, ACTION!!!!**

This year, you need to answer a question. Which role will you take on??? Will you be a talent scout and look for people to help the auxiliary? How about a director who will find new and exciting ways to use the membership to promote the programs that we have and get the community involved? Some of you will be the camera person, the one who sets the scene and gets this great organization in the limelight and, better yet, up for an award. No matter what role you take, it is important and how and why we grow the membership of this great organization - an organization that supports Veterans, day in and day out. Although you are reading this at Kickoff (a day that we introduce the programs and the new and exciting ideas from our National Ambassadors) you probably have already been out recruiting for your auxiliary. There have been celebrations for the 4th of July and many summer concerts and farmers markets happening throughout the state, and I know you were there. I was at the Women's Veteran Expo in Quincy right after our State Convention with Christine Tron from the VFW. We were spreading the word about the VFW and Auxiliary to the many attendants.

Now for the real message you need to have. The number that you all have been waiting for - **3907**. 3907 paid members will get us to 100%; that is only three (3) members over the number we started with last year, a goal that is very attainable as you did that already last year.

In the state of Massachusetts, we are a family whether you are on the VFW side or the Auxiliary side of this great organization. The state special project, Medic Now, has told us that we are one team, and this is one fight, so here is the VFW number, too. The VFW needs 15,559 to be 100%, and the National Commander has asked that each state get to 102% at the end of this year. So for Commander Morrissey, that means he will need 15,871 to obtain that goal. I am asking you for not only myself but for the Membership Chairman on the VFW side, Craig DeOld, let's help this year's Commander and this year's President reach these goals. I know that the members of this great state can and will do that. Let's have a great membership year.

VFW Auxiliary Eligibility Wheel



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

New Member Orientation Checklist

(For Officer Use)



The key to retaining new members is to ensure they are receiving value from their VFW Auxiliary membership, and that they are aware of the value they are receiving. Engaging with your members on a regular basis to communicate this value to them helps keep it fresh in their minds, and reminds them of why they became members in the first place. Studies on new members of any organization show that the first three months are critical to engaging that member and keeping that member.

Here is a suggested checklist to help you and your Auxiliary engage its new members during the first three months:

Within The First Week

- Call or email the new member to introduce yourself. Offer your contact information should that new member have any questions. If your Auxiliary has a website or Facebook page, tell them about it so they can see what's going on. Provide a calendar of upcoming events.
- Encourage them to create a member profile in MALTA.

Within The First Month

- Invite the new member as soon as possible to whatever Auxiliary event is coming up next, whether it be a meeting, a community service project, or something else. Offer to pick them up if they need a ride. Or if it's a family event, be sure to let them know that anyone can come. They might feel more comfortable coming with a family member or friend. Be sure to send them a reminder at least three days out from the event. And immediately following the event, send an e-mail or handwritten note saying that you're glad they came.
- Give them a New Member Packet with the items available on MALTA.

Within The First Two Months

- Your Auxiliary will most likely have a meeting within this time period. Specifically invite the new member and save them a seat. Have a copy of "Understanding VFW Auxiliary Traditions" printed out, and make time to explain each of the items on it. Much of it will be entirely new to them.

Within The First Three Months

- Scheduling is difficult, but try to meet up for coffee, and see if the new member has any questions about what they have been involved with so far. Have a copy of the VFW Auxiliary Bylaws and Ritual available in case a question comes up that you can't answer.

The goal with each of these steps is to maintain contact with the new member in order to engage them in your Auxiliary as soon as possible. Engaged members actively participate in Auxiliary meetings, events, special projects and leadership opportunities. Once you have engaged that member and extended that hand of friendship, continue to nurture that relationship. An engaged membership equals a healthy Auxiliary!

VFW Auxiliary Membership Moment

Recognizing Your Auxiliary's Members

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FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

A simple “thank you” can go a long way. Recognizing your members’ contributions to your VFW Auxiliary’s success is the first step to positive membership retention. Auxiliary members are volunteers who juggle multiple daily responsibilities and still manage to give their time and/or membership dues to support the efforts of the Auxiliary. Show them you appreciate their dedication to creating the most powerful national network of voices on behalf of veterans, active-duty service members, and their families.

Here are several “sure-fire” ways that your Auxiliary can recognize its members:

Send press releases to newspapers when groups of new members join; include photos when possible. In smaller communities, there are likely opportunities to get members’ names and photographs in the local paper when they join. A group photo of a number of new members holding their membership applications or cards might very well be picked up by a local paper in the community where the members live or work.

Feature a “Member of the Month” in your Auxiliary correspondence.

Highlighting an individual member on a regular basis is one way to ensure that members who are featured will renew, as well as getting members who would like to be featured to renew. Be sure that the “members of the month” are not only current or past Auxiliary leaders. It is important to also highlight members who do nothing more than support the Auxiliary by paying their dues on time and participating at a level that is comfortable for them.

Host a member appreciation event at least once a year.

Organizing a member appreciation event helps your Auxiliary to recognize and thank members who have participated in its activities and events, and championed our organization’s mission.

Treat each other with respect and humility.

As Auxiliary members, we value the strengths, experiences and perspectives of others, and we also recognize our own limitations. By treating each other with respect, we show our appreciation and thanks for the special gifts, talents and contributions of every individual within the VFW Auxiliary family.

VFW Auxiliary Membership Moment

Three Great Strategies for Member Retention

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The key to retaining VFW Auxiliary members is to ensure that they are receiving value from their membership and that they are aware of the value they are receiving. Engaging with your members on a regular basis to communicate this value to them helps keep it fresh in their mind, and reminds them of why they became members in the first place.

So what are some of the top retention ideas and strategies? Here are three that you may want to try:

1. **Communicate through a channel that the member has said they prefer**

By allowing members to specify their preferred way of communicating, then being able to tailor your communication with them in that format, you're more likely to get a level of engagement back from them. Whether it is email, text message, telephone or letter, make sure you're communicating with them how they've requested.

2. **Focus on the first year**

It has been well documented that if you can keep a member for more than a year, then the chances of subsequent renewals increase. This is why the first year is called the "Conversion Year." Tailor your communication to target these new members specifically and make sure they're as engaged with your local Auxiliary as possible.

3. **Let them know their membership is about to expire**

Believe it or not, some members may not renew simply because they forgot. People are busy, and often renewing their membership isn't at the top of their "to-do list." So make sure you let people know in advance when their membership is about to expire, and communicate with them on a regular basis before December 31.

Remember – if they don't renew, it's not all lost. Keep on communicating with them on a regular basis – let them know the value they received while they were members, how easy it is for them to rejoin, and what's in it for them if they do rejoin (for example, benefits, VFW Auxiliary Magazine, etc.). Don't stop communicating with them until they specifically request it!

VFW Auxiliary Membership Moment

How to Treat People with Respect

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The key to treating people with respect is to treat them as you would like to be treated – also commonly known as the Golden Rule. When dealing with difficult members in your local Auxiliary, seek to understand the root of their problems toward you. Then, you will be able to rise above the situation, and treat them well.

Here are several tips for treating members with respect within your Auxiliary:

1. **Practice self-respect.**

Because you want to respect others as you would hope to be respected, it is incredibly important that you extend to yourself the same respect and courtesy that you would extend to another person. If someone says something cruel or demeaning, speak up. Tell them what you found to be disrespectful and why.

2. **Really listen.**

A lot of people don't listen very well, because they're distracted, checking their phone, or thinking about the next thing that they are going to say. Learn to *really* listen when other people speak.

3. **Treat other people's ideas with due consideration.**

This means listening to another person's ideas, opinions, and advice with an open mind. Even if you don't necessarily agree with them, give them the benefit of thinking about what they have said.

4. **Be mindful of your words.**

Words are *very* powerful and they can be incredibly disrespectful if used improperly. Think carefully about what you're going to say, and to whom, otherwise you might hurt someone.

5. **Cultivate good manners.**

This is as simple as saying "thank you" and "please" when you're requesting something from another person. It shows that you respect the time and effort that it will take for them to help you, and it will allow them to feel respected.

VFW Auxiliary Membership Moment

What's the Value of One Member?

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FOR UNCOMMON HEROES

What's the Value of One Member?

Author Unknown

Ten little members standing in a line
One disliked the President, and then there were nine.
Nine ambitious members offered to work late
One forgot her promise, and then there were eight.

Eight creative members, had ideas good as heaven
One lost enthusiasm, and then there were seven.
Seven loyal members got into a fix
They quarreled over programs, and then there were six.

One dropped out and then there were five.
Five happy members, not one a bore,
Till they fought over Bingo
And then there were four.

Four cheerful members
Who never disagree,
Till one complained of meetings
And then there were three.

Three eager members, what did they do?
One got discouraged, and then there were two.
Two tired members, our rhyme is nearly done
One joined a bridge club and then there was one.

One faithful member, feeling very blue
Met with a neighbor, and then there were two.
Two earnest members each enrolled one more,
Doubling their number, and then there were four.

Four determined members, just couldn't wait
Till each won another, and then there were eight.
Eight excited members, signed up sixteen more
In another six verses there will be a thousand and twenty-four!

Mentoring for Leadership

Dawn Wright, Chairman
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West Townsend, MA 01474
Cell # 603-532-6269
* dgbunton@aol.com *

“SOARING TO HIGHER EXPECTATIONS”

Brothers and Sisters,

Have you asked yourself the following questions?

Can I be a mentor? What does a mentor do? Can I be a leader?

The answer is: Yes, you can, if you can offer friendship, advice, teach, support, listen, motivate, and encourage new and older members.

Every Auxiliary should be able to earn all 6 points they are easily attainable.

MENTORING FOR LEADERSHIP

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Utilize the Mentoring for Leadership materials in MALTA Member Resources | 1 Point |
| 2. Educate members on the National Mentoring for Leadership Program Awards | 1 Point |
| 3. Member(s) fulfilling the role of Mentor | 1 Point |
| 4. Hold a special recognition for mentors in your auxiliary | 1 Point |
| 5. Submit required two (2) reports by deadline dates (one [1] point each report period) | <u>2 Points</u> |
| | <i>6 Points</i> |

How to achieve these points.

1 Point- Log into MALTA, assist someone who may have difficulty logging in or perhaps just does not own a computer. I have attached a few examples pages. While in MALTA, familiarize yourself with the other programs and get inspired to file your reports.

1 Point- Educate members on the Mentoring for Leadership awards. Pull out the attached form, make copies and distribute them to your members.

1 Point- Tell me about a member who fulfilled the role of mentor. Give them a “Good Job” award. (can also be used in other reports)

1 Point- Everyone loves a party! Hold a little gathering before or after a monthly meeting and celebrate and recognize all those mentors.

1 Point- for each of the two required reports by the deadline date for 2 points.

It's that easy!



Welcome
We're glad you're here.



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Have Questions? Please Ask Me!

Name _____
Phone _____
Email _____



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Name _____
Phone _____
Email _____



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Name _____
Phone _____
Email _____



Have Questions? Please Ask Me!

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Name _____
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Mentoring for Leadership

Auxiliary Award No. 1

Entry Form • 2023-2024 Program Year

1. Most unique activity and/or event that educates their Auxiliary members about how to find and train mentees while using and promoting VFW Auxiliary resources and learning material
 - **Citation** to every Auxiliary that has an activity and/or event that educates their Auxiliary members about how to find and train mentees. Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.
 - **Citation and \$25** to one Auxiliary in each of the four (4) Conferences that has the most outstanding activity and/or event that educates their Auxiliary members about how to find and train mentees. Winners will be announced at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

**Auxiliaries are to send this completed form to their Department
Mentoring for Leadership Chairman by March 31, 2024.**

Auxiliary Name: _____ No.: _____

Department of: _____

Describe the activity and/or event that educated their Auxiliary members about how to find and train mentees. (E.g., flyers, brochures, social media posts, newsletters, e-newsletters, handouts, photos, links to videos, etc.)

Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman: _____ Date: _____
(signature)

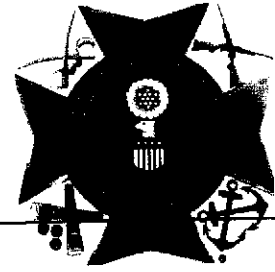
April 30, 2024 - The Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman is to sign and send the completed Department winning entry form to National Mentoring for Leadership Ambassador Francine Cornish for judging.

AND

April 30, 2024 - The Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman is to **email** National Headquarters at info@vfwauxiliary.org a total combined **list** of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form.

Forms sent directly to National Headquarters will not be processed.

Mentoring Guide: Relationship Building for the Future



Introduction

Everyone has a fairly similar idea of what a mentor is. It's a person who has befriended you and shown you the way in some area of your life. You may have been a student when a teacher took an interest in you and taught you more than just the class materials. Perhaps you were a new parent, and someone who had been in your shoes gently reassured you and gave a little advice. Or it could have been a co-worker or boss who saw your potential and was willing to help you achieve your goals. Mentors are more than just friends and they are more than just instructors. They do both, and you care about one another.

It doesn't happen overnight.

It often happens naturally.

Everyone wants a mentor in some way.

Not everyone is willing to be one.

There are hundreds of mentor studies, programs and resources all over the world to help men, women, children, young and old, reach certain goals in his or her life. In the VFW Auxiliary, mentoring is an important part of maintaining the health and viability of each Auxiliary and for the organization as a whole.

Members who have belonged for a number of years all have someone who took them under their wing, showed them the ins and outs of the organization and encouraged them to greater heights or simply kept them coming back for more of the wonderful things VFW Auxiliary has to offer.

This guide is to help your Auxiliary think about what mentoring looks like in your Auxiliary, tips on how to get things started, advice on how to make those relationships great and tools to make sure no one falls through the gaps.

Remember, no one walks around wearing a sign that says, "I want a mentor." But I can bet you that each person is thinking it, even secretly praying someone will take an interest in him or her and show them the way.

When I was younger, I distinctly remember saying to a friend, "I just wish someone would come along and tell what I'm supposed to be doing!"

That new member who just walked through the meeting room door? That is exactly what is going through his or her head.

Am I ready to mentor someone?

This is perhaps the trickiest part: convincing someone they are ready to be a mentor. If there were a magic formula, I would share it here. Instead, let's just look at some factors that might help you decide you have plenty to offer another member.

- You have held a position, either as an officer or a chairman.
- You have helped with several different programs.
- People rely on you to remember how things are done.
- You are ready and willing to lend a helping hand to projects.
- You care about veterans and their families.
- The organization is very important to you for many reasons.

ANY of these (not necessarily ALL of these) make you qualified to mentor another member. You don't have to be a certain age or have been a member for any specific length of time or even know everything there is to know about the organization. More importantly than any qualification, what you really have to do is CARE.

C: Catch the member when they first join.

A: Ask them to participate.

R: Remember what it felt like to be new.

E: Engage them in a program that fits them.

C is Catch

Catching a member when he or she first joins means not saying to yourself, "Surely someone will call or email the new people about the next meeting." Guess what? Your new name is Someone. Decide now that when a new member is recruited (or if a rejoined member comes back after some time off) that Someone needs to contact that member and let them know they are important to the Auxiliary.

If your Auxiliary is quite large, you may need a small team of people to make sure this happens. You might not become mentors to every person you call, but it's a first step.

You also want to catch newer members as they come in the door at a meeting. They might arrive alone, choose a seat toward the back and generally look a little overwhelmed. That's when Someone (remember, that's now YOU) goes up to the new member, introduces themselves and says, "Come sit with me. I'll explain everything!"

A is for Ask

There are not nearly enough people in this world who stand up and immediately volunteer to do things. These people are typically the exception rather than the rule. For MOST other people, they need and want to be asked.

Research done by many nonprofit organizations has shown that if a member is not actively participating within three months of joining, he or she will mostly likely drop that membership after the first year. It is critical to ask

those new members to participate in whatever is coming up next. Don't make them CHAIRMAN of it, but invite them to come and join you in what you're doing.

R is Remember

Everyone was new once. Everyone had that first meeting. Everyone was once a stranger. Try to remember what this felt like. And then be gentle. There are an enormous number of details to know about VFW Auxiliary. There are rules and there are guidelines and there are suggestions. It's a lot! Remember the first time you accidentally walked when the flags were in motion? Or you talked when they were closing the Bible? At some point, someone said to you, "Don't do THAT!"

Have copies of the Auxiliary Traditions handout at every meeting. It helps explain common practices they might not be familiar with.

Remember what it felt like, and then be the Someone who gently says, "Let me tell about why we do it this way so you can do it better next time."

E is for Engage

One of the unique things about VFW Auxiliary is that there are so many different ways to become involved in the organization. Every personality and every passion can find a place in VFW Auxiliary. But in order to help that new member find his or her place, you have to get to know them.

Take the time over coffee to figure out his or her passion and then find a way to get them involved in that program. We have everything from working with youth to serving in hospitals to fundraising to publicity and more! There was something, some phrase, some project or program that was mentioned when they decided to join. Find out what it is, and you'll find out how to get them involved.

Do I want a mentor?

The first time I remember needing a mentor, someone to guide me, was at church, and there was a specific woman I liked and respected. The more I got to know her, the more I wanted her to speak wisdom into my life. I just didn't know if she would be willing. I made a big mistake: I didn't ask her. I didn't just come out and say, "Can we get coffee?" or "Do you want to go to this event with me?"

Though there is a responsibility of those who can and should mentor to reach out to those needing mentors, the mentee has a responsibility to do two things:

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

So how do you know when it's time to ask that longtime, wise member to get coffee? Just as soon as you get curious and start having a ton of questions about how things work and what to do. Find that person who you respect, who seems open and is always helpful. Then ask him or her for some time, and get your questions answered.

Be Informed

There is also something else you can do to grow and become more involved. You need to learn all you can with the resources available to you.

1. Get a copy of the National Bylaws and read the entire thing. Your rights and responsibilities are contained in that document, and you need to know them.
2. Be sure you read all communications from Auxiliary, Department and National levels.
3. Go to the Auxiliary website and Facebook pages often. You will want to stay up-to-date on news and information, www.vfwauxiliary.org.

Should our Auxiliary start a mentor program?

Every Auxiliary should have some sort of mentor program. This can be done formally or informally. The more members you have and the more quickly you're growing may indicate that you need to have a process in place to get those new members involved and included as soon as possible.

Three members could take this on, perhaps those who remember well what it felt like to be new and who know enough about the organization to be helpful. (For a smaller Auxiliary, one person may be able to handle this.) As soon as a new member is voted on and accepted, their name and contact information should go to this team. Based on what they know about this new member, someone should be assigned to that member for at least the first year. It doesn't have to be a member of this team, but a member who would be willing to reach out to someone new and show them the ropes.

Studies on new members of any organization show that the first three months are critical to engaging that member and therefore keeping that member.

Here is a timeline to help engage new members:

Within first week: Call or email the new member introducing yourself. Offer your contact information should that new member have any questions. If your Auxiliary has a website or Facebook page, tell them about it so they can see what's going on.

Within first month: Invite this new member as soon as possible to whatever event is coming up next, whether it be a meeting or something else. Offer to pick him or her up. Or if it's a family event, be sure to say that anyone can come. They might feel more comfortable coming with their family or friend.

Because people are very busy these days, be sure to send a reminder at least three days out from the event.

At the event or if they come to the Post Home for a social event, there is ONE THING you can do when they step through that door. If the new member says, "How can I help?", stop right then and there and find a way for them to help. DO NOT tell them, "Oh don't worry, I've got it." Even if you are peeling potatoes and you're almost done, let them peel the potatoes!

Immediately following the event, send an email or handwritten note saying you're glad they came.

Within first two months: Your Auxiliary will most likely have a meeting within this time period. Specifically invite a new member and save them a seat. Have a copy of "Auxiliary Traditions" printed out and explain each of the items on it. Much of it will be entirely new to them.

Within first three months: Scheduling is difficult, but try to meet up for coffee or drinks, and see if the new member has any questions about what they have been involved with so far. If they have a family, consider having them over for dinner. Have a copy of the Bylaws available in case a question comes up that you can't answer.

Over the next six months: Continue with the phone calls and emails, inviting him or her to meetings and events. In this day and age, be patient with how they choose to communicate. Everyone feels differently about phones, texts, emails, Facebook messaging, etc. They may be more comfortable or have better access to one than another.

See if they have any new ideas and be open to them. Send notes for birthdays or thanks you if they helped with an event. Don't let a month go by without reaching out to that new member.

The goal with each of these steps is to maintain contact with a member in order to engage him or her. Once you have engaged that member and extended that hand of friendship, continue to nurture that relationship. There is so much to learn, and learning it from a friend is the best way to develop future leaders.

Building on Common Ground

Mentoring is based on relationships. No matter the different backgrounds and cultures members may come from, they all have something in common: veterans. Start each relationship from that common ground, and build on it with time, patience and caring.

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 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. 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 presents 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.

To apply for the \$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 mailed directly to the Program Awards Administrator, VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters, 406 W. 34th Street 10th Floor, Kansas City MO 64111 or emailed to info@vfwauxiliary.org with the following subject line: Continuing Education Scholarship Application in time for them to be received no later than 15 February 2024.

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 2024 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**. Watercolor, pencil, pastel, charcoal, tempera, crayon, acrylic, pen, ink, oil, marker, or other media may be used. The piece should not be framed. Canvas entries should be submitted on a stretcher frame or canvas board, while other entries, if matted, must be matted in white. It is highly recommended that heavy paper be used to reinforce the back of an entry which is matted. Mounted and floating boards may also be used. The art should be no smaller than 8 inches by 10 inches or larger than 18 inches by 24 inches, not 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 paper, papier-mâché, pottery, sculpture, fabric, wood, metalwork, etc. Entries should be no larger than 18 inches in any direction. The art may not 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.

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 (2023-2024) school year. Both the correct, completed Official Patriotic Art Contest Scholarship Application 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 explanation of the entry (250 words or less) must be submitted with the entry. The typed explanation of the 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art entry should include the steps taken to create it.

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 Sunday, 31 March 2024.

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 2024 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 will be shown on VFW Auxiliary social media pages and displayed at the VFW Auxiliary National Convention.

“How are you inspired by America?” is the 2023-2024 theme of our VFW and 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 or 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. Quotations may be used sparingly if plainly identified wherever used. Contestants may not identify themselves within their essay (including, but not limited to, their name, school, city, state, race, or national origin) or put their name on their essay. A completed 2023-2024 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 2023. 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%).

“What are the greatest attributes of our Democracy?” is the 2023-2024 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 2023-2024 Official

Voice of Democracy Competition Entry Form attached to a VFW Post by midnight on Tuesday, 31 October 2023. An emailed entry form, essay, and attached audio file may be submitted to the 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, but not limited to, his name, school, city, state, race, or national origin). No music, singing, poetry, or sound effects are permitted on the recording. Judging of Voice of Democracy entries will be based on originality (30%), content (35%), and delivery (35%).

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 \$55,000. Those range from \$5,000 for first place down to \$500 for fifty-third place. There is a total of \$171,000 in National Voice of Democracy Scholarships ranging from \$35,000 for first place down to \$1,000 for fifty-third place, so every Department winner will receive a National Voice of Democracy Scholarship.

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 still needed. The goals of these funds are to increase the number and amounts of both the Young American Creative Patriotic Art and the 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Scholarships awarded at the national level and to increase the award amount of the Continuing Education Scholarship from \$1,250 to \$2,500, respectively. Auxiliaries and individual members are asked to **make donations to the two scholarship funds** to make these goals realities. It is hoped that you will be **especially generous in your donation to the Patriotic Art Escrow Fund** since that fund now is designed to provide for both patriotic art contests. To donate by mail, send a check earmarked either **Patriotic Art or Continuing Education** 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 is offering Scholarships Program Awards to Auxiliaries that host an activity and/or event educating their community about scholarship opportunities through the VFW Auxiliary. It will send a citation to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event educating their community about scholarship opportunities through the VFW Auxiliary and submits a completed Scholarships Auxiliary Award No.1 Entry Form - 2023-2024 Program Year to me by 31 March 2024. I shall sign and forward the form to National Headquarters. The National Auxiliary will also award \$25.00 to one Auxiliary in each of the four (4) Conferences with the most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about scholarship opportunities through the VFW Auxiliary.

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

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Promote the 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 |
| 10. Submit required two (2) reports by deadline dates (one [1] point each report period) | <u>2 Points</u> |
| | 21 Points |
| | 21 Points |



2023-2024 VFW Auxiliary National Continuing Education Scholarship Application

The VFW Auxiliary is pleased to present this National Scholarship to assist VFW Auxiliary members and their immediate family who wish to further their education by pursuing a college degree or a career direction at a vocational/technical school. One (1) scholarship will be awarded each year to a selected candidate in each of the four (4) VFW Auxiliary Conferences.

The \$1,250 scholarship shall 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.

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.
- Applicant 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 Full Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

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

Applicant Phone Number: _____ Applicant email: _____

Relationship to VFW Auxiliary Member: (please circle one) **Self** **Spouse** **Son** **Daughter**

VFW Auxiliary Member Name: _____ Date VFW Auxiliary Member joined: _____

VFW Auxiliary Member I.D. Number: _____ VFW Auxiliary No.: _____

I hereby grant permission to publish my name and photo in VFW Auxiliary Magazine, on the VFW Auxiliary website and to be used for any and all promotional purposes by the VFW Auxiliary and the VFW Store if named a winner in one of the top national awards. I hereby verifying that the entry was done by the applicant listed above.

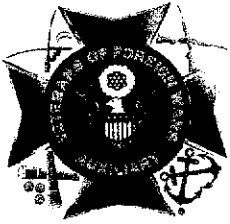
Applicant Signature: _____ AGE: _____ Date: _____

**On a separate piece of paper, provide typed answers each question listed below.
All questions must be answered for the application to be considered.**

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 Continuing Education Scholarship?
7. Have you been awarded Financial Aid from any other sources? Please list/specify.
8. Write a brief essay (no more than 300 words*) describing your commitment to your goals and how this scholarship will help you attain these goals. *Essays longer than 300 words will not be accepted.

Email to:
info@vfwauxiliary.org with the following subject line:
Continuing Education Scholarship Application
OR mail to:
VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters
406 W. 34th St., 10th Floor
Kansas City, MO 64111
Attn: Program Awards Administrator

**Application due to
VFW Auxiliary
National
Headquarters
By February 15**



Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest

A VFW Auxiliary National Scholarship
for eligible students in grades 9-12

2023-2024

The VFW National Auxiliary 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 originality of concept, presentation and patriotism expressed, content of how it relates to patriotism and clarity of ideas, design technique, total impact of work.

Contest Eligibility

- Students in grades 9-12 by the 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 residence (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen.
- Student does not have to be related to a VFW or VFW Auxiliary member to participate.
- Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or older, GED and adult education students, or National winners of previous Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contests are **NOT** eligible.

Contest Rules

- Entry must be completed during the current school year.
- Art must be two dimensional.
- Watercolor, pencil, pastel, charcoal, tempera, crayon, acrylic, pen, ink, oil, marker or other media may be used.
- Entry must be on canvas or paper.
- Do not frame two-dimensional pieces art.
- Submit canvas entries on a stretcher frame or canvas board.
- Other entries if matted must be matted in white. Do not use color mats.
- Reinforce the back with heavy paper.
- Mounted and floating mats may also be used.
- Entry may not be smaller than 8" x 10" and not larger than 18" x 24", not including mat.
- Complete contest entry form and submit with entry.
- Complete typed explanation of the entry (250 words or less) and submit with entry.
- Parent or guardian signature required on contest entry form.
- If the American Flag is used, it must conform to the Federal Flag Code in relation to colors, number of stars and stripes and other pertinent rules of the code.
- Digital art and photography are not accepted.

VFW Auxiliary National Scholarships

First place - \$15,000

Second place - \$7,500

Third place - \$3,500

Fourth and Fifth place - \$1,500

Sixth and Seventh place - \$1,000

Eighth through Nineteenth place - \$500

VFW Auxiliary is not responsible for incomplete, lost, late, misdirected entries. All scores are final as received from the judges. Falsifying information on the entry form is reason for immediate disqualification. All contestants agree to abide by the contest rules. Any violation of these rules shall be cause for immediate disqualification and forfeiture of award.

To acquire contact information and application assistance in your state please email info@vfwauxiliary.org

VFW Auxiliary judging and deadlines:

- **March 31:** Student entries must be submitted to a participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary for judging.
- **April 15:** One winner from each VFW Auxiliary advances to the VFW Auxiliary District (optional) then Department (state) for judging.
- **May 5:** VFW Auxiliary Department (state) winners due to VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters for judging.
- **July/August:** Students will be notified of entry status via email provided on entry form. First through twelfth place winners named on VFW Auxiliary social media pages and displayed at the VFW Auxiliary National Convention.
- **September:** Art will be returned to address on entry form.

Scholarships are paid directly to the American college, vocational, technical or trade school of the winners' choice.



Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest

A VFW Auxiliary National Scholarship
for eligible students in grades 9-12

2023-2024 Contest Entry Form

Please print or complete fillable form at vfwauxiliary.org and submit with entry
along with a typed explanation of entry (250 words or less).

Student Name: _____ Age: _____

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

Email: _____ Phone: _____

School Name: _____ Grade: _____

Title of Artwork: _____ Date Completed: _____

Source: _____ Media used: _____

State the source of your idea for entry: person, website, magazine, TV, newspaper, etc. To comply with copyright laws, all artwork must be original to the entrant. Artwork may be inspired by other artist's/photographer's work, but not to the degree that the new piece of artwork is easily recognized as being derivative of other artist's work. If another artist's/photographer's work is used as a source of inspiration or reference, a copy of the 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 Magazine and on the VFW Auxiliary website and to be used for any and all promotional purposes by the VFW Auxiliary and the VFW Store if I win one of the top National awards.*

VFW Auxiliary is not responsible for incomplete, lost, late, misdirected entries. All scores are final as received from the judges. Falsifying information on the entry form is reason for immediate disqualification. All contestants agree to abide by the contest rules. Any violation of these rules shall be cause for immediate disqualification and forfeiture of award.

Sponsoring/Participating VFW Auxiliary Contact or VFW Auxiliary Department Contact information:

Representative Name: _____ Representative Phone: _____

Representative email: _____

This section to be filled out by VFW Auxiliary at each judging level.

National Headquarters only accepts Department level winners.

Entries received at National Headquarters that are not from the Department will be disqualified.

Sponsoring VFW Auxiliary No.: _____ **Department of:** _____

March 31: Student entries must be submitted to a participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary for judging.

Auxiliary Scholarships Chairman verification signature: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

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: One winner from each VFW Auxiliary advances to the VFW Auxiliary District (optional) then Department (state) for judging.

Department Scholarships Chairman verification signature: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed above if not advancing to the next level.

Final Level - Department first-place entry must be received at
VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters by **May 5** or it will be disqualified.

ATTN: Program Awards Administrator

Judge's Scoring Sheet

Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest

Criteria within the three categories can each receive up to 10 points, with 10 being the best.

Entrant:



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. Can 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:



Rules for Administering VFW Auxiliary Young American Creative Patriotic Art Scholarship

DISBURSING FUNDS

SECTION I

All scholarships must be paid by the VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters directly to the Registrar or Finance Officer of the American college, university or vocational/technical school selected by the recipient upon receipt of:

- An official letter or acknowledgment from the American college or vocational/technical school stating that the student is enrolled and that includes the student name, student ID and proper school address to forward the financial award.

AND

- A bill or invoice stating the amount of funds required. **(This information can be included in the above letter.)** The full amount can be sent at one time, or partial funds can be sent whenever they are requested. Each time funds are requested, send official notification of the student's **enrollment** and the amount needed.

This scholarship is not meant to reduce other sources of aid.

Requests for scholarship funds must be sent to the Program Awards Administrator at the below address. After receiving official notification, it usually takes no longer than three weeks for the school to receive the check. All scholarship checks will be mailed **directly to the school**. Checks can not be sent to the student.

SECTION II

HOW FUNDS CAN BE USED

Scholarship funds may be used for tuition, textbooks, laboratory fees, and/or other items relating specifically to the student's formal education and purchased through the school (remember, all funds must be paid directly to the school). **NOTE: Clothing, room and board (dorm fees and dining plans) and pocket money are not to be considered authorized expenditures.** The scholarship funds need not be used during any one school year, they may be extended to cover all years of study. All scholarship funds may be held for a maximum of **(5) five years** from the date of high school graduation.

SECTION III

RETURNING FUNDS TO THE VFW AUXILIARY

In the event the recipient does not graduate from high school on or prior to the customary graduation year, the funds will be immediately forfeited.

In the event the recipient's course of instruction is interrupted by personal or family emergencies, illness, death, military service, failure to maintain passing grades and/or other extenuating circumstances, all unused funds will be returned to the VFW Auxiliary.

In the event the recipient transfers to another school, the Registrar or Finance Officer will forward remaining funds of the scholarship to the VFW Auxiliary. The remainder of the scholarship will be forwarded to the Registrar or Finance Officer of the school to which the recipient transfers in accordance with the procedure outlined in section one.

At the time of graduation from any one school, any funds that remain from the scholarship will be returned to the VFW Auxiliary. To use the remainder of the scholarship for graduate work, a request may be submitted by the recipient with the procedure in section one.

All inquiries regarding the use of Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest Scholarship and request for funds should be directed to:

VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters
406 West 34th Street, 10th floor
Kansas City, Missouri 64111
Program Awards Administrator

Fax: (816) 931-4753

E-mail: info@vfwauxiliary.org



3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest 2023-2024

A VFW Auxillary National Scholarship for eligible students in grades 9-12

The VFW National Auxiliary 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 originality of concept, presentation and patriotism expressed, content of how it relates to patriotism and clarity of ideas, design technique, total impact of work.

Contest Eligibility

- Students in grades 9-12 by the 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 residence (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen.
- Student does not have to be related to a VFW or VFW Auxiliary member to participate.
- Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or older, GED and adult education students, or National winners of previous 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 be paper, papier mâché, pottery, sculpture, fabric, wood, metalwork, etc.
- Entry may not be larger than 18" in any direction.
- Entry may not weigh more than 5 pounds.
- Complete contest entry form and submit with entry.
- Complete typed explanation of the steps taken to create the 3-Dimensional art entry and an artist statement (250 words or less) and submit with entry.
- Parent or guardian signature required on contest entry form.
- If the American Flag is used, it must conform to the Federal Flag Code in relation to colors, number of stars and stripes and other pertinent rules of the code.
- Digital art, photography, weapons, art generated by a 3-D printer and jewelry are **NOT** accepted.

VFW Auxiliary National Scholarships

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

VFW Auxiliary is not responsible for incomplete, lost, late, misdirected entries. All scores are final as received from the judges. Falsifying information on the entry form is reason for immediate disqualification. All contestants agree to abide by the contest rules. Any violation of these rules shall be cause for immediate disqualification and forfeiture of award.

To acquire contact information and application assistance in your state please email info@vfwauxiliary.org

VFW Auxiliary judging and deadlines

- **March 31:** Student entries must be submitted to a participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary for judging.
- **April 15:** One winner from each VFW Auxiliary advances to the VFW Auxiliary District (optional) then Department (state) for judging.
- **May 5:** VFW Auxiliary Department (state) winners due to VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters for judging.
- **July/August:** Students will be notified of entry status via email provided on entry form. First through third place winners named on VFW Auxiliary social media pages and displayed at the VFW Auxiliary National Convention.
- **September:** Art will be returned to address on entry form.

Scholarships are paid directly to the American college, vocational, technical or trade school of the winners' choice.



3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest

A VFW Auxillary National Scholarship

for eligible students in grades 9-12

2023-2024 Contest Entry Form

Please print or complete fillable form at vfwauxiliary.org and submit with entry along with a typed explanation of the steps taken to create the 3-Dimensional art entry and an artist statement (250 words or less).

Student Name: _____ Age: _____

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

Email: _____ Phone: _____

School Name: _____ Grade: _____

Title of Artwork: _____ Date Completed: _____

Source: _____ Media used: _____

State the source of your idea for entry: person, website, magazine, TV, newspaper, etc. To comply with copyright laws, all artwork must be original to the entrant. Artwork may be inspired by other artist's/photographer's work, but not to the degree that the new piece of artwork is easily recognized as being derivative of other artist's work. If another artist's/photographer's work is used as a source of inspiration or reference, a copy of the 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 Magazine and on the VFW Auxiliary website and to be used for any and all promotional purposes by the VFW Auxiliary and the VFW Store if I win one of the top National awards.*

VFW Auxiliary is not responsible for incomplete, lost, late, misdirected entries. All scores are final as received from the judges. Falsifying information on the entry form is reason for immediate disqualification. All contestants agree to abide by the contest rules. Any violation of these rules shall be cause for immediate disqualification and forfeiture of award.

Sponsoring/Participating VFW Auxiliary Contact or VFW Auxiliary Department Contact information:

Representative Name: _____ Representative Phone: _____

Representative email: _____

This section to be filled out by VFW Auxiliary at each judging level.

National Headquarters only accepts Department level winners.

Entries received at National Headquarters that are not from the Department will be disqualified.

Sponsoring VFW Auxiliary No.: _____ **Department of:** _____

March 31: Student entries must be submitted to a participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary for judging.

Auxiliary Scholarships Chairman verification signature: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

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: One winner from each VFW Auxiliary advances to the VFW Auxiliary District (optional) then Department (state) for judging.

Department Scholarships Chairman verification signature: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed above if not advancing to the next level.

Final Level - Department first-place entry must be received at VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters by **May 5** or it will be disqualified.

ATTN: Program Awards Administrator

Judge's Scoring Sheet

3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest

Criteria within the three categories can each receive up to 10 points, with 10 being the best.

Entrant:



<u>Criteria</u>	
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. Can 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:

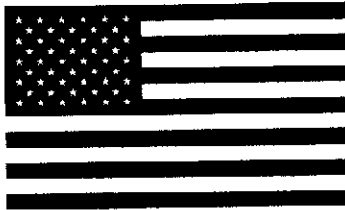
YOUNG AMERICAN

creative

& 3-Dimensional PATRIOTIC ART CONTESTS

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.



TO MAT OR NOT TO MAT?* All two-dimensional art (except pieces on a stretcher frame) if matted, must be matted **ONLY IN WHITE**. **The use of a color mat will result in immediate disqualification.** Colored mats can give an entry an unfair advantage by drawing out color or setting off contrast. It is very important that mats **ONLY BE WHITE**. Double mats are accepted if they are **ONLY WHITE**.

*(Matting only applies to Young American Creative Patriotic Art- two-dimensional - entries.)

APPLICATION (One application for each contest)

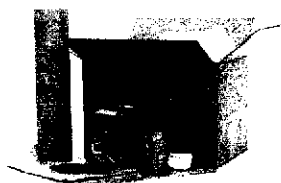
When a student submits an art entry and contest application, check for the following:

- Legible writing (If you can't decipher the writing, chances are we can't either.)
- Address with city, state and ZIP Code (No P.O. Boxes. We cannot ship art back to a P.O. Box.)
- Phone number with area code.
- Email address.
- Name and signature of or parent or guardian.
- Signature of student.
- Source - this must be completed even if it says "original idea."
- Media used in entry.
- Signature of Auxiliary Chairman and Judge (*Department Chairmen: Do not send the Department-winning entry to National Headquarters without these signatures!*)
- **ARTWORK NOT SPONSORED BY A VFW AUXILIARY WILL BE RETURNED WITHOUT BEING JUDGED.**

TIP: Students may sign their art, but you may choose to cover the signature for local judging if you are concerned a judge may recognize a student's name.

PACKING THE ART

Do not use old, bent or torn cardboard for packaging. If the cardboard can bend, so can the art. Consider insuring the art and getting a delivery confirmation. National Headquarters is not responsible for art lost or damaged during shipment.



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



Patriot's Pen Rules and Eligibility

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. 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 intends to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. (Foreign exchange students or former winners that placed in the National contest are ineligible.)

HOW TO ENTER

Download and complete the Patriot's Pen entry form.

All essays should be typed in English with no color or graphics and 300 - 400 words in length (+ or - 5 word max). The essay must be 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. The body of the essay must not identify you in any way, (including, but not limited to your name, school, city, state, race, or national origin) 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.

Students can ask a teacher or youth group leader to supervise their progress in the competition. Your Patriot's Pen entry must be submitted to a participating VFW Post by the Oct. 31 deadline.

JUDGING CRITERIA

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.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 54th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
Office 816.736.5590
Fax 816.968.1157

WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
Office 202.545.3239
Fax 202.545.6719

info@vfw.org
www.vfw.org

PATRIOT'S PEN



2023-2024 Theme

“How are you inspired by America?”

Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2023

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 73,000 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 the 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 intends to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. (Foreign exchange students or former winners that placed in the National contest 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 October 31, 2023. You can submit your essay and entry form 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 2023-2024 theme is:

“How are you inspired by America?”

Deadline Information.

To qualify, all entries must be submitted to a sponsoring VFW Post by midnight October 31, 2023.

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 816.968.1155
Email: youthscholarships@vfw.org

2023-2024 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.
- In no way may contestants identify themselves within their essay (including, but not limited to, your name, school, city, state, race or national origin.) 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. 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 _____.

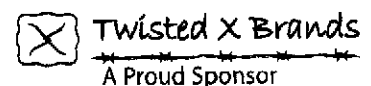
Local VFW Post Information:

Contact: _____

Phone: _____ Best Time To Call: _____

Alternate Contact: _____

Phone: _____ Best Time To Call: _____





**Patriot's Pen
Scoresheet**

Program Year

Theme Knowledge: Shows knowledge of the theme and use of research.

Theme Development: Answers relevant facts - who, what, where, when, and why. Relates to the writer's own experiences.

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

Contestant Code Number:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Theme Knowledge (0 to 30 points):																					
Theme Development (0 to 35 points):																					
Clarity of Ideas (0 to 35 points):																					
Total (0 to 100 points):																					

Contestant Code Number:	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	
Theme Knowledge (0 to 30 points):																					
Theme Development (0 to 35 points):																					
Clarity of Ideas (0 to 35 points):																					
Total (0 to 100 points):																					

Contestant Code Number:	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
Theme Knowledge (0 to 30 points):													
Theme Development (0 to 35 points):													
Clarity of Ideas (0 to 35 points):													
Total (0 to 100 points):													

Judge's Signature

Date and location of judging



Voice of Democracy Rules and Eligibility

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 intends to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or over, previous Voice of Democracy first place state winners, GED or Adult Education Students are ineligible.

HOW 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.

You must be the sole author of your essay. The recording must be in your own voice and in English. No music, singing, poetry or sound effects are allowed. The body of the essay must not identify you in any way, (including, but not limited to your name, school, city, state, race, or national origin) although the recording & typed essay should be labeled with your name, to show ownership. Your Voice of Democracy entry must be submitted to a participating VFW Post by the Oct. 31 deadline.

JUDGING CRITERIA

Originality is worth 30 points: Treatment of the theme should show imagination and human interest.

Content is worth 35 points: Clearly express your ideas in an organized manner. Fully develop your theme and use transitions to move smoothly from one idea to the other.

Delivery is worth 35 points: Speak in a clear and credible manner.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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Office 816.735.3390
Fax 816.968.1157

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200 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
Office 202.543.2239
Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org
www.vfw.org

2023-2024 Theme

“What are the greatest attributes of our Democracy?”

Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2023

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 27,000 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, **“What are the greatest attributes of our Democracy?”**

Why Should I Enter?

Prizes and scholarships can be awarded at the Post, District, state and national level. Department (State) winners receive an all-expense-paid trip to Washington DC, to tour the city, be honored by the VFW and its Auxiliary and receive their portion of \$171,000 in national awards, the top scholarship being \$35,000.

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 intends to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or over, previous Voice of Democracy first place state winners, 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. 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. The body of the essay must not identify you in any way, (including, but not limited to your name, school, city, state, race, or national origin) although the recording & typed essay should be labeled with your name, to show ownership.

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, 2023**. 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 30 points:

Treatment of the theme should show imagination and human interest.

Content is worth 35 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.

2023-2024 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 Voice of Democracy National Finals in Washington, D.C. 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 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, 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 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:
816.968.1155
Email: youthscholarships@vfw.org

Local VFW Post Information:

Contact: _____

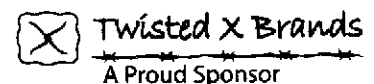
Phone: _____

Best Time To Call: _____

Alternate Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Best Time To Call: _____





**Voice of Democracy
Scoresheet**

Program Year

Originality: Treatment of the theme should show imagination and human interest.

Content: Ideas are expressed clearly and in an organized manner.

Delivery: Speaking voice is clear and credible.

Contestant Code Number:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Originality (0 to 30 points):																					
Content (0 to 35 points):																					
Delivery (0 to 35 points):																					
Total (0 to 100 points):																					

Contestant Code Number:	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	
Originality (0 to 30 points):																					
Content (0 to 35 points):																					
Delivery (0 to 35 points):																					
Total (0 to 100 points):																					

Contestant Code Number:	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
Originality (0 to 30 points):													
Content (0 to 35 points):													
Delivery (0 to 35 points):													
Total (0 to 100 points):													

Judge's Signature

Date and location of judging



Scholarships

Auxiliary Award No. 1

Entry Form • 2023-2024 Program Year

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about scholarship opportunities through the VFW Auxiliary.
 - **Citation** to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event educating their community about scholarship opportunities through the VFW Auxiliary. Citations will be mailed directly to the participating Auxiliaries from VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters.
 - **Citation and \$25** to one Auxiliary in each of the four (4) Conferences that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about scholarship opportunities through the Auxiliary. Winners will be announced at the 2024 National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.

Auxiliaries are to send this completed form to their Department Scholarships Chairman by March 31, 2024.

Auxiliary Name: _____ No.: _____

Department of: _____

Describe the activity and/or event that educated their community about scholarship opportunities through the VFW Auxiliary. (E.g., flyers, brochures, social media posts, newsletters, e-newsletters, handouts, photos, links to videos, etc.)

Department Scholarships Chairman: _____ Date: _____
(signature)

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

AND

April 30, 2024 - The Department Scholarships Chairman must **email** VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters at info@vfwauxiliary.org a total combined **list** of every Auxiliary in their Department that completed and submitted an entry form.

Forms sent directly to VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters will not be processed.