

VFW National Membership Program



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Commander-in-Chief**

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Membership Mission

To recruit, retain and mentor a stable membership base including all generations of veterans.

To cultivate a membership that is well versed in institutional knowledge and actively involved at all levels of the organization and in the local community. To establish Posts with an established vision of service, leadership and community outreach.

Introduction

Without question, our membership numbers have decreased every year except for two years in the last 30 years. Yes, we have been successful in recruiting new members. However, the effort across the organization needs to improve if we want our influence in Congress to be noticed.

Today, the Veterans of Foreign Wars is 123 years old. During those years, we have had WWI, WWII, Korean, Vietnam and other veterans joining en masse. Today, however, we have lost many of these honorable men and women. As history has proven, the Post-9/11 veterans will join our organization like others have when they are ready, however usually not until their kids grow or their retirements are in place.

We must not stereotype any of our future members regardless of sex, color or personal beliefs. If a member qualifies, bring them in. The only way to make this success permanent is to retain those members, recover past members, and continue to recruit new veterans into our ranks. There are still many veterans eligible to join and at all ages. However, our focus needs to be on our Post-9/11 veterans, for they will be our future.

You might ask, how do we build our organization? It's simple, leadership by example. If you are a Commander of a Post, District, Department or the National Commander, then get out there and recruit members yourself and show your team that if you can do it, so can they. A good way to do this is to improve the way we communicate with our members at all levels of the organization. Posts, Districts, Departments and our National Officers need to use all methods available to convey information for news and training to our membership through newsletters, emails, social media, recruiting booths and outreach teams.

We need to know who our members are and how we can address their needs and concerns. It's time to step it up and recruit post-9/11 veterans. Each of us needs to do our part and recruit at least one new member. Think about it. If we all recruit one each, we would show substantial growth in membership in just one year. If we repeated that same scenario again

next year and the year after, we could be easily back over 2,000,000 members strong. When you are out there recruiting, remember this one thing: Every Veteran Counts!

Membership Goals

1. Build a strong organization through recruiting new members while retaining our current membership that creates a solid baseline for the future.
2. Work together to achieve the VFW's goals. The VFW National Headquarters staff is available to assist in coordinating programs, developing membership initiatives and building awareness among our membership and the entire veteran community.

Membership Objectives

- 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.

Membership Resources

In order to assist our Posts, Districts, and Departments in meeting the goals set out by the Commander-in-Chief in this membership program, the National Headquarters has a wealth of resources at your disposal. Many of those are available free of charge to our members.

- Membership materials ranging from applications, recruiting brochures, posters, and benefits brochures can be ordered directly from the Membership Department using the Membership Order Form (located under Membership Quick Links once you log into vfw.org)
- Resources for Post Development, Membership Campaigns, and Mentorship such as training guides, videos, and webinars are available in the Training & Support section on vfw.org
- Promotional tools such as radio spots, sample advertisements, public service announcements, and media kits are all available through the Media Room on vfw.org

See the trend? Just about anything you will need is at vfw.org, check it out.

The VFW National Headquarters staff is ready and trained to answer any questions you may have concerning membership, VFW programs, or other issues. You can contact our **Member Service Center directly at 1.833.VFW.VETS**, or the **Membership Department at 1.888.JOIN.VFW**.

Triple Crown Award

Any commander who achieves All-American at the Post, District and Department level will receive a Triple Crown pin and recognition at the National Convention.

Recruiting Awards

- **1,5, 10, 15** Corresponding numbered member pin
- **25** CIC Belt Buckle or Jewelry Set & Citation
- **50** National Aide-De-Camp cap and Citation
- **75** Commemorative Medallion Set
- **100** Century cap or \$50 VFW Store credit & Citation
- **175** CIC Century Plus Jacket

Department “100 Percent” Incentive

Any Department that attains 100% in membership by close of business on May 1st, 2023, will be entered into a random drawing. The commander plus guest and quartermaster plus guest that is selected will each receive:

- **\$2500 voucher through Veterans Travel Services (VTS) applied towards airfare, accommodations and transportation for a trip of their choice.**

Early Bird Award—VFW Legislative Conference

The top three Post commanders and quartermasters in each division and the top two District Commanders and Quartermasters on Jan. 1, 2023, will receive:

- **A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW Legislative Conference, Washington D.C.**

Department Early Bird Incentive

For every Department that achieves 92% in membership by Jan. 1, 2023; the Department commander and quartermaster will receive:

- **A Henry .30-30 Caliber Rifle or a credit voucher of equal value for use with Veterans Travel Services (VTS) or the VFW Store.**

Post Commander and Quartermaster – New & Reinstated Member Award

The top 10 Post commanders and quartermasters in each division who report more than 50 new and/or reinstated members by Jan. 1, 2023, will each be awarded:

- **A travel charger with the official VFW Commander-in-Chief logo.**

Kansas City Spree

The top two Post commanders and the top two District commanders in each division who achieve 100% membership by April 1, 2023, along with their guest will each be awarded:

- **Round-trip airfare to Kansas City, Mo. from the airport nearest the awardee's home.**
- **A fun-filled weekend (May 18-21, 2023) that may include but is not limited to touring, shopping and a complete tour of the VFW National Headquarters.**

100% Post, District & Department

A distinctive streamer will be awarded to every Post, District and State/Department that achieves 100% or greater in membership before July 1, 2023.

100% Commander Drawing

Each Post and District commander that exceeds 100% in membership by June 1, 2023, will receive an entry in this drawing. Twenty Post commanders and Twelve District commanders will receive:

- **A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.**

Post Commander and Quartermaster Division Challenge

For every 10 new/reinstated members recruited between July 1, 2022, and April 1, 2023, Posts will earn one entry for both Post commander and quartermaster entered into a drawing. One Post per division will receive:

- **A \$1,000 stipend each for commander and quartermaster to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.**

Legacy Life Membership Acquisition

Each Post that achieves the designated benchmarks of 25, 50 and 75 Legacy Life Members will be awarded:

- **A Legacy Society Post Proclamation.**

Each Post that achieves the distinctive benchmark of 100 Legacy Life members by July 1, 2023, commander or Post representative will receive:

- **A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.**
- **Reserved seating at the VFW National Convention joint opening session.**
- **Legacy Society Post Proclamation.**

Top 5 National Recruiters

The top five Recruiters plus a guest on February 1, 2023, will each receive:

- **Transportation and Accommodations to attend the Commander-in-Chief's Seminar in May 2023. (SEE IMPORTANT NOTES SECTION)**

Top Department Recruiter

The top Recruiter in every Department on July 1, 2023, will receive:

- **A Henry .30-30 Caliber Rifle or a credit voucher of equal value for use with Veterans Travel Services (VTS).**

Note: Minimum of 25 new/reinstated members required to win this award.

Elite Recruiter

Any VFW member who signs up 250 or more new and/or reinstated members by July 1, 2023, will receive:

- **A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.**
- **Distinctive cap, CIC Elite Recruiter Jacket, citation, and name badge.**

Recruiter of the Year

The VFW member who signs up the greatest number of new and/or reinstated members greater than 250 by July 1, 2023, will receive:

- **A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.**
- **Reserved seating at the VFW National Convention joint opening session.**
- **Distinctive cap, CIC ROY Jacket, citation, and name badge.**
- **Commander-in-Chief's Crystal Eagle.**

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.**

All-American Criteria

The All-American program exists to recognize exceptional leadership and teamwork, authentic accomplishment in membership growth and VFW core programs.

All-American Post Criteria

- Membership greater than 100%
- Must conduct two Membership recruiting events, submit reports through All-American Dashboard.
- Post-Election Report must be submitted to National
- Meet all the following Program Participation Criteria:
 - Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging (Overseas Post can donate \$75 to National in lieu of entry)
 - Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging (Overseas Post can donate \$75 to National in lieu of entry)
 - Hold a fundraiser with the proceeds going to Veterans & Military Support Programs Services, minimum of \$100.

- National Citizenship Education Teachers Award – one entry advanced to next level of judging (Overseas Post donate \$75 to National in lieu of entry)
- A Post must submit a community service report to their department for submission to the All-American Dashboard NLT 30 June 2023
- Buddy Poppy- Purchase five per member in the Post

All-American Post Award

- All Posts that meet the Qualifying Percentage and the program participation criteria will receive an All-American Post Citation, Post Streamer and be recognized in the VFW magazine.

- The Top **50** Posts in each Division will receive:

- Acknowledgment in VFW Magazine
- Acknowledgement during the All-American Awards Ceremony at the National Convention
- All-American Post citation
- All-American Post streamer
- All-American citation - commander
- All-American name badge - commander
- All-American cap (commander only, quartermaster and Post members may purchase "Post Member" cap)
- All-American lapel pin (commander only, quartermaster may purchase pin)
- All-American Team Post Member lapel pin (25 pack)

- The top **five** commanders in each division will also receive:
 - **A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.**
 - **Reserved seating at the VFW National Convention joint opening session.**

All-American District Criteria

- Membership greater than 100%
- Conduct two Membership recruiting events, submit report through the dashboard.
- District-Election Report must be submitted to National
- Meet all the following Program Participation criteria:
 - Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to Department judging (Overseas District donate \$100 to National in lieu of entry)
 - Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to Department judging (Overseas District donate \$100 to National in lieu of entry*see last page)
 - National Citizenship Education Teachers Award – one entry advanced to Department judging (Overseas District donate \$100 to National in lieu of entry)

All-American District Award

- All Districts that meet the Qualifying Percentage and the program participation criteria will receive an All-American District Citation, All-American Streamer and be recognized in the VFW magazine.

- The Top **25** Districts in each Division will receive:

- All-American District streamer
- All-American District citation - commander
- All-American name badge - commander
- All-American cap (commander only, quartermaster may purchase cap)
- All-American lapel pin (commander only, quartermaster may purchase pin)
- The top **two** District commanders in each division will also receive:
 - **A \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention.**
 - **Reserved seating at the VFW National Convention joint opening session.**

All-American Department Criteria

- Membership must be greater than 100%.
- Must conduct two Membership recruiting events, report of these events must be submitted through the All-American dashboard.
- Conduct a Department Commander's "Official Visit or Round Up" prior to Jan 1, 2023, with a report submitted through the All-American dashboard.

National Legislative Service

- Monthly National Legislative Service committee member reports submitted to National Legislative Service in Washington, D.C.

National Veterans Services

- Must have a State/Department service officer and submit his or her name and contact information to National Veterans Services in Washington, D.C. by July 31, 2022.
- Department Service Officer successfully completes NVS training requirements with a passing grade.
- Department Service Officer or appropriate designee reports hosting Post Service Officer training to NVS. Reports due by 30 June 2023.

Programs

- Voice of Democracy - An entry advanced to National judging
- Patriot's Pen - An entry advanced to National judging
- Veterans & Military Support Programs – Must complete State/Department fundraiser and proceeds donated to Veterans & Military Support Programs, Kansas City, Mo. (*see last page)
- Must have at least One teacher submitted for the Teacher of the Year competition. (One entry from one of the three categories).

All-American Department Award

- All-American Department streamer
- All-American Department citation - commander
- All-American name badge - commander
- All-American cap - commander - *quartermaster may purchase cap*
- All-American lapel pin - commander - *quartermaster may purchase pin*
- \$1,000 stipend to be used toward attending the VFW National Convention
- Reserved seating at the VFW National Convention Joint Opening Session

Conference Membership Award

The State/Department leading each conference will be entrusted with the conference membership colors for the following year. The 2021-2022 Conference winners will return the colors to the membership booth at National Convention in Phoenix, AZ no later than COB on Monday after the Joint Opening Session. The 2022-2023 Conference winners will then pick up the colors from the Membership Director at National Convention in July 2023 in Phoenix, AZ any time after 0800 on Tuesday at the Membership booth.

The Conference with the highest membership percentage of the four Conferences will have their name and year engraved on a traveling trophy presented by the Commander-in-Chief to the Conference Chairman at the National Convention. The 2022-2023 Conference Chairman will return the trophy to the membership booth at National Convention in Phoenix, AZ no later than COB on Saturday to ensure placement of the new nameplate. This trophy will be presented to the 2022-2023 Conference Chairman on stage during the Joint Opening Session**.

Post Membership Divisions and Minimum Qualifying Percentages

Division	Total Membership		Qualifying Percentage
1	951+		Over 100%
2	750	950	Over 100%
3	356	749	Over 100%
4	246	355	Over 100%
5	185	245	Over 100%
6	143	184	Over 100%
7	112	142	Over 100%
8	88	111	Over 100%
9	68	87	Over 100%
10	51	67	Over 100%
11	10	50	Over 100%

District Membership Divisions and Minimum Qualifying Percentages

Division	Total Membership		Qualifying Percentage
1	5,000	14,000	Over 100%
2	3,282	4,999	Over 100%
3	2,172	3,281	Over 100%
4	1,447	2,171	Over 100%
5	906	1,446	Over 100%
6	1	905	Over 100%

Important Notes

- In order to receive stipends, awardees must attend designated events
- Only **one** National paid stipend per event (National Convention, legislative Conference, etc.)
- **All awards are non-transferable**
- **Post/District/Department:** Membership must be greater than 100 percent, which means 100 percent plus one in overall membership.
- **Early Bird Award – VFW Legislative Conference:** Each winner if able must walk Capitol Hill with their Departments and attend the Voice of Democracy (VOD) parade of winners.
- **Top Five Recruiter Award:** Seminar is outside the continental United States and requires current passport to attend. Must be valid for 6 months after the trip dates.
- **Post member cap,** any member in a Post that achieves All-American status can purchase a “Post Member” cap. Those members must be in the Post during the membership year.
- The *Department Commander’s “Official Visit or Round Up”* is for Department commanders to visit Posts in their Department to get face-to-face time with their Post and District leadership and assist with membership and Programs. For further information about the *Commander’s “Official Visit or Round Up”*, please contact the Membership Department by calling **1-888-JOIN-VFW** or by email at membership@vfw.org
- Donations made to replace a Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen (By eligible overseas Post). **Do not donate through your Department or by any other means.** Use this link: <https://VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/vfwprogramsdonation>
- Veterans & Military Support Programs Services Donations for Post/District/Department as listed above will only be accepted only through the following link: <https://heroes.vfw.org/page/22950/donate/1>
- ****For the Conference Membership Award traveling trophy, the Conference Chairman will be responsible for the return of the trophy to the Membership Department booth at the National Convention each year**