

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



BULLETIN

Ocala, Florida

October 2023

**“To Command Is To Serve
Nothing More Nothing Less”**

COMMANDER'S CHALLENGE

This membership year has started strong, and we want to keep that momentum going! To encourage long-term success, Commander-in-Chief Duane Sarmiento has issued a special challenge to all our VFW Posts to increase our Life membership during October!

Throughout the month of October, the Commander-in-Chief has challenged us to build a stable and strong membership foundation for the future, and one of the best ways to accomplish this is through Life membership. The Post in each membership division that has the newest, reinstated, and upgraded Life and Life Installment members during October will receive a \$500 cash award plus a CIC Medallion set!

This challenge will count any VFW member who either pays the full amount for a Life membership or who makes the initial \$45 payment and enters the Automatic Payment Plan to make installment payments for a Life membership during the month of October 2023. Remember that when processing a member online for the Installment Plan, they **MUST** check their email and click the link to complete their entry into the Automatic Payment Plan! Without that, their upgrade cannot be processed.

When we talk about the strength of our membership, our Life members are a solid part of establishing that membership base. When they make a commitment to the VFW for life, it helps our ranks grow and encourages everyone to join them and MEET THE CHALLENGE!

This contest will count all members of a Post who make a full one-time payment for Life membership and/or complete processing for the Automatic Payment Plan for Installment Life Membership between Oct. 1 and Oct. 31, 2023. Applications and payments processed online before close of business will be credited that day, payments and applications made through the mail will be processed when received. Questions about this or other membership programs can be sent to membership@vfw.org.

ALL-AMERICAN POST CAP ORDER INFORMATION

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

2023-24 MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

The 2023-24 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 2023-24 VFW National Membership Program in blue letters.

MEMBERSHIP OBJECTIVES

As the membership year has begun, keep in mind our membership objectives, also written in the 2023-24 Membership Program.

- For everyone to recruit at least one new member and then mentor that member.
- Increase membership drives and/or events.
- For Posts, Districts and Departments to reach 102% membership by June 30, 2024.
- 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 DEPARTMENT AWARD

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

- A \$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

Membership Monday training webinar will be on Oct. 9, 2023, at 2:00 PM, CDT, Topic: TBD.

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/VFWmembership/.

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 10th Anniversary of the VFW Sport Clips Help A Hero campaign will run from Oct. 8 – Nov. 11, with over 1,800 franchised stores participating. Join the campaign and donate at vfw.org/2023HAH.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Brooke Brown, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, bbrown@vfw.org.

The May 2023 Burger King/VFW Unmet Needs campaign raised over \$430,000, which brings total fundraising for this fiscal year to \$745,000. Since the fundraiser's inception in 2007, Burger King and its supporters have donated over \$7.6 million to Unmet Needs!

The VFW Foundation is proud to announce that we have received a four-star rating by Charity Navigator, the site's highest rating. Charity Navigator, the most respected and utilized independent nonprofit evaluator, examines over 200,000 U.S. charities using the metrics of Impact & Results; Accountability & Finance; Leadership & Adaptability; and Culture & Community. Only a quarter of charities rated by Charity Navigator receive a coveted four-star rating and only 1/10 of all charities receive a perfect 100% score. The VFW Foundation attained both!

Contact: VFW Foundation Director of Donor Relations Richard Freiburghouse, rfreiburghouse@vfw.org.

Development

Here is some helpful information about why the support of every VFW member is vitally important. VFW's life-changing programs are not possible through membership dues alone. In fact, **membership dues alone cover just 18% of the cost of programs**. As a nonprofit organization, the VFW relies heavily on the generosity of its members and patriotic supporters. When members donate, 100% of their net donation goes directly back to support their Department. *Please spread the word and give as generously as you are able.*

VFW's Special Edition Christmas Cards for 2023 – In September, we mailed the VFW's Special Edition Christmas Cards for 2023. 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.

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 choose a special card and message online to sign so we can print and deliver 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!

Sign a Christmas 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 it by Nov. 20 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 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!

A Simple Way to Make a Big Difference – Making a gift in your will is the easiest way to support the VFW and your fellow veterans after your lifetime. Did you know just a few sentences in your will can make a lifetime impact? We invite you to learn more about this type of legacy gift and the lasting impact you can leave your family and the VFW. Free information is available by visiting vfw.org/PlannedGiving, contacting the VFW Planned Giving office at 816.968.1119 or emailing plannedgiving@vfw.org.

Have You Heard About the VFW’s Partners in Patriotism? – Adjutant General Dan West 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 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 toll-free 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

VMS All-American Requirement

VMS donations will only be handled through the Dashboard. An email was sent out June 29, 2023, annotating this change and explaining the NEW donation page. All Posts must click on the VMS donation tab on the Dashboard to donate. The link will point them to OMS. Please do not send checks to the National Headquarters.

If a Post does not use a credit card, the Post will send their donation to their Department HQs and the Department HQs will submit the donation for their Post. Credit will automatically update on the Dashboard daily. No more weekly updates.

Overseas Departments will donate for the other programs through the link also in lieu of participation. Again, this will automatically update for credit daily.

Continue to do what you are doing and thank you for your continued support!

Veterans & Military Support (VMS)

If your Department ordered and received the 2023-24 VMS Lapel Pins, please pay for them as soon as possible. You may use the VMS Donation link on the upper right-hand corner of the Dashboard.

As the Veterans & Military Support Program evolves and streamlines our operations, we have augmented the current Veterans & Military Support Programs Chair Tools webpage. This will be updated every month.

VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship"

The 2024 Spring semester runs through Nov. 15, 2023. The application is available online only at vfw.org/scholarship.

VFW Programs

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.

2023-24 SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD PROGRAM. 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.

All Post-level nominees should provide an entry form, a one-page resume as a minimum or up to five pages, including the resume, as a maximum of documentation of their teaching experience (for example: resume, references, news articles, etc.) and a head-and-shoulder photo of themselves, if available.

VFW Post Teacher Award chairpersons may submit one candidate, in each category (K-5, 6-8, 9-12), to their District by Nov. 15. If a Department does not have a District judging, then the Post winning entries would be submitted to the Department Headquarters and/or Department Chairperson by Jan. 1. The Department may select a single candidate, in each category, and submit them to VFW National Headquarters by Feb. 1 for National judging.

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

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

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 their school; and an all-expense-paid trip to attend a VFW National Convention.

Please verify that all websites, publications, announcements, etc. have the correct teacher award entry deadlines and rules for the 2023-24 program year. The teacher entry form, information page, and Chairpersons Guide are available on the VFW website.

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 a participating VFW Post by **Oct. 31, 2023**. Each corresponding deadline for Post, District and Department to have their entries to the next level are Nov. 15, 2023, for completion of Post judging; Dec. 15, 2023, for completion of District judging; Jan. 10, 2024, for completion of Department judging and the Department winners are due to National Headquarters by **Jan. 15, 2024**.

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, more students and parents will be reaching out trying to find a 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 the 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 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 \$172,000, 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 2023–24 themes have been chosen by Commander-in-Chief Duane Sarmiento. The Voice of Democracy theme is “**What are the greatest attributes of our Democracy?**” and the Patriot’s Pen theme is “**How are you inspired by America?**”

NOTE: “NEW” Voice of Democracy and Patriots 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 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 manuals, 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 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician category has been added. Departments are asked to submit five nominees (one for each career area) to the VFW Programs office no later than Feb. 1, 2024. VFW Programs will create citations for the following awards in each Department:

- VFW National Law Enforcement Award
- VFW Firefighter Award
- VFW National Emergency Medical Technician Award
- VFW National 911 Dispatcher Award
- VFW National Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician (E.O.D.T.) 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 receive for Department Convention presentations.

Each Department will receive their requested 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, dispatchers and EODTs personnel, many of whom are veterans eligible for VFW membership. Order plaques and citations for public servants from the VFW Store at vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=public%20servant.

NOTE: VFW PUBLIC SERVANT AWARD CITATION POST ENTRY FORM. This form has been 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: Remember, the 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 VETERAN’S 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.

NEW UPDATES. VFW National Programs has updated the Fred C. Hall and Outstanding Community Service Post Award programs starting this program year. Please share this with your Community Service Chairpersons.

The new programs are as follows:

FRED C. HALL MEMORIAL AWARD FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE. Each year on July 1, the national Programs office will determine the top community service Posts in each conference, based off their community service reporting and total impact, from July 1 to June 30 the previous year. Your community service total impact is figured by the money spent to host and organize the community service event, plus total hours all volunteers participated, plus the mileage for all volunteers (Dollars Donated + Hours + Mileage = Total Impact).

These four Posts will be awarded the Fred C. Hall Memorial Award for Community Service and will be invited to attend the VFW National Convention. The Post Commander (or designated representative) and a guest will receive round-trip airfare, hotel accommodations for five nights, and a \$599 stipend to receive the award at the VFW National Convention.

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE POST OF THE YEAR. Each Department will have an OCSF winner based on total impact. National will select based on end of year reports on July 1. Winners will also be published in the Convention program booklet and receive a street sign identifying this national award for the Post to put up in their community.

“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

Get a better understanding of your Medicare plans options.

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

“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 three (3) weeks in advance of your distribution date.

BUDDY POPPY UPDATE: National Headquarters conducted a review of the Buddy Poppy policy and procedures and implemented the following changes effective Aug. 1, 2023:

- 1) If you do not receive your order within four weeks of placing it with your Department, please contact your Department Headquarters to report you have not received your order.
- 2) If you do not report a missing order within 90 days of processing, 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.

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. 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.

National Veterans Service

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 the 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.

National Legislative Service/Action Corps

VFW on Capitol Hill

The VFW National Legislative Committee members met with senators, representatives, and staffers during the VFW Fall Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., to discuss the [VFW's legislative priorities](#). Specific focus was given to cracking down on predatory claims companies, consistent access to VA benefit enrollment for service members, and the role of economic opportunity benefits in helping to prevent veteran suicide. The VFW will continue to advocate for these issues to assist service members, veterans, and their families.

Administrative Operations

2024 REVISED PODIUM EDITION – CONGRESSIONAL CHARTER, BYLAWS, MANUAL OF PROCEDURE AND RITUAL:

The 2024 copies of the podium edition of the Congressional Charter, Bylaws, Manual of Procedure and Ritual, which reflect the amendments adopted by the 124th National Convention, effective Aug. 22, 2023, can be purchased through the VFW Store at vfwstore.org/products/22690.

Entry deadlines are Oct. 31 for the teacher award, and the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen essay contests. Show appreciation for entrants at your 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

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).