

**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
OF THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA
HEADQUARTERS**



BULLETIN

Ocala, Florida

October, 2022

“Florida Rocks”

Commander-in-Chief Tim Borland has issued a LIFE MEMBER INCENTIVE for the month of October!

As we continue to move closer to our membership goals, there is no better time to stress the importance of Life Membership. For every new Life Member you bring into your Post, we will issue a \$50 grant directly to the Post at the end of the month! For the purposes of this program, the National Headquarters will be issuing a grant of \$50 directly to the Post for each of the following during the month of October:

- A New member who pays the Life Membership amount in full
- A Lapsed member who rejoins by paying the full Life Membership amount
- An Annual member who converts to Life by paying the full amount
- A member currently on the Life Member Installment Plan who makes their final payment and converts to Life before the end of the month.

There is no easier way to retain members than by having them become a member for life. Not only do they experience the benefits of a Life Membership, but the Post can save time and effort when working towards your retention goals. Talk to your members today about the benefits of becoming a Life Member, and how it helps

the VFW's mission. It is time to make that lifetime commitment because ... **EVERY VETERAN COUNTS!**

This contest will count the Life Members as listed above from Oct. 1 through close of business Oct. 31. Transactions posted before close of business will be credited that business day. Payouts will be made by ACH debit to the Post using the account on file. For assistance with setting up ACH deposits for your Post, please contact our Member Service Center at 1.833.839.8387.

ALL-AMERICAN POST CAP ORDER INFORMATION

Members of an All-American Post may submit their cap order through the VFW Store.

2022-23 MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

The 2022-23 Membership Program is available online at vfw.org, under MY VFW, scroll down to Membership Quick Links, click on Membership Recruiting and Retention. You will see the 2022-23 VFW National Membership Program in blue letters.

2022-23 NEW RECRUITING AWARD

One New Member Pin - As part of this year's membership incentives, Commander-in-Chief Tim Borland wants to drive home the message that EVERY VETERAN COUNTS. To support this message, every VFW member who recruits a new member will receive a special One New Member recruiting pin to show the world that they're doing their part to help our organization grow in strength and reach our membership goals.

MEMBERSHIP OBJECTIVES

As the membership year has begun, keep in mind our Membership Objectives are also written in the 2022-23 Membership Program.

- For everyone to recruit at least one new member and then mentor that member
- Increase membership drives and/or events
- Develop new Posts and/or revitalize existing Posts
- Increase Life Membership and Legacy Life Membership
- Provide Membership Assistance using teams from your conference to assist and mentor those who request assistance.

NEW POST DEVELOPMENT & POST REVITALIZATION

We are underway and Posts are out there getting it done! There are over 4,000 members who have actively recruited at least one new member this year already! Where will the first new Post be chartered this year? There are a few Departments close! If you have more than 15 members ready to charter a new Post, we have resources to help get you over the top! If you have Posts needing revitalization, we will help you! Call us at 816.968.2788 or email coreyhunt@vfw.org.

New Post Development and Post Revitalization Department Award: For each new Post chartered, and/or revitalized, the Department Quartermaster will receive:

- \$250 credit from the VFW Store to be used towards necessary materials for the new Post.

For details on this and all other All-American membership incentives, view the Commander-in-Chief's National Membership Program at vfw.org under *Membership Recruiting & Retention*.

For any questions or further information, please contact the Membership Department via email at membership@vfw.org or call us at 1.888.564.6839.

UPCOMING TRAINING

The next Membership Monday training webinar will be on Oct. 10, 2022, at 2 PM, CDT, Topic: **How to Use Your Membership Lists (reports)**.

CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook to view the latest membership news, Post Shout-Outs, and important resource information throughout the year - facebook.com/VFWmembershipHQ/.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TOP THREE RECRUITERS!

Top Three Recruiters (as of 9.28.22):

Joseph M. Young – 201
VFW Post 7108, Dept. of TX

Steven L. Woodward – 116
VFW Post 2224, Dept. of WA

Timothy M. Borland – 100
VFW Post 9972, Dept. of AZ

LEGACY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

CHECK OUT OUR LEGACY LIFE VIDEO! Go to vfw.org, click on JOIN, and scroll down to Legacy Life Membership and then click on the video on the right. This prestigious program is available to all Life members and is now available in memoriam for past Life members. There are three levels of membership; each offers their own package of exclusive member benefits. Financial contributions to the Legacy Life member program are tax deductible to the maximum extent allowed by law.

Enrollment Cost:

Annual Payouts:

<u>Levels</u>	<u>Posts</u>	<u>Departments</u>	<u>National</u>
Gold- \$1,200.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00
Silver- \$800.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
Bronze- \$400.00	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00

What will your Legacy be?

VFW Foundation

The 2022 Sport Clips Help A Hero fundraising campaign with in-store donations and other individual wraparound fundraising events begins Oct. 9 through Nov. 12 at over 1,850 Sport Clips locations. We also invite you to participate in the 2022 Virtual Help A Hero Walk. Sign-up at app.mobilecause.com/vf/HERO.

Questions on how to create a team and sign up? Contact Brooke Brown, VFW Foundation Corporate Relations at BBrown@vfw.org or 816.868.3156.

Comcast NBCUniversal, Bridgestone and Humana have committed to sponsor the Junior Vice Commanders training which will take place in Kansas City on Oct. 13-16.

Contact: VFW Foundation Manager Richard Freiburghouse, rfreiburghouse@vfw.org.

VFW's Special Edition Christmas Cards for 2022 – In September, we mailed the VFW's Special Edition Christmas Cards for 2022. We hope you enjoy these cards along with the other gifts that were included in the package. In the letter that was sent with the cards and gifts, we asked you to consider taking some time to visit or call a hospitalized service member or veteran in your community. You can visit heroes.vfw.org/Volunteer to find out about volunteering at your local VA facility. And please remember that the VFW's life-changing programs would not be available to veterans of all generations without the generosity of its members. Your donation to the VFW helps support programs for veterans and service members right in your own Department.

Sign a Card for a Veteran – You may receive a package this month with a special Christmas card for you to sign for a lonely, hospitalized veteran or current service member. We want to get a Christmas card to as many veterans and service members in VA medical facilities as possible before Dec. 25. Please sign the card and return by Nov. 21 and a VFW volunteer will deliver it to a veteran who didn't think anyone remembered or cared. And when you mail the signed Christmas card back, please include a special holiday donation if you can to help support the VFW National Veterans Service. With your support of VFW National Veterans Service, the VFW is able to fight – and win – vital legislative battles on Capitol Hill. The VFW is on the front line in the fight for education, jobs, health care and an overall better quality of life FOR VETERANS!

Veterans Day Sign-A-Card Campaign to Friends of Freedom Online Community – As Veterans Day approaches, Friends of Freedom members will receive an email inviting them to sign a card to be printed and delivered to a hospitalized veteran or service member. Join us as we honor America's heroes in signing a card to show them our appreciation for all they have sacrificed for our freedom. Signing a card may seem like a small gesture compared to what they have done for us but hearing from you while in the hospital means the world to a veteran. Keep an eye out for this email and don't forget to sign the card!

Create Your Legacy in Just a Few Words – Having a will helps ensure your family and loved ones will be taken care of after your lifetime. Should you like to support future generations of veterans once your family is covered, you can do so by adding a gift to the VFW in your will. To learn more about wills and how easy it is to make a gift to the VFW in yours, visit vfw.org/PlannedGiving. You can also contact the VFW Planned Giving Office to request information on estate planning by calling 816.968.1119 or email plannedgiving@vfw.org.

Have You Heard About the VFW's Partners in Patriotism? – Commander-in-Chief Timothy M. Borland would like you to join with him in supporting the VFW's life-changing programs for veterans, service members and their families and reduce the amount of mail you receive. The VFW has an option that allows you to support VFW programs on a monthly, quarterly, or yearly basis, as well as reduce expenses and eliminate the fundraising mail. It is called Partners in Patriotism. As a member of Partners in Patriotism, you choose a set dollar amount for your donation (minimum amount of \$10) that is either charged to your credit card or set up as an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) from your bank account. Once you join the VFW's Partners in Patriotism, you will only receive the Quarterly Supporter newsletters to keep you informed of the many efforts your monthly gifts are making possible, and a Year-End Tax Receipt mailed by the end of January. If you are interested in joining Partners in Patriotism, you may contact Donor Services in the VFW Development Department at 1.833.VFW.GIVE (1.833.839.4483) or email us at partners@vfw.org with "Partners in Patriotism Application" in the subject line.

VFW Friends of Freedom – If you are not already a member of the VFW’s online community, please visit vfw.org and look for the gold banner that says “**Find Out What’s Happening**” to sign up. As a member of the VFW’s Friends of Freedom, you will receive special emails with breaking VFW news, legislative alerts and unique opportunities to help the VFW in assisting our nation’s veterans, service members and their families. You may also visit vfw.org/VFWatWork and click on “**Read VFW success stories**” to learn how the VFW is fighting for veterans’ rights, assisting veterans in need, educating our youth and aiding military families across the nation. Check back often to see newly posted stories!

Department Resources – Many great resources are available for your Department to use in promoting fundraising programs. By visiting heroes.vfw.org/VFWTools, you will find the latest fundraising program information, ideas and promotional tools from the Development Department. Download ad slicks, ready-to-use articles and other items for your Department publications and/or website. Recent mailings and mail schedules are also posted on a regular basis. Use the tools found on the VFW Department Resources Page to help strengthen your Department programs. Check it out today!

Veterans & Military Support Programs

VFW’s “Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship”

The Spring 2023 application is available online at vfw.org/Scholarship with a deadline date of Nov. 15, 2022.

VMS Lapel Pin Orders

If your **Department ordered the 2022-23 VMS Lapel Pins** and have yet to pay for them, please do so as soon as possible. Payment can be made via the **Dashboard** using the **VMS Donation link** in the upper right-hand corner of the webpage.

VMS Donation for All-American

Donating to the VMS Program can be done on the VFW Dashboard by going to the link “**VMS Donation**” at the upper right-hand corner of the screen. Your \$100 or more donation to the VMS Programs meets the eligibility criteria for All-American in this category. Thank you for your support!

Veterans & Military Support Program Chair Tools

Contact forms, monthly reports, applications, and program reports are located at the **Veterans & Military Support Program Chair Tools** webpage. This is our one-stop-shop for all your Chair needs. Please click the link below to access the webpage.

[Access the Veterans & Military Support Program Chairperson Tools webpage now](#)

Do not use the red donate link in the upper right-hand corner of this webpage. This is the general donation link.

VMS Donation Reports

Donation reports are received on **most Fridays** and are uploaded to the **Dashboard** on the **same day**. The period of these reports is from the **previous Friday** to **current Thursday**.

DISPLAYING MILITARY SERVICE SYMBOLS. Military service flags, insignias, etc. should be displayed in the following order (left to right as you face the flags): Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force and then Coast Guard. For military flags, go to vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=MilitaryFlag.

“NEW” 2022-23 SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD PROGRAM REMINDER. This year, the Veterans of Foreign Wars wants to recognize the nation’s top elementary, junior high and high school teachers (teaching at least half of the school day in a classroom environment) who teach citizenship education topics regularly and promote America’s history, traditions, and institutions effectively through this program.

Now is the time to begin locating exceptional teachers for your Post to nominate for the next competition. All current certified/licensed teachers in grades K-12 are eligible. Previous national winners are ineligible. Nominations can be submitted by themselves, fellow teachers, supervisors, family members or other interested individuals.

Post Teacher Award Chairpersons must submit one candidate, in each category (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12), for these awards to their District, if applicable, by Nov. 15. The District will forward a winner, in each category, to their Department Headquarters by Jan. 1. The Department must select a single candidate, in each category, for the awards and submit the winners to VFW National Headquarters by Feb. 1.

NOTE: The only item the National VFW Programs Department requires is the “VFW Department Teacher Award Citation Request Form” which is available on the VFW website. You can locate this form by logging in to vfw.org and searching under “My VFW” in the Training & Support section.

All Post-level nominees should provide a one-page resume as a minimum or up to five pages as a maximum of documentation of their teaching experience (for example: references, news articles, etc.) and a head-and-shoulder photo of themselves, if available. These items will be forwarded on to the District, if applicable, then to the Department with the completed entry forms.

The VFW’s Department Citizenship Education Teacher Award includes a citation for both the winning teacher and their school.

The VFW’s National Citizenship Education Teacher Awards include: three national \$1,000 awards for the top K-5, 6-8, and 9-12 teachers for professional development expenses; \$1,000 award to each winning teacher’s school; plaques for both the winning teacher and school; and an all-expense-paid trip to attend a VFW National Convention.

Please verify that all websites, publications, announcements, etc. has the correct teacher award entry deadlines and rules for the 2022-23 program year.

Simply visit vfw.org/#login, log in to My VFW, then look under Member Resources, click on **VFW Training & Support**, then click on **Community Service & Youth Programs**, then look under **Additional Resources**. Here you will find all program manuals, and on the same page are all other program materials.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT’S PEN ESSAY CONTEST DEADLINE REMINDER. The deadline for the annual Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen essay contests is quickly approaching. The students must have their completed entry form with the (audio and/or written) essay submitted to their local participating VFW Post by **Oct. 31, 2022**. Each corresponding deadline for Post, District and Department to have their entries to the next level are: Nov. 15, 2022, for completion of Post judging; Dec. 15, 2022, for completion of District judging; Jan. 10, 2023, for completion of Department judging and the Department winners are due to National Headquarters by **Jan. 15, 2023**.

Please ensure that the entry forms are filled out completely and that the appointed individual at the Post is available to receive the entries and answer questions. As we get closer to the deadline, the more students and parents will be reaching out trying to find their local participating Post so we want to ensure they can make contact.

Simply visit vfw.org/#login, log in to My VFW, then click on **VFW Training & Support** under the **Member Resources** heading, then click on Community Service & Youth Programs and Activities, then click on **Chairperson Guides** under the **Additional Resources** heading. Here you will find all program materials.

Please remember that Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen are VFW programs supported by the VFW Auxiliary. It is inappropriate for the VFW Auxiliary to conduct a separate judging at any level.

If you have questions regarding any of the above, please email nlopez@vfw.org or call 816.968.1155.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT’S PEN NATIONAL AWARDS. Every Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen first place Department winner will receive a National scholarship or award. The amount for the Voice of Democracy National Awards now totals \$171,000, with the top three awards being raised to \$35,000, \$21,000 and \$15,000. The Patriot’s Pen National Awards total is \$55,000.

NEW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT’S PEN THEMES. The 2022-23 themes have been chosen by Commander-in-Chief Timothy M. Borland. The Voice of Democracy theme is “Why is the Veteran Important?” and the Patriot’s Pen theme is “My Pledge to our Veterans.”

NOTE: “NEW” Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen posters are now available!

Anyone (including students, parents, teachers, and chairpersons) can download and print the student entry forms for Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen by visiting the below links:

Voice of Democracy: vfw.org/VOD/

Patriot’s Pen: vfw.org/PatriotsPen/

For Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen brochures, posters, awards and more, visit the VFW Store: vfwstore.org/category/programs/voiceofdemocracy for Voice of Democracy and vfwstore.org/category/programs/patriotspen for Patriot’s Pen.

VETERANS IN THE CLASSROOM MONTH IN NOVEMBER. VFW and VFW Auxiliary members are encouraged to volunteer in their schools to talk about their military and home front experiences to students. Invite your local military recruiter to join you to talk about military service today. Additional information can be found in the 2022-23 VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairperson’s Guide.

Simply visit vfw.org/#login, log in to My VFW, then look under Member Resources, click on **VFW Training & Support**, then click on **Community Service & Youth Programs**, then look under **Additional Resources**. Here you will find all program guides, and on the same page are all other program materials.

Participate in this activity during the week of Veterans Day, which is part of “National Veterans Awareness week,” as designated by Congress. Find Pledge of Allegiance pencils and coloring books, plus other citizenship education tools at the VFW Store vfwstore.org/category/programs/citizeneducation.

VFW NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVANT AWARDS. New this year, the dispatcher category has been added. Departments are asked to submit four nominees (one for each career area) to the VFW Programs office no later than Feb. 1, 2023. VFW Programs will create citations for the following awards in each Department:

- VFW National Law Enforcement Award
- VFW National Firefighter Award
- VFW National Emergency Medical Technician Award
- VFW National 911 Dispatcher Award

All Department Public Servant Citations must be requested through the “VFW Department Public Servant Award Request Form” through Formstack. VFW Programs staff will email the form link to Department Adjutants and Quartermasters. Deadline for Department submissions to National is Feb. 1, to guarantee receipt for Department Convention presentations.

Each Department will receive their four awards and should contact their recipients to arrange a presentation. Department Commanders may present the awards at their Department Convention, but are encouraged to also present the award in front of the recipient’s peers at a professional association event, city council meeting, etc. The purpose of the second venue is to expose these VFW awards to the general public and especially other law enforcement personnel, firefighters, EMTs and dispatchers, many of whom are veterans eligible for VFW membership. Order plaques and citations for public servants from the VFW Store vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=public%20servant.

NOTE: VFW PUBLIC SERVANT AWARD CITATION POST ENTRY FORM. This form was developed to assist VFW Post Safety Chairpersons with an entry form to hand out to the local Fire Department, Police Department, etc. to assist interested individuals in nominating one of their own. The entry form along with the required documentation are to be returned to the local VFW Post for their judging by Oct. 31. Once a winner in each category has been chosen, the Post will forward the winning entries on to the next level of judging.

Simply visit vfw.org, log in to My VFW, then look under Member Resources, click on **VFW Training & Support**, then click on **Community Service & Youth Programs**, then look under **Public Servant Program**.

NOTE: NEW First Responder Medal is available through the VFW Store. To review this item, please click on the following link: vfwstore.org/products/32134.

CONDUCT A VETERANS DAY PROGRAM ON NOV. 11. Organize a community event on Veterans Day honoring all veterans. For a ceremonial procedure, refer to the information found in the VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education VFW Chairperson’s Guide. If you should need a Veterans Day speech, please go to vfw.org/MY-VFW/Patriotic-Holiday-Speeches. Click here for Veterans Day merchandise vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/veteransday.

VFW SPECIAL PROJECT PROGRAM. This program was put in place to recognize VFW units for creating and completing unique and extraordinary community service projects.

Record book entry nominations that are found to be complete and well-substantiated should be endorsed by the Department Adjutant or VFW Department Community Activities Chairperson and forwarded to National Programs Department. Deadline for entries is April 30 of each year.

Every Post Special Project receiving the Award of Excellence in the May judging will be entered in the Fred C. Hall Memorial Outstanding Post Special Project Competition. Complete information can be found in the VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairperson's Guide.

“UPDATED” POW/MIA FLAG -- OFFICIAL DISPLAY DAYS. Under previous Public Law 105-85 (Nov. 16, 1997), it indicated there were only six days that federal agencies, military installations and U.S. post offices were required to display the POW/MIA flag. Now under new law, Public Law 116-67 (Feb. 21, 2020), it is required that the POW/MIA flag be flown on all days on which the flag of the United States is displayed. To purchase a POW/MIA flag, go to vfwstore.org/products/GP237.

IRS AND VFW AWARD MONIES. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires that any recipient that receives more than a \$599 award should receive a Form 1099 identifying the proceeds as taxable. This will include the VFW programs Patriot's Pen and Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award.

VFW Member Benefits

Looking for more from your Medicare plans? Humana can help.

If you need additional coverage beyond your Medicare Part A Hospital insurance or Medicare Part B Medical insurance, Humana can help!

Available through the VFW Insurance Program, veterans like you have access to:

Medicare Advantage — All-in-one coverage

The all-in-one Medicare Advantage plan includes prescription drug coverage and offers the security of an annual out-of-pocket maximum. Many plans also include coverage for routine dental, vision and hearing care, with a \$0 monthly premium in most areas.

Medicare Part D — Stand-alone Rx coverage

Standard Medicare doesn't cover prescription drugs, but you can help close that gap in your coverage with a stand-alone prescription drug plan.

Medicare Supplement — Medigap options

Original Medicare doesn't cover everything, but a Medicare Supplement insurance plan can help pay some of the out-of-pocket costs that standard Medicare doesn't, like copayments and deductibles.

Learn more today at VFWInsurance.com/Medicare.

“BUDDY”[®] POPPY CAMPAIGN. Although we emphasize Buddy Poppies on Veterans Day and Memorial Day, it is important to realize that the distribution of Buddy Poppies should be a year-round exercise. Each time a Post participates in an activity where the public will be present, Buddy Poppies should be present as a fundraising tool and simply to recognize our fallen comrades. Where the VFW appears, Buddy Poppies should be a constant reminder that we will never forget those who have perished in the name of liberty. Just as “They Gave, Will You?” is a year-round thing, so should the distribution of VFW Buddy Poppies.

Remember that your poppies should be ordered a minimum of 8 weeks in advance of your distribution date. Be sure to specify a date by which the poppies are required, do not use “ASAP.”

BUDDY POPPY UPDATE: National Headquarters conducted a review of the Buddy Poppy policy and procedures and implemented the following changes effective May 20, 2021:

- 1) If you do not receive your order within 8 weeks of placing it with your department, please contact National Headquarters to report that you have not received the order.
- 2) If you do not report a missing order 3 months after the 8-week processing time, the order will NOT be replaced free of charge, and you will have to resubmit your order.

Miscellaneous items (coin cans, buttons, posters, etc.) should be ordered directly from the VFW Store at vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy or the VFW Store/Emblem and Supply Catalog.

The Manual of Procedure provides that Post relief funds may be used for programs such as Voice of Democracy, Patriot’s Pen, Citizenship Education, and Community Service as long as suggestions in the chairperson’s guidebooks are used as an example of promoting these programs.

Posts are further reminded that Section 711 of the Manual of Procedure provides that non-profit organizations, exempt from taxes under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, may assist with the distribution of Buddy Poppies, provided there shall be no division of proceeds. A donation to these groups may be made from the Post general fund.

Contact information: BuddyPoppy@vfw.org or 816.756.3390, ext. 6722 for any questions or concerns.

VFW SILVER, GOLD AND DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY POPPIES. The silver, gold and diamond anniversary Buddy Poppies are for Posts that are currently in their 25th, 50th or 75th anniversary years. For Posts currently in their 100th year anniversary, they can order any color and as many as they need. The anniversary poppies are approximately three times as expensive for us to produce, but because of the small quantities we deal in, we do not pass those costs on to the Posts. Please limit your order of anniversary poppies to 1,000 to ensure stock does not run out unless you are currently in your 100th year. These are ordered through the Department and processed the same as the red poppies. Annotate on the order to National that it is for anniversary poppies and specify which one.

STUDENT VETERAN SUPPORT GRANT

The VFW recognizes that both funding and support for our student veterans and dependents at institutions of higher learning can often be difficult to find. The **VFW's Student Veteran Support Grant** offers much needed assistance to support specific student veteran events. The grant, administered by the VFW Washington Office, focuses on supporting the overall student veteran population within the community, which consists of many student veterans at campuses across the country that are not affiliated with an SVA chapter. The grants will be disbursed to a VFW Post or Department that has submitted an application, to support the student veterans at the university or college.

Grant Eligibility:

- Applicants must be VFW members associated with an appropriate entity of the VFW (VFW Post, District, Department, or National).
- Appropriate VFW Post, District, Department, or National leadership serve as the convening authority on the grant request and is responsible for receiving funds.
- Funds must be utilized for events and outreach designed to assist and support veterans currently enrolled in institutions of higher learning.
- Grants may be awarded up to \$500 to support each event, and grants can be awarded to a VFW entity twice each fiscal year, totaling up to \$1,000.

For more information, please see vfw.org/assistance/student-veterans-support.

VFW Fall Legislative Conference

The VFW National Legislative Committee members met with senators, representatives, and staffers in Washington, D.C., to discuss the [VFW's legislative priorities](#) and to thank them for the historic passage of the *Honoring our PACT Act*. There was specific focus given to cracking down on predatory claim companies, eliminating the unjust offset for Chapter 61 retirees, and the role of economic opportunity in helping to prevent veteran suicide. The VFW will continue to advocate for these issues as the 117th Congress finishes its last few weeks in session.

2023 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship Closing Soon

The application process for the 2023 class of VFW-SVA legislative fellows is open until Oct. 15. VFW members who attend an accredited institute of higher learning with an approved Student Veteran of America chapter will be chosen for the semester-long program that focuses on real policy issues faced by veterans, service members, and their families. The capstone of the program is participation in the 2023 VFW Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. Alumni of the program have become more active at all levels of the VFW and have been instrumental in changing laws to improve care and benefits for veterans. [Learn more and apply for the fellowship.](#)

Improvements to Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry

VA is making several changes to its [Airborne Hazards and Open Burn Pit Registry](#) to expand eligibility and make it easier to use. Veterans are now eligible to participate if they have deployed to one of three new locations – Syria or Uzbekistan since Sept. 11, 2001, or Egypt since August 1990. Other veterans and service members who can participate include those who deployed to the Southwest Asia theater of operations any time after Aug. 2, 1990, or Afghanistan or Djibouti on or after Sept. 11, 2001. In addition, VA is making the registry more user friendly and ensuring that veterans have the option to have an in-person health exam. [Read more.](#)

Eliminate Unjust Offset for Chapter 61 Retirees

Reform to retirement pay and disability compensation policy is long overdue. Many of our nation’s combat-disabled veterans are prohibited by Congress from receiving their full earned Department of Defense retirement pay and Department of Veterans Affairs service-connected disability compensation. Over 50,000 Chapter 61 retirees with combat-related disabilities are required to forfeit every dollar of their retirement pay for every dollar they receive in disability compensation. No veteran should have to choose between two fundamentally different benefits that they earned for two entirely different reasons. Tell Congress to end this extremely unjust offset by immediately passing the Major Richard Star Act. [Click here](#) to send a letter to your congressional offices requesting action.

Administrative Operations

2023 REVISED PODIUM EDITION – CONGRESSIONAL CHARTER, BYLAWS, MANUAL OF PROCEDURE AND RITUAL:

The 2023 copies of the podium edition of the Congressional Charter, Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual, which reflect the amendments adopted by the 123rd National Convention, effective Aug. 20, 2022, can be purchased through the VFW Store at vfwstore.org/products/22690.

VFW Store

Midterm elections will be held in November. Promote the vote with posters and buttons from the VFW Store.

vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=get%20out%20the%20vote.

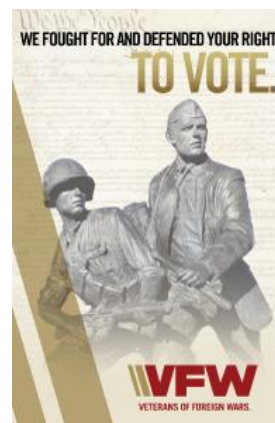
Entry deadlines are Oct. 31 for the Teacher of the Year Award, and the Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen essay contests. Show appreciation for entrants at Post with commemorative items from the VFW Store:

Voice of Democracy:

vfwstore.org/category/programs/voiceofdemocracy?page=1&size=50

Patriot’s Pen: vfwstore.org/category/programs/patriotspen?page=1&size=50

Teachers: vfwstore.org/category/programs/citizeneducation



your

Veterans Day is just around the corner – order now to receive your merchandise in time. We offer parade items, patriotic apparel and more. Go to vfwstore.org/category/more/specials/veteransday.

Buddy Poppy items are also available at the VFW Store. Go to vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy?page=1&size=50.

To order, go to vfwstore.org or call 1.833.VFW.VETS (1.833.839.8387).