

VFW Programs

- Your VFW programs are defined under two categories;
 - **Community Service, Youth Scholarships and Activities**
 - **Veterans & Military Support.**

- The **Community Service, Youth Scholarships and Activities** category is broken down into two Groups commonly referred to as our Core Programs and Special Projects & Activities.
 - Core Programs - • Voice of Democracy • Patriot's Pen
 - Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher of the Year • Scouting • "Buddy"® Poppy.
 - These programs are executed by the largest number of Posts and have the greatest impact on our organization, our communities and our veterans.

- Special Projects & Activities – These cover Americanism, volunteer recognition, community service, awards and recognition and other miscellaneous youth activities.

- The **Veterans & Military Support** category programs assist members of the active-duty military, National Guard and Reserves, as well as their families.

- These programs consist of: • VFW Communication Assistance • Unmet Needs • Military Assistance Program (MAP) • VFW "Sport Clips Help a Hero Scholarship" program.



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.

• **Community Service, Youth Scholarships and Activities - Core Group Overview**

- **Patriot's Pen**
- The Patriot's Pen essay contest asks students in grades 6-8 to write a 300-400-word essay on a new patriotic theme each year. Winners receive scholarships and begin by competing at the Post level. Winners proceed to District, Department and finally to the National level where they compete for the \$5,000 first place scholarship.
- 2021-22 Theme: How Can I Be A Good American? Program Chairperson – Marcia Kuehl
- **Voice of Democracy**
- The Voice of Democracy Audio/Essay Contest asks high school students in grades 9-12 to write and record a 3 – 5 minute essay, again on a patriotic theme selected by the VFW each year. Students may record on an audio CD or flash drive. The Voice of Democracy winners receive scholarships and other incentives at the Post, District, and Department and finally to the National level where they will compete for the \$30,000 first place scholarship.
- 2021-2122 Theme: America: Where Do We Go From Here? Program Chairperson – David Kuta
- **These two great youth scholarship programs provide over \$3 million in scholarships and incentives every year.**
- **Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award**
- The Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teachers Award was created to identify and recognize America's best educators in each department who instill a sense of national pride in students. Teachers who promote civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism are prime candidates. This honor can establish a great relationship that opens the door for all of the VFW and Auxiliary programs.
- Program Chairperson – Marcia Kuehl



Community Service, Youth Scholarships and Activities - Core Group Overview – cont.



VFW Scout of the Year Program

The Scout of the Year program is open to Eagle Scouts, Girl Scout Gold Award, Venture Summit Award recipients and Sea Scout Quartermaster recipients. VFW's Scout of the Year offers a first place \$5,000 scholarship, a second place \$3,000 scholarship and a \$1,000 third place scholarship each year. VFW Posts need to consider providing leaders, sponsoring units, offering their facility for meetings and encouraging their involvement in service projects.

Program Chairperson – Frank Squire

VFW "Buddy"® Poppy Program

Our oldest and perhaps most historically significant program is the VFW "Buddy"® Poppy program. Net proceeds from the distribution of Buddy Poppies must be credited to the Post Relief Fund as per Section 219 of the National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure. This section also mandates the purposes which funds can be disbursed from the Post Relief Fund. I'm sure you know that we never "sell" poppies. We give them away and receive donations. If someone cannot make a donation, don't deny them a poppy. It is important that you realize that although Memorial and Veterans Days are particularly important Buddy Poppy events, you should have poppies at every event that involves your Post and the public. Poppies can and should be distributed year-round.

Program Chairperson – Alexis Henshaw



- ***Community Service, Youth Scholarships and Activities -***
Special Projects & Activities Group Overview

- ***Public Servant National Awards (Law Enforcement, Firefighter, Emergency Services)***

- Each year, the Veterans of Foreign Wars selects emergency medical technicians (services), law enforcement, and firefighter personnel to receive VFW Public Servant Awards. Posts are encouraged to submit a candidate for these awards to their Department Headquarters. The Department then selects a single candidate for each of the three awards and submits those to the VFW National Headquarters.

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rogram Chairperson – Stephen Curtin

- ***Life Saving Awards***

- The Safety Chairmen at Posts, Districts and Departments are encouraged to regularly identify and honor individuals throughout the year in their geographic area who have saved a life. The VFW programs department provides the three different life saving citations (Regular, Line of duty and Valor), free of charge, for local presentation.

- ***National Citation of Recognition***

- These citations are available to recognize Posts or individual Post chairmen who have demonstrated an exceptionally high level of service to their community. The Department Chairmen are given sole responsibility for identifying those Posts and individuals.

Community Service, Youth Scholarships and Activities **- Special Projects & Activities Group Overview**

- **Recognition for exceptional efforts in community service provided by a Post or Auxiliary that benefits the community.**
- ***Outstanding Post Special Project Awards*** - given each year to Posts that do a special project outside their normal VFW activities. All submissions receive a certificate, Award of Merit plaque or an Award of Excellence plaque. Those receiving the Award of Excellence will be entered into the Fred C. Hall Memorial Outstanding Post Special Project competition. The Post receiving the Fred C. Hall award receives a plaque at the VFW National Convention and a \$1,000 service scholarship for community projects.
- ***The Outstanding Community Service Post Awards*** - given to Posts for their exceptional response to VFW community service programs. Posts selected for this honor are invited to send a representative to the VFW National Convention for a reception with the VFW Commander-in-Chief. There they will receive a national plaque and a recognition street sign for their community.
- ***Volunteer Recognition Programs***
- VFW Veterans in the Classroom
- VFW members volunteering time with other groups such as Scouting, Civil Air Patrol, Naval Sea Cadet or JROTC units.



Veterans & Military Support

- Veterans & Military Support is part of the VFW's never-ending obligation to assist members of the active-duty military, National Guard and Reserves, as well as their families. These programs were established to keep the Veterans of Foreign Wars in the forefront of patriotism as the organization and its members find innovative way to show support for America and her armed forces.
- ***VFW Communication Assistance***
 - This program initially began with calling cards for deployed and hospitalized troops, and included several days throughout the year where deployed service members could call home for free.
- ***Unmet Needs***
 - Unmet Needs provides financial assistance to service members, veterans, and their families who are experiencing a financial hardship directly related to their military service. The financial assistance is in the form of a one-time grant. All grants are paid directly to the "creditor" companies (such as the electric company, mortgage company, landlord, etc.) and not to the individual. The funds can be used for rent, car repairs, medical expenses, infant-care items and many other necessities. Each case is reviewed individually and acceptance determined by a committee.
- ***VFW Military Assistance Program***
 - This program is designed to encourage the link between the VFW and the Military community. It promotes VFW member interaction with the local military and opens avenues for National Sponsorships and local level involvement with all branches of service. Within this program are two unique services to help foster the relationship between the Post and the local military community, the Military Assistance Program Grant process and the Adopt-A-Unit program.



Veterans & Military Support



VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" Program

The VFW Sport Clips Help-a-Hero Scholarship helps service members get the education and training needed to begin the next chapter of their life. Each scholarship will provide recipients with up to \$5,000 for tuition and fees to apply toward their education at an accredited post-secondary institution, including universities, colleges, trade schools and apprenticeships, and certification programs.

Student Veteran Outreach & Support Partnerships

Today's veterans can face any number of obstacles while furthering their education so the VFW teamed up with Student Veterans of America (SVA), to be there for veterans while they pursue their education.

Working side by side, SVA Chapters and VFW Posts can help our nation's veterans attain these goals. SVA offers peer support for veterans transitioning back to civilian life and academia, frequently after serving one or more deployments overseas. The VFW provides opportunities for camaraderie, community service and veterans advocacy to those who have honorably served.

Veterans & Military Support

Student Veteran Demographics



Who Are Student Veterans?

- ✓ 73%-80% of Student Veterans are male; 21-27% are female.
- ✓ With only 10-14% of military personnel being women, female Student Veterans are over represented in postsecondary education.
- ✓ Only 15% of Student Veterans are traditionally aged college students. Most Student Veterans are between the ages of 24 and 40.
- ✓ 47% of Student Veterans have children.
- ✓ 47.3% of Student Veterans are married.
- ✓ 62% of Student Veterans are first-generation students.

The majority of student veterans are enlisted (90.35) and current conflict era. The chart provided below are for reference. More information on Student can be found at studentveterans.org.



Figure 1: The sum is greater than 100 because many veterans have supported multiple operations over the span of their career.

Veterans & Military Support



The **1 Student Veteran** program was developed by the VFW in conjunction with the SVA. 1 Student Veteran offers direct assistance to student veterans who have questions or are experiencing problems accessing their VA benefits.

Veterans who send a message to 1 Student Veteran (1studentveteran@vfw.org) will receive a reply from a VFW staff member who specializes in student veteran issues within 24 hours or the next business day.



In keeping with VFW's commitment to student veterans' success, the VFW has partnered with Student Veterans of America to host the **VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship program**, providing 10 exemplary student veterans the opportunity to make their voices heard on Capitol Hill and in their community. Selected Fellows will conduct research on an approved policy area which affects veterans. They will, through this research, identify specific problems and propose solutions which would help veterans.

The chosen Fellows will be flown to Washington, D.C. where they will participate in the VFW National Legislative Conference and hopefully educate their legislators on the issues facing today's student veterans.



VFW NATIONAL HOME FOR CHILDREN

Every child deserves a happy family.



The VFW National Home for Children was founded in 1925 in Eaton Rapids, Michigan as a place where families left behind by war could remain together, keeping the family circle intact even when their serviceman didn't come home. The National Home is there to help veteran connected families as well who are directly related to a VFW or Auxiliary member or are eligible to become one.

The Home offers case management services to help families establish their plans for the future and set goals, education, recreational, and enrichment opportunities for parents and their children, as well as free housing and daycare. Community resources and counseling provided as needed.

The single family homes at the National Home are maintained by many VFW Departments. VFWCA has 2 homes that we are committed to, California 1 and California 2. We provide \$16,000/year for these 2 homes which covers the costs of utilities, trash, sewage, etc. and minor repairs. Donations are needed to cover the costs of "Programs and Services" such as assisting these impacted families to attend the community Fair, Field Trips and VFW Camp Trotter for Children. Donations to the National Home (California 1 & 2) can be made from your Relief Fund.

Program Chairperson – Chris Ingraham

VFW PROGRAMS DEADLINE DATES

NOTE: Updated for the 2020-2021 VFW Program Year Smart/Maher Citizenship Education Teacher Award

- *January 1, Post winners due to Department
- *February 1, Department winners due to National (to guarantee receipt for Department Convention presentation)

Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen

- *October 31, Student entries to the Post
- November 15, Completion of Post judging
- December 15, Completion of District judging
- January 10, Completion of Department judging
- January 15, District participation reports due to Department Chairmen
- *January 15, Department winners due to National
- *January 31, Department reports due to National

Scout of the Year

- *March 1, Scout entries to the Post
- *April 1, Post entries to Department Scouting Chairman or Department HQs
- *May 1, Department entry to National from Department Scouting Chairman or Department HQs

Community Service

- *April 30, Post Special Project & Fred C. Hall Award Submission (Department to National)



Community Service –cont.

- *April 30, National Outstanding Community Submission(s) (Department to National)
- *May 31, Department Community Service Report (Department to National)

Public Servant National Award (Law Enforcement, Firefighter, Emergency Services)

- January 1, Nominations due (from Post to Department)
- *February 1, (to guarantee receipt for Department Convention presentation), Nominations due from Department to National

National Certificate of Recognition

- April 1 (to guarantee receipt for Department Convention presentation), List due to National from Department

***Required deadline (by VFW National Headquarters.) All other deadlines are suggested, and can be internally set at the discretion of the VFW Department leadership. Post Chairmen, be sure to communicate with your District Chairmen to find out their official deadlines, and District Chairmen need to communicate with their Department Chairmen to find out their deadlines.**

QUESTIONS?



NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.