

# Auxiliary Community Outreach Ambassador

---



## DIANE M. PENCAK

5100 S. Long Ave.  
Chicago, IL  
60638-1626  
dpencak@msn.com  
773-573-5386

As we continue Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation, we have to find the ways and means to be more active and visible within our local communities. That is the goal of the Auxiliary Community Outreach Program. As Auxiliary members, we serve other organizations outside the Auxiliary circle, and that volunteer work needs to be counted. The VFW Auxiliary is part of the VFW family, the largest and oldest veterans service organization. The VFW has a long and proven history of providing vital assistance and support to America's service members, veterans and their families and our communities.

Volunteering is considered a selfless activity where an individual or group provides services for no financial or social gain to benefit another person, group or organization.

### Benefits of Volunteering

- People of all ages and abilities have the opportunity to volunteer.
- You can participate and have a positive impact whether you live in a small rural community, suburb or big city.
- Volunteering allows us to express our interests and excel in what we like and do best.
- Volunteering is renowned for skill development and is intended to promote goodness or to improve human quality of life.
- Volunteering often provides positive benefits for the volunteer as well as for the person, agency or community served.

Volunteering is second nature for VFW Auxiliary members. It's what we do, how we do it, where we do it and why we do it - because it's always the right thing to do.

In the history of the Auxiliary, we have done this same work under the titles of Community Service, Community Activities, and we are now updating this Program to include what we are all about - Auxiliary Community Outreach.

Auxiliary Community Outreach gives us the opportunity to do more with local communities, schools and other civic, faith-based and youth organizations. You probably already volunteer with your local Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, or youth sports programs, after school clubs or senior center. This list can go on, but you get the picture!

Here are some other ways the Auxiliary Community Outreach Program can be implemented in our communities:

- Kids/Education: Mentor students, tutor, volunteer at after school programs, performing arts programs, sports clubs, arts and crafts classes, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, etc.
- Hunger/Homelessness: Soup kitchens, food pantries, homeless shelters, farmers markets, backpack snack programs, toiletry care packages, Habitat for Humanity, etc.
- Career skills: GED tutoring, job coaching, mock interviews, business mentoring, resume assistance, etc.
- Elderly: Serve lunch to seniors, Meals on Wheels, senior dining club, pet therapy for seniors, yard and garden care (mowing, raking leaves, pruning bushes, etc.), housekeeping and laundry services, etc.
- Health/Research: American Cancer Society, American Diabetes Association, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Autism Speaks, Relay for Life, Alzheimer's Association, etc.
- Nature: Organic greenhouse, community gardens, park maintenance, etc.
- Animals: PAWS, local humane societies, animal rescue groups, etc.

It's time for the VFW Auxiliary to reveal itself to their local community. Take an active role in community events and affairs. Host an open house, welcome your local neighbors in to see what the VFW and VFW Auxiliary are about. What a great idea for a Family Freedom Festival! Contact your local newspaper and

get some publicity about the event. The more people hear or read about the VFW and VFW Auxiliary the more interest you'll generate for the event. This Program opens the door to other opportunities to recruit members, get students involved with our scholarship contests, or people who want to help veterans and their families.

"Carry out a random act of kindness, with no expectation of reward, safe in the knowledge that one day someone might do the same for you."

- Princess Diana



# Auxiliary Community Outreach Program

## Member Participation in Community Outreach • Auxiliary Participating in Community Outreach

Auxiliary Community Outreach is volunteer work performed by one member, a group of members or an Auxiliary for the benefit of their community or its institutions. Auxiliary Community Outreach can:

- Be performed by people of any age, skill set or ability level.
- Benefit any group of people such as children, senior citizens and those with disabilities.
- Benefit animals, the environment and public spaces.
- Be done in communities of all types and sizes – rural, suburban and urban, small and large.

We volunteer to make a difference in our community, but we receive benefits including:

- Helping others
- Learning new skills
- Career advancement
- Increased confidence
- Meeting new people
- Fighting stress and depression
- Developing a stronger sense of purpose
- Personal growth

### Community Outreach and the VFW Auxiliary

While emphasis is placed on our core VFW and Auxiliary Programs, we realize Auxiliary members and Auxiliaries also participate with other community organizations. Members and Auxiliaries can now report and be recognized for such community work through the Auxiliary Community Outreach Program.

It is important that at the beginning of the Program Year a motion is made on the floor that when a member(s) volunteers their time for a civic program, school program, youth program, etc., they are representing the VFW Auxiliary and the member should turn in their hours served to be reported for Auxiliary Community Outreach.

Projects may be done by a member who is representing an Auxiliary, by an Auxiliary alone, with the VFW Post or other community groups.

Collectively, all of our volunteer hours need to be counted to effectively show the importance of the local VFW and VFW Auxiliary to the community.

Be visible and show your pride in the VFW Auxiliary by wearing Auxiliary-branded attire when you participate in Auxiliary Community Outreach. A shirt, jacket or hat with the Auxiliary emblem can start a

conversation about the Auxiliary and what we do. It is also a great way show members volunteering out in our communities and not just in our Post homes.

### What's Considered Auxiliary Community Outreach

When an Auxiliary member, group of members or an entire Auxiliary volunteers for an organization outside our own, it should be considered Auxiliary Community Outreach **if the project was approved by the Auxiliary and recorded in the meeting minutes prior to the project.** Examples include:

- Participation in walks that benefit other organizations (e.g. Race for the Cure, Walk to End Alzheimer's, Light the Night Walk, Walk MS, Heart Walk, etc.)
- Working with local police on child ID kits.
- Working with firefighters on fire safety and prevention.
- Working with EMTs to host CPR training.
- Hosting a blood drive.
- Working with parks and recreation departments to plant trees, adopt-a-park initiatives and develop community art installations.
- Handing out food at soup kitchens.
- Delivering food for Meals on Wheels.

When we participate in Auxiliary Community Outreach we become better citizens of the communities in which we live.

### What's Not Considered Auxiliary Community Outreach

- **Auxiliary Community Outreach is for projects NOT AFFILIATED with VFW or VFW Auxiliary Programs.**
- Volunteer work that is performed for the benefit of the Post or Auxiliary is NOT considered community service. Examples of projects that do not qualify include:
  - Repairs or maintenance to the Post home.
  - Cooking or serving a meal for a Post or Auxiliary fundraiser.
  - "Buddy"® Poppy distribution.
  - VFW or Auxiliary meetings, conventions, conferences or schools of instruction.
  - Church activities for one specific congregation and not the entire community (e.g. usher, elder, deacon, minister, etc.)

# Auxiliary Community Outreach Program Awards

---

## **AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES**

1. Most outstanding Auxiliary Community Outreach Program.

- Citation to every Auxiliary that participates in a community event. Criteria and entry form (required) available at [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources). Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Auxiliary Community Outreach Chairman by March 31, 2021.

The Department Auxiliary Community Outreach Chairman must send a copy of all submitted entry forms to National Headquarters by April 30, 2021.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences with the most outstanding Auxiliary Community Outreach Program.

The Department Auxiliary Community Outreach Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Auxiliary Community Outreach Ambassador by April 30, 2021 for judging.

## **AWARDS FOR DEPARTMENTS AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN**

1. Citation to each Department Auxiliary Community Outreach Chairman for participation in this Program.
2. \$25 VFW Store Gift Certificate to one Department Auxiliary Community Outreach Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best promotion of the Auxiliary Community Outreach Program.
3. Outstanding Performance Award in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of Program Goals on Page 14.