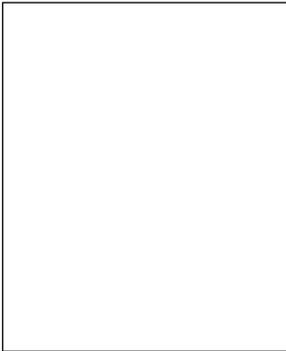


Chief of Staff & Mentoring for Leadership Ambassador



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No, your eyes are not deceiving you—there are two Programs with one Ambassador. A great deal of reflection went into both the Chief of Staff and Mentoring for Leadership Programs and what each brings to our organization. The more we reflected, the more we realized that these two Programs are intertwined; it makes sense to bring them together.

Two Roles – One Goal

When you think about these programs individually, words such as nurturing, cultivating, fostering, caring, knowledge, sharing and strengthening come to mind. Both Programs share one common goal: Ensure the legacy of our great Organization continues through strong, healthy Auxiliaries with members who are prepared to take over leadership roles when needed. So, how do we attain that goal?

First, as the National Chief of Staff, I believe it is my duty and responsibility to work with each Department Chief of Staff and provide the guidance, resources and tools they need so they, in turn, can work with their District Presidents, Auxiliary Presidents and Chairmen to ensure that Auxiliaries are functioning in a healthy manner.

To accomplish this, we must not only empower Auxiliaries to use the resources/tools that are available to them; we must encourage them so that they are not “anchored in the past” and they take advantage of the flexibility our National Organization has given to us in conducting business in our own Auxiliary. In today’s world “one size does not fit all,” so we need to ensure that Auxiliaries are conducting business in a way that works for them and where their members feel empowered and engaged.

As a Department Chief of Staff, you have a team of District Presidents that can be a valuable resource; however, it is up to you to provide the guidance they need in order to perform Auxiliary visits and recognize red flags that may lead to a problem within the Auxiliary. Encourage District Presidents to use the District President Notice of Auxiliary Official Visit and Official Visit Form available at vfwauxiliary.org/resources. Ask them to give an honest assessment of the Auxiliary so that any concerns can be addressed before they become major problems.

Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation is one of the most valuable tools available to members on all levels to understand our Programs, how to conduct meetings, duties of Officers at all levels of our organization, duties of Chairmen, the “why” of reporting and so much more. Every Auxiliary should have a copy of this document and should encourage their members to use it as a resource. It is available at vfwauxiliary.org/resources.

While our focus from years past has shifted to ensuring that our current Auxiliaries are sound and that we do not lose any Auxiliaries, it is still important to make presentations to unaffiliated Posts and where it is viable, to institute new Auxiliaries. An Auxiliary cannot exist without a Post and an Auxiliary cannot be started without the 2/3 vote of a Post. Be sure you choose a positive, knowledgeable member to speak to the Post Commander and ask for permission to address Post members on the benefits of having an Auxiliary.

The following presentations and tools available at vfwauxiliary.org/resources can be utilized:

- A PowerPoint and PDF titled “Why Having an Auxiliary Can Boost Your Post.” This presentation is designed to show Post members how helpful the Auxiliary and its contributions are.
- “Top Ten Reasons for your Post to Have an Auxiliary.” This handout is great to use when you meet with Post members.

The Chief of Staff is also a mentor. The Mentoring for Leadership Program goes hand-in-hand with being Chief of Staff. It comes with a responsibility to ensure that members receive mentoring needed for them to not only take on leadership roles but to be successful in that role. This is especially important with new Auxiliaries, as they need special attention during at least the first year of their existence.

A leader/mentor takes the time to stop and explain our Programs to new members, listens to all our members and is open to new ideas. They recognize the importance of respecting - not throwing away - the past and embracing the present while finding a way to blend the past with the present and planning for the future so that we can keep our legacy alive. We must always remember that veterans and their families are our purpose.

This year, as a mentor, I would like to practice the 3 C's of mentoring:

- Consultant – that is the most obvious role of the mentor
- Counselor – listen to your mentees
- Cheerleader – give constructive feedback, advise, provide support and enthusiasm

I want to put emphasis on being a cheerleader. Not everything we do is successful, and that is OK; we learn from our failures and become better individuals. As a cheerleader, we certainly want to celebrate success. However, it is also important to heed the lessons of failure and learn from that. As a mentor, that is when you can provide support and encouragement, instead of discouragement and criticism.

I would ask you to remember what it was like when you were a new member. What kept you coming back to your Auxiliary? Did you have someone who was your mentor? It is up to each and every one of us to become that member we looked up to – the member who we should be. Someone who:

- Treats others with respect
- Shares their knowledge
- Can be trusted
- Is patient
- Motivates
- Can work side-by-side with members.

It is only through building on our foundation as an organization and working together as a team that we will ensure our continued success as an organization. The future is in our hands.

Remember, whether you are the Chief of Staff, the Mentoring for Leadership Chairman, or both – the goal is the same: Ensure the legacy of our great organization continues through strong, healthy Auxiliaries with members who are prepared to take over leadership roles when needed.



WELCOME

Chief of Staff Program

Maintain and Strengthen Current Auxiliaries • Present to Unaffiliated Posts Establish New Auxiliaries

Chiefs of Staff work with District Presidents and the Department President to maintain current Auxiliaries. They encourage members, promote teamwork and provide guidance during challenging times such as suspension, consolidation or even the loss of a Charter. Chiefs of Staff also works closely with their Department President and organizers to establish new Auxiliaries.

Maintaining Current Auxiliaries

The National Organization has developed many resources for members use, including tools available on the Online Auxiliary Academy and the Program & Publicity Resources page of the National website: vfwauxiliary.org/resources. Two of these resources have proven to be valuable tools in helping Auxiliaries be more productive.

1. The Healthy Auxiliary Tool Kit includes seven (7) resources to assist Auxiliaries in identifying and solving issues:
 - Healthy Auxiliary Checklist
 - Healthy Auxiliary Member Questionnaire
 - Auxiliary Meeting Clinic
 - Communication Phone/Text Tree
 - Good Job Certificate
 - Healthy Auxiliary Certificate
 - VFW Auxiliary Mentoring Guide
2. *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation* makes every effort to educate members on all aspects of the duties of Officers at all levels, how to be a Chairman, the why of reporting, etc.

These tools invite all members to come forward and take on a position of leadership, mentoring, and being a member who advocates for their Auxiliary and the veterans we serve.

5 Essentials of an Auxiliary

The National Organization requires only five (5) things of an Auxiliary:

1. Auxiliaries should have at least ten (10) business meetings per year. (Sec. 210) Five (5) members in good standing (of that Auxiliary) shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. (Sec. 212)

2. Dues should be paid by at least ten (10) members on or before February 1 of the current year. (Sec. 207)
3. Quarterly Audits by Trustees must be submitted. (Sec. 814)
4. Officers elected, installed and reported to National Headquarters no later than June 30. This generates the bond application via email. (Sec. 804A and 806A)
5. The offices of President and Treasurer MUST be bonded by August 31.

Establishing New Auxiliaries

Whether a VFW Post decides on its own that it wants an Auxiliary or whether an Auxiliary member or non-member sees the potential for a new one, the steps for creating an Auxiliary are the same.

1. A VFW Post must vote by 2/3 majority to have an Auxiliary. (An Auxiliary can never exist on its own without a Post and can never be started without that Post's permission.)
2. The Department President appoints the official organizer of that Auxiliary, and he/she must be a member of the Auxiliary.
 - It would help to allow two others who are knowledgeable with Auxiliary business and work well with others to be on an organizing team. They can answer questions and assist with training, educating and mentoring the new Auxiliary once it is instituted. It is recommended the organizer and the organizing team work with the Auxiliary and its members for at least a year, or until they are ready to proceed as an Auxiliary in good standing.
3. A minimum of 15 eligible applicants must be on the application for the Charter. Transfers are accepted at the close of the institution and just prior to the installation of the newly-formed Auxiliary.

The Department Chief of Staff could assist by providing the following tools for the organizer and organizing team:

- Talking points for the first meeting.
- A procedure for membership applications.
- When and how to collect dues.
- Assist in securing and filling out official and proper paperwork.
- See that deadlines and filings are met in a timely manner.
- For more information on this topic, see Article II of the *VFW Auxiliary Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual*.

Suspensions, Cancellations and Consolidations

An Auxiliary is in danger of losing its Charter when they are unable to meet the 5 Essentials of an Auxiliary. Suspensions are used in certain cases to give Auxiliary members a chance to fulfill their duties and continue with their mission of serving veterans, service members and their families.

Please know that being placed on suspension is not negative. It is not labeling your Auxiliary as a “bad Auxiliary.” It simply means there is some work that needs to be done to get your Auxiliary where it needs to be. A team appointed by the Department President to mentor, educate and listen will help bring your Auxiliary back to health.

Cancellations can only be done by the National President, with or without the recommendation of the Department President.

If a VFW Post closes or consolidates, Auxiliary National Headquarters will be notified. **ONLY AFTER THIS NOTIFICATION** can the process for closing or consolidating begin.

- Far too often, an Auxiliary will start the cancellation or consolidation process because they heard through the grapevine the Post was shutting down or consolidating with another Post. Rumors can be harmful and actions should not - and must not - be taken due to rumors.
- The notification from National Headquarters will allow ample time to close, move members to their desired working Auxiliary or consolidate where the Post goes.
- Be sure to wait for direction from National Headquarters before taking any action at all.

EVERY Auxiliary’s goal should be to meet the 5 Essentials, so members can begin serving veterans and families in all the unique and wonderful ways they can.

Chiefs of Staff are there to help Auxiliaries maintain their Charters, continue to be healthy Auxiliaries and to proceed under the direction of the Department President to ensure all resources are utilized.

Know what you read and what is written using the following words found often in our National Bylaws:

MAY:

Past-tense verb of might used to indicate:

1. Possibility.
2. Permission.

MUST:

Verb used to indicate:

1. Obligation.
2. Probability or certainty.

Noun

1. Something that is required.

SHALL:

Verb used to indicate:

1. At a future time.
2. Determination, obligation or intention.

SHOULD:

Past-tense verb of shall used to indicate:

1. Obligation.
2. Probability.

Chief of Staff Program Awards

AWARDS FOR MEMBERS

1. \$25 VFW Store Gift Certificate to one member in each of the four Conferences who assisted the Department Chief of Staff in nurturing/strengthening a struggling Auxiliary and utilized *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation* in their efforts. The Department Chief of Staff is to complete and submit the nomination form (required) available at vfwauxiliary.org/resources to the National Chief of Staff & Mentoring for Leadership Ambassador by April 30, 2022.

AWARDS FOR DEPARTMENTS AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN

1. Citation to each Department Chief of Staff for participation in this Program.
2. \$25 VFW Store Gift Certificate to one Department Chief of Staff in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the most effective training of District Presidents in identifying red flags and utilizing *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation* in assisting struggling Auxiliaries.
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 listed at the top of Page 24.



Mentoring for Leadership Program

Ensure a Positive Member Experience • Engage in Learning and Training Opportunities
Develop and Empower Members for Leadership Roles

Mentoring helps broaden leadership skills and leadership provides guidance for mentoring members; they work hand in hand.

Mentoring

A stronger membership on every level of our organization will be accomplished through mentoring.

Mentoring for Leadership will enhance all type of Program activities. Vigilance in mentoring will make the difference in obtaining and maintaining members; since a large number of other organizations are vying for our members' time and talents.

Through the mentoring process, extending the hand of friendship to a new member or even a tenured member who has been inactive for a while can create a strong and vibrant organization. By providing a positive and organized meeting experience it will leave the members wanting to come back, especially when good communication and respect for each other is demonstrated.

By engaging in mentoring activities you will build a stronger relationship amongst new and tenured members. Whether you create a formal or informal mentoring program, every Auxiliary should have a type of resource to assist in communicating and motivating members to better understand the organization.

Utilizing the *Mentoring at VFW Auxiliary: Relationship Building for the Future* document will help you get started in creating a program for your Auxiliary.

Through this Program you will be encouraged to embrace and promote the CARE concept.

- **Catch** the member when they first join.
- **Ask** them to participate.
- **Remember** what it felt like to be new.
- **Engage** them in a program that fits them.

Some individuals may be hesitant to take on the task of being a mentor; however, keep in mind there are also silent mentors amongst our members.

A mentor who is able to communicate, energize interest and is patient will enrich the member experience. The majority of our members have had

someone who took interest in them, is knowledgeable about the Auxiliary, willing to explain meeting proceedings, the *Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual*, and National Programs.

Over time the mentee may express interest in going beyond just attending meetings. They may even realize they have gained confidence to take the next step in entering in to a leadership role. This may consist of holding an Officer position, Chairmanship or committee member.

Leadership

Leadership can be difficult in any organization. Through mentoring, willingness to listen to the suggestions of others and following the guidelines set in place for the office or position held, leadership is easier.

A Mentor who uses the *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation* is the key to creating a successful leader. This resource should be shared on each level of the organization. The guidebooks provide suggestions and examples for Officers, Chairmen and members to understand their duties according to the National Bylaws and the best practices discovered during the 100-plus year history of the organization.

The goal of the guidebooks is to develop and maintain consistent practices across the organization, to train and equip leaders of today and tomorrow, and to strengthen the basic building blocks of the organization: the foundation.

Mentoring for Leadership resource materials may be found at vfwauxiliary.org/resources.

- *2021-2022 National Program Book*.
- *Mentoring at VFW Auxiliary: Relationship Building for the Future*.
- *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation*.

Please be aware the Mentoring for Leadership and Chief of Staff Programs utilize many of the same tools and resources. Reviewing and sharing the various Membership materials available shall create dialogue and interest to the mentee and future leaders.

Listed within the Chief of Staff Resources:

- VFW Auxiliary Acronyms and Common Terminology
- Healthy Auxiliary Tool Kit
- Auxiliary Meeting Checklist
- Communication Phone/Text Tree
- Healthy Auxiliary Checklist – Auxiliary To-Dos and Deadlines
- VFW Auxiliary Meeting Challenges & Solutions
- VFW Auxiliary Member Questionnaire

Utilize the various Membership Recruitment and Retention Tools:

- Membership Engagement Packet
- Membership Moments
- VFW Auxiliary Fact Sheet
- Member Benefits One-Sheet
- Cultivate Engagement by Asking “How would you like to contribute?”
- Matching Member Talents to Leadership Success
- Engaging Existing Members
- Know your National Bylaws
- Understanding Auxiliary Traditions video
- VFW Auxiliary National Programs Overview

Additional beneficial resources for the mentor, mentee and leader may be found at the Online Auxiliary Academy.

- MALTA (Membership Auxiliary Leadership Technology Access)
- Administrative & Instructional
- Social Media (Facebook)
- Membership & Leadership

**Goals + Mentoring + Leadership =
Healthy Auxiliary**

Mentoring for Leadership Program Awards

AWARDS FOR MEMBERS

1. Citation awarded to the first, second and third place member in each Department who is instrumental in fulfilling the role as a mentor/leader. Three nominations from each Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman are due by April 30, 2022 to the National Chief of Staff & Mentoring for Leadership Ambassador. Nomination form (required) available at vfwauxiliary.org/resources. Citation will be mailed directly to the member.

AWARDS FOR AUXILIARIES

1. Most Outstanding Implementation of a Mentoring for Leadership Program.
 - Citation to every Auxiliary that implements a Mentoring for Leadership Program. Entry form (required) available at vfwauxiliary.org/resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman by March 31, 2022.

The Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman must send a copy of all submitted entry forms to National Headquarters by April 30, 2022.

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 implementation of a Mentoring for Leadership Program.

The Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to the National Mentoring for Leadership Ambassador by April 30, 2022 for judging.

AWARDS FOR DEPARTMENTS AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN

1. Citation to each Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman for participation in this Program.
2. \$25 VFW Store Gift Certificate to one Department Mentoring for Leadership Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions who conducts the most informative School of Instruction at a Department meeting.
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 listed at the top of Page 27.