



## VFW Programs & Projects

*Since its founding, the VFW has been a staple in the community. Troop support, youth activities, volunteering and scholarship programs are a few of the ways the VFW shines in the many communities and cities where Posts are located.*

### Youth Scholarship Programs

- ***Voice of Democracy***

This audio-essay competition annually awards nearly \$2 million in scholarships to students in grades 9-12. The first place winner receives a \$30,000 scholarship.

- ***Patriot's Pen***

More than \$1.2 million is awarded annually to students in grades 6-8 in this essay contest. The first place winner receives \$5,000.

- ***Teacher of the Year***

The VFW annually recognizes one exceptional (K-12) school teacher for their outstanding commitment to teaching Americanism and patriotism to their students. Awards include \$3,000 for his/her school and an all-expense-paid trip to attend the VFW National Convention.

### Educational Outreach

- ***Echoes From the Wall***

The VFW partnered with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund to distribute a curriculum, Echoes From the Wall, to 25,000 public and private high schools and donated \$50,000 to the project.

- ***Educational Brochures***

The VFW produces and distributes a flag brochure and poster.

- ***Veterans in the Classroom***

November is officially known as VFW Veterans in the Classroom Month. Members demonstrate flag etiquette and share their wartime experiences with America's youth.

### Youth Activities

Locally, VFW Posts sponsor various youth sporting programs such as baseball and ice hockey. In addition, many VFW Posts sponsor Boy and Girl Scout troops, Junior Olympics, bike safety, JROTC units, drill teams, color guards and a variety of other programs to build good citizenship and exemplary character in America's youth.

### Community Volunteerism

Each year, VFW members volunteer more than 9 million hours of service to various community endeavors.

- ***Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service***

The VFW was a charter member in 1946. VFW volunteers donate millions of hours of service annually at VA medical facilities.

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## **Troop Support**

- ***Military Assistance Program (MAP)***

More than 2.3 million service members and their families have been hosted at morale-boosting events sponsored by the VFW since 2005.

- ***Adopt-a-Unit***

More than 2,900 units and ships have been adopted through VFW Posts since 2007. VFW National Headquarters adopted the USS Cole in 2002.

- ***Care Packages***

Posts across the country show their support of America's military by collecting and distributing much-needed personal items for adopted units.

- ***VFW Unmet Needs***

This program administers emergency financial grants to military families to help cover basic expenses like mortgage payments, childcare, food and more. Since 2004, 10,660 grants have been issued totaling more than \$11.9 million.

- ***VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship"***

Introduced in 2013, this program awards scholarships of up to \$5,000 to qualifying veterans and service members. The program has provided more than 1,900 scholarships totaling nearly \$8.7 million.

- ***1 Student Veteran***

Enacted in 2013, this program offers direct assistance to student veterans who have questions or are experiencing problems accessing their VA benefits.