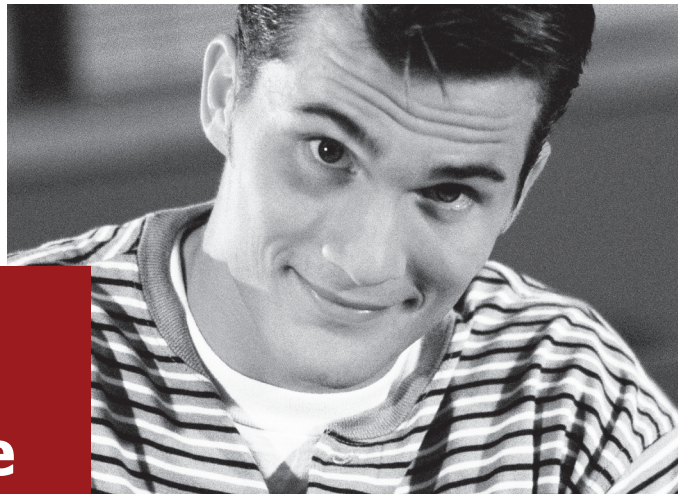
VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.
www.vfw.org

UNWAVERING SUPPORT
FOR UNCOMMON HEROES



Help Your Kids Get a Head Start on Their Future

An Open Letter to Teachers and Youth Leaders:

Thank you for the time, effort and commitment you invest each year in America's young people. Because of you, our nation continues to produce scholars, dreamers and leaders who benefit the entire world. We, the nearly 1.7 million members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and the VFW Auxiliary share your commitment to America's youth. Each year, the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary provides millions of dollars worth of awards and college scholarships to students across the U.S. and overseas. The purpose of these awards is to encourage personal growth and foster a greater understanding and appreciation for America, its history and values. This brochure is provided to acquaint you with the VFW's programs that benefit those young lives you touch each day. Again, thank you for all you do. If we can serve you in any way, please contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Lynn W. Rolf, III
Director, VFW Programs
lrolf@vfw.org

Patriot's Pen Essay Contest

Patriot's Pen provides 6th-, 7th- and 8th-grade students the opportunity to express their opinion on a patriotic theme and improve their writing skills while they compete for worthwhile awards and prizes. Awards can be given at the local, district and state levels. The state winners compete for $54,500 in awards at the national level. The first-place national winner receives a $5,000 award and an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington D.C., where they tour the city. **The entry deadline is Oct. 31.**

Voice of Democracy Scholarship Competition

The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) started the Voice of Democracy Scholarship Competition in 1947. The VFW became a national sponsor in the late 1950s and assumed sole responsibility for the program in 1961. Many notables have participated in Voice of Democracy including journalist Charles Kuralt, Miss America Anita Bryant and former U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft. The Voice of Democracy competition provides high school freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors the opportunity to write and record an essay on a patriotic theme, competing for more than $2.1 million in college scholarships and incentives. State winners receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., to enjoy our nation's capital and compete for $155,500 in scholarships —first place receiving a $30,000 scholarship. **The entry deadline is Oct. 31.**

Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher of the Year Program

Each year three exceptional teachers are recognized by the VFW for their outstanding commitment to teach Americanism and patriotism to their students.

The VFW annually recognizes the nation's top elementary, junior high and high school teachers who teach at least half of the school day in a classroom environment and promote America's history, traditions and citizenship education effectively. The Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award recipients are selected from entries submitted to local VFW Posts in every state and overseas.

The awards include the following items:

- A national $1,000 Past National CIC John Smart award for the top K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 grade teachers for professional development expenses.
- $1,000 award for each winning teacher's school.
- Plaques for both the winning teacher and school.
- An all-expenses-paid trip to attend the VFW National Convention.

Nominations must be submitted to a local VFW Post by Oct. 31. For additional information about our program please refer to our website at www.vfw.org/teacheroftheyear.

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How Do I Get My Students Involved?

To encourage as many students as possible to participate, the VFW provides a number of ways to enter:

Submitting Student Entries

Students can enter directly by submitting the required entry form, along with their essay and (in the case of Voice of Democracy, their recording) to a local participating VFW Post. Your local VFW Post's contact information can be obtained at www.vfw.org/find-a-post or by calling the VFW National Programs office during normal business hours at (816) 756-3390. Entry forms and instructions can be downloaded from the VFW website at www.vfw.org/VOD.

Patriotic Project

Teachers and youth leaders may obtain student entry forms in the manner indicated above. You may then select from the following options:

Patriot's Pen (Grades 6-8): Write a 300-400 word essay on the annual theme available online at www.vfw.org/patriotspen or by calling (816) 756-3390. Use the competition as a patriotic assignment and encourage the students with the best essays to complete the entry form and forward those, along with the essay, to the local VFW Post competition.

Voice of Democracy (Grades 9-12): Write an essay on the annual theme available online at www.vfw.org/VOD or by calling (816) 756-3390. Again, use the competition as an essay contest and encourage the students with the best essays to record their essays, complete the entry form and forward them, with the recording and typed essay, to the local VFW Post competition.

Local VFW Post Information

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Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

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