

## **VETERANS AND FAMILY SUPPORT 2021-2022**



Diane Ahrens  
809 Royal Lane  
West Dundee, IL 60118  
P: 224-805-1220  
E: dahrens0221@gmail.com

The Veterans and Family Support Program has a mission of giving something back to our Veterans. Every veteran has sacrificed a part of their life to keep the American Dream a reality. It is our obligation as an Auxiliary to assist those who have served whenever possible. This includes assisting their families to cope with the stress of deployment, with its unexpected challenges while their loved one is away serving. This also includes physical and emotional injuries received during active duty and other struggles related to being in the military, some are seen, and many are unseen. The National Veterans Service and the Veterans and Military Support Program are two parts of this program with distinct purposes for supporting our veterans, active military, and their families.

**National Veterans Service (NVS)** works to ensure that all veterans, service members, and their families obtain the benefits that they earned. This VFW sponsored network works nationwide to provide Service Officers who help veterans navigate the Veterans Affairs system. There is no cost for this service. They assist all veterans (VFW members or not) in filing claims for disability compensation, rehabilitation and educational programs, pension and death benefits, and employment and training programs. They also assist veterans in receiving access to health care medical evaluations, and treatment for drug or alcohol dependency. Your donations are what keep this network in operation. To get reported in this portion of the program donate to NVS online at [vfw.org/ways-to-help](http://vfw.org/ways-to-help) or donate by mail with funds earmarked for National Veterans Service: VFW National Headquarters Attn: NVS, 406 W 34<sup>th</sup> St. 11<sup>th</sup> Floor Kansas City, MO 64111. After making your donation, report it to your Chairman, donations of any amount are acceptable.

**The Veterans and Military Support Program (VMS)** contains three programs initiated by the VFW. They were created to serve our active duty and recently discharged military.

## **VETERANS AND FAMILY SUPPORT 2021-2022**

- **Military Assistance Program (MAP)** provides financial assistance to Posts, Districts and Departments that are sponsoring military send offs, homecomings or other get togethers such as baby showers for veterans and their spouses. It will also assist with postage for Posts & Auxiliaries that are participating in Adopt-A-Unit. Guidelines for applying for these funds can be received from the VFW Veterans & Military Support Office @ 816-756-3390
- **UNMET NEEDS** provides grants up to \$1,500 to meet expenses for those actively serving in the military. It was developed to help military families through a financial crisis. Military families could qualify for a grant to help pay for necessities such as rent car repairs, utilities, and food. To learn more about the program visit [vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants](http://vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants), (with many of our National Guard serving FULL time, this would be a great way to assist families, you can reach out to your local FRG/Family Readiness Group)
- **VFW “Sports Clips Help a HERO SCHOLARSHIP”** awards scholarships of up to \$5,000 to qualifying veterans and service members to help them complete their educational goals without incurring excessive debt. More information can be found at [vfw.org/student-veterans-support](http://vfw.org/student-veterans-support).

These programs help to meet needs of our military and their families with the day-to-day trials of serving, and the adjustments when a soldier returns from deployment.

Donate online at [vfw.org/ways-to-help](http://vfw.org/ways-to-help), selecting **VETERANS & MILITARY SUPPORT** click “Contribute”. To donate by mail, send the funds to:

VFW National Headquarters

attn: Veterans & Family Support

406 W 34<sup>th</sup> St., 9<sup>th</sup> floor

Kansas City MO 64111 and then report to your Chairperson, any amount is acceptable.

### **Veteran & Military Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Awareness**

Make a difference in the life of a veteran or service member in crisis by educating yourself and others about the warning signs of suicide.

- **The Veterans Crisis Line** connects veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders thru a confidential toll-free hotline online chat, or text. Veterans and their loved ones can:
  - **Call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1**
  - **Chat online at [veteranscrisisline.net](http://veteranscrisisline.net)**
  - **Send a text message to 838255**

## **VETERANS AND FAMILY SUPPORT 2021-2022**

Confidential support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Support for deaf and hard of hearing individuals is available.

**TIP:** add the Veterans Crisis Line number as a contact in your cell phone for easy referral.

**The Veteran & Military Suicide Awareness Blue Teardrop sticker** is the VFW Auxiliary's symbol to give this issue the attention it so desperately needs. Wear the teardrop to open a conversation, when asked, share it is to create awareness for veteran and military suicide. Download the Veteran & Military Suicide Awareness Blue Teardrop Sticker template at [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources).

### **MENTAL WELLNESS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES**

A staggering 20 veterans commit suicide each day, and the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary are committed to helping change the conversation and stigma surrounding mental health in the United States. Change the stigma, improve research, support your community, and explore treatment options at the resources below:

- **The Campaign to change Direct/** [changedirection.org](http://changedirection.org)
- **Give An Hour/** [giveanhour.org](http://giveanhour.org)
- **Patients like Me/**[patientslikeme.com/join/vfw](http://patientslikeme.com/join/vfw)
- **One Mind/**[onemind.org](http://onemind.org)
- **The Elizabeth Dole Foundation/**[elizabethdolefoundation.org](http://elizabethdolefoundation.org)
- **Help Heal Veterans (Therapeutic Craft Kits)** [healvets.org](http://healvets.org)
- **Veterans Voices Writing Project/**[veteransvoices.org](http://veteransvoices.org)
- **Road Home Program/**[roadhomeprogram.org](http://roadhomeprogram.org) 312-942-8387(VETS)/RUSH Center of Excellence for Veterans & their families
- **Coaching into Care(VA) 1-888-823-7458**

When you participate in any type of suicide awareness program, which would include your local and district meetings, or one involving the community, please report this under Other Veterans & Family Support. You can use the resources above to promote suicide awareness. These groups are trying to change the stigma of mental health issues and promote research and treatment options for those affected.

### **SUPPORT FOR VETERAN & MILITARY CAREGIVERS**

Caregiver for a veteran is a role that many parents spouses, children and other family members and friends have taken. The VA Caregivers Support Line is answered by licensed professionals who can connect callers with several different services, **1-855-260-3274** or more information is available at [caregiver.va.gov](http://caregiver.va.gov). If you are now in the role of a veteran's caregiver consider using these resources for support. As an Auxiliary, you can offer your support to those in this role. Host a luncheon, mail a thank

## **VETERANS AND FAMILY SUPPORT 2021-2022**

you card, send a gift card for personal care or give them a phone call to let them know that you appreciate them for serving our veterans. National Family Caregivers Month is observed each November and May is Military Caregiver Month. Be sure to follow up and report that under Other Veterans & Family Support. Caregiver Services available from the VA's Caregiver Support Line:

- Adult Day health care centers
- Home-based primary care
- Home hospice care
- Homemaker and Home Health aide Program
- Home telehealth
- Respite Care
- Skilled home care

### **EDUCATION, PROMOTION AND PUBLICDITY**

When we take time to educate the community about our many important programs that help veterans and their families, we create an opportunity to join with other organizations. Promote the Veterans & Military Support Programs to local civic, faith based and school related groups. Publicize what your auxiliary is doing to support our veterans. Newspapers, social media and speaking at local functions are just some ways you can educate your communities on these projects and encourage groups to work with your auxiliary and VFW. Together we can succeed in the fight to keep our veterans and military lives physically and mentally whole.

#### **Possible Community Partners**

- **Salvation Army**
- **Alpha Beta Clubs in local high schools**
- **Scout groups**
- **Church youth groups**
- **Senior Center @ local Park Districts**
- **Local businesses**
- **Chamber of Commerce**
- **Rotary & Lions Clubs** (like to have speakers at their meetings)
- **Community college, veterans' groups**

When thinking about Veterans & Family Support, I gravitate to family, what keeps our Veterans strong is the family, their purpose, those to come home to. Auxiliaries are reaching out, looking for ways to serve our young veterans our increasing number of women veterans also. **MY CHALLENGE FOR YOU IS: Veterans Baby Showers.** This can be accomplished in many ways, the VA

## **VETERANS AND FAMILY SUPPORT 2021-2022**

Women Veterans Clinics and the VA Transition Care Management Programs are in touch with young veterans recently discharged and often beginning a new season of family. Baby Showers are also a great way to reach out to community to get them involved thru the local Salvation Army, and Senior Centers often have quilters or knitters looking for outlets for the beautiful items they are making. School and church groups are often willing to have a diaper & baby wipes drive or even make a wish list and have the Auxiliary set up outside of Walmart with Buddy Poppies and give customers a list to pick an item or two from to donate to the shower. It really encourages the community when they see what the Auxiliary is doing to serve our Veterans. The key is to reach out to your local VA facility, work with them, remember the importance of keeping the veteran's information confidential. You can begin with collecting needed items and making the available for new parents at no cost. Car seats are first on the list to be able to bring the newborn home, Pack-n-Plays or play yards with a bassinette are so versatile. Of course, diapers, onesies, blankets, the possibilities are almost endless. All items need to be new, because of COVID, BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY WE WANT TO HONOR OUR VETERANS. Gently used items can be implemented in a veterans closet type resource. (Note: Women Veterans that are expecting stay in contact with a social worker at the VA, however they receive Maternity care outside of the VA)

### DEPARTMENT AWARDS

#### **Auxiliaries**

- 1. A citation to every auxiliary that is reported in all three parts of the program by December 32, 2021.**
- 2. A citation to every auxiliary that gives a suicide awareness workshop to the public or in an auxiliary meeting. Report must be submitted to Department Chairperson by March 31, 2022**
- 3. An award to the Auxiliary Chairperson with the best promotion of the VFW Program presented to the public through media (newspapers, radio, TV, etc) or presentations given to a civic, educational, or other organization. Report must be submitted to Chairperson by March 31 2022.**

#### **Districts**

- 1. A citation to every district that is 100% reported in each part of the program by December 31, 2021**
- 2. An Award to the District Chairman with the best promotion of the VFW Program. Report must be submitted to the Chairperson by March 31, 2022**

#### **National Awards**

## ***VETERANS AND FAMILY SUPPORT 2021-2022***

- 1. A citation will be mailed to every Auxiliary, District and Department that donated a minimum of \$25.00 to the VFW Foundation earmarked for Unmet Needs-Hunger between July 1, 2021 and April 31, 2022.**

# Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue!

A national anthem singing contest for youth ages six to 16.

## CONTEST ELIGIBILITY

- Open to youth ages six to 16 years at the time of local entry.
- Contestant must be a U.S. citizen or U.S. national.
- Contestant does not have to be related to a VFW or VFW Auxiliary member to participate, but must live or attend school in the same state as the sponsoring VFW Auxiliary.

## CONTEST RULES

- Video of contestant solo vocal performance of “The Star-Spangled Banner” must be recorded between July 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021.
  - Contestant shall state name and age prior to vocal performance.
- Contestant may sing a cappella, with backing tracks or instruments.
- Contestant may sing in the arrangement and genre of their choice.
- Contestant may **NOT** change the words.
- Complete and sign contest entry form.
  - Parent/Guardian signature required on entry form.

## NATIONAL AWARDS

- One winner in each of the 10 National Auxiliary Program Divisions will receive a \$100 Visa gift card.
- One national winner will be selected from the 10 National Auxiliary Program Division winners.
  - The national winner will receive an additional \$1,000 Visa gift card.

## CONTESTANT SUBMISSION DEADLINE

March 31: Entry deadline to VFW Auxiliary.\*

Video must be saved to a DVD or flash drive, or uploaded to an online video platform (e.g. YouTube or Vimeo) and submitted with completed entry form to a local Auxiliary for judging.

*Maximum one entry per contestant. VFW Auxiliary is not responsible for incomplete, lost, late, misdirected or poor quality video entries. All scores are final as received from the judges. Falsifying information on the entry form is reason for immediate disqualification. All contestants agree to abide by the contest rules. Any violation of these rules shall be cause for immediate disqualification and forfeiture of award.*

## JUDGING AND AUXILIARY DEADLINES

Entry will be judged on vocal ability, mastery of lyrics, originality or interpretation and entertainment value.

*One winner from each VFW Auxiliary advances to the District competition (if applicable).*

April 10: Local VFW Auxiliary and District judging complete.

*One winner from each District (if applicable) advances to the Department competition.*

April 15: Local VFW Auxiliary and District (if applicable) winners to Department (state) Youth Activities Chairman for judging.\*

*One winner from each Department advances to the National Auxiliary Program Division competition.*

May 5: VFW Auxiliary Department (state) winners due to VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters.\*

June: National Auxiliary Program Division winners selected in each of the 10 Auxiliary Program Divisions.

July: One national winner selected from the National Auxiliary Program Division winners.

**Winners will be notified the week of August 9, 2021 via the email address provided on the winners' entry form.**

\* required deadlines



[www.vfwauxiliary.org](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org)

# Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue!

A national anthem singing contest for youth ages six to 16.

**CONTEST ENTRY FORM** Please print or complete fillable form at [www.vfwauxiliary.org/what-we-do/youth-activities](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org/what-we-do/youth-activities).

CONTESTANT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

*I certify that I have met all the contest requirements and that I am the sole author of the attached/enclosed video entry. By entering the contest, I grant the VFW Auxiliary royalty-free rights to use, edit, share, publish and broadcast my contest video entry for the "Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue!" national anthem singing contest for any and all promotional purposes by the VFW Auxiliary. I understand the video will not be sold but will remain the property of the VFW Auxiliary.*

CONTESTANT SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**ENTRIES NOT SPONSORED BY A LOCAL VFW AUXILIARY WILL BE RETURNED WITHOUT BEING JUDGED.**

SPONSORED BY VFW AUXILIARY # \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

JUDGED \_\_\_\_\_ VFW AUXILIARY YOUTH ACTIVITIES CHAIRMAN \_\_\_\_\_

CHAIRMAN OF JUDGES' SIGNATURE (REQUIRED) \_\_\_\_\_

**DISTRICT JUDGING** (Optional)

DATE JUDGED \_\_\_\_\_ DEPARTMENT YOUTH ACTIVITIES CHAIRMAN \_\_\_\_\_

CHAIRMAN OF JUDGES' SIGNATURE (REQUIRED) \_\_\_\_\_

**DEPARTMENT JUDGING**

DATE JUDGED \_\_\_\_\_ DEPARTMENT YOUTH ACTIVITIES CHAIRMAN \_\_\_\_\_

CHAIRMAN OF JUDGES' SIGNATURE (REQUIRED) \_\_\_\_\_

Department first-place entry must be received at VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters by May 5 or it will be disqualified.  
Email link to: [info@vfwauxiliary.org](mailto:info@vfwauxiliary.org) ATTN: Program Awards Administrator or Mail to: 406 W. 34th Street, 10th Floor, Kansas City, MO 64111.



[www.vfwauxiliary.org](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org)