

VFW YOUTH ACTIVITIES CHAIRPERSON'S GUIDE



The Role of the Chairperson

The VFW's chairpersons do more than just plan projects to improve their communities. They also recruit volunteers, build relationships with community leaders, organize partnerships with civic groups and promote the VFW.

You Are the Point Person

A program chairperson should understand one important fact right from the outset: You are the Post's point person in your community. As chairperson you will be your Post's liaison to:

- school teachers and administrators community leader
- local military personnel
- city government officials
- members of civic groups
- members of the media
- your fellow veterans

Seek out these new relationships. When it comes time to recruit volunteers or you need specialized expertise for Post projects, these community contacts will prove invaluable.

Project an outgoing, friendly personality. Speak positively about your Post, your community and your projects. Articulate your thoughts and plans clearly, concisely and coherently. Remember, you represent not only your Post, but the entire VFW organization as well.

Reporting Your Activities

You may have heard it said that "the job's not over until the paperwork is done!" That is especially true of VFW Programs.

A chairperson must report their Post activities in their respective areas at least twice each year. Check with your respective Department chairperson to learn what should be reported and in what form. Documentation of your programmatic efforts is the thing that ensures the VFW's reputation and our not-for-profit status.

Master Organizational Skills

As chairperson, your talents must be varied. Consequently, your organizational skills should be fully developed. Some of your specific duties include

- recruiting and maintaining a pool of active volunteers
- identifying and initiating programs needed in your community
- motivating your Post members, community volunteers and sponsors involved in your various projects
- recognizing your volunteers efforts organizing and maintaining records, photos and newspaper clippings that document your act
- reporting to your Department chairperson the volunteer hours, dollars donated by the VFW, Auxiliary and Cootie members, and other information requested.

Through the contacts you've developed in your community, cooperate with other civic or fraternal groups. They may already be involved in community service programs you would like to undertake, or they may be eager to help with projects that you've planned. Also identify resources at your Post, talk with members and find out what special skills or hobbies they may have.

Scouting & JROTC

(Junior Reserve Officer Training Course)

Why should a Post become involved?

Few youth programs provide a greater benefit to a Post than involvement with a Scouting or JROTC unit. Both programs annually produce individuals with an appreciation for patriotism, civic responsibility and the likelihood of future military service. As Boy and Girl Scouts, Sea Scouts, Venture Scouts and JROTC cadets, these individuals are often a tremendous asset to a Post by helping with Post projects such as placing flags on graves on Veterans Day and Memorial Day, helping with Post maintenance and fix-up efforts, helping distribute "Buddy"® Poppies, providing color guards and assisting with VFW public events.

As young adults, participants in these programs are much more likely than others of their age group to enter the military and, ultimately, become eligible for membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

How does a Post become involved?

Aside from sponsoring or chartering a unit, there are literally hundreds of ways for a Post to serve the youth in their community through Scouting and JROTC and reap the benefits. Your Post may have individuals who would like to serve as leaders. Your Post may be able to serve as a meeting place or a place for a drill team to practice. Your Post may wish fund a unit or individual project. In turn, Scouts and cadets can fulfill their community service and civic requirements by helping with Post projects. It is truly a win-win situation for the Post and the youth of your community.

So, what do I do now?

For Scouting, you should make contact with the VFW Department Scouting Chairperson in your Department (state.) These are VFW members who are heavily involved in Scouting and have committed themselves to growing Scouting within their respective Departments. They will be happy to assist your Post and its members in becoming involved with this important youth program. For JROTC, your state's Adjutant may be able to help identify a JROTC unit in your area.

VFW members of Posts can request additional information about Scouting & ROTC by calling the VFW Programs office at 816.968.2787 or email a request to scouting@vfw.org.

Youth Cadet Awards Program

VFW awards for special recognition of outstanding achievement and exceptional leadership are available for Junior and Senior ROTC programs, Naval Sea Cadets and Civil Air Patrol Cadets. If any of these programs exist in your community, these awards provide your Post an outstanding opportunity to honor these patriotic young people.

Awards Administration

Cadet awards may be initiated by the local VFW Post or directly by the cadet's unit. In either case, documentation should come from the unit as follows:

- **Naval Sea Cadets:** from the unit commanding officer in a letter with copy to NSCCHQ.
- **Civil Air Patrol Cadets:** from the candidate's squadron by submitting a CAPF-120.
- **JROTC/SROTC Cadets:** from the unit by submitting a letter documenting the criteria.

All letters of nomination should be sent to:

Your local VFW Department (State) Headquarters

***If you cannot locate your state VFW department contact information you may go to <https://www.vfw.org/>**

****If you are still unable to locate their contact information, contact John Linstra at 816-968-2787 for assistance.**

Criteria for Civil Air Patrol and Naval Sea Cadets

- Good academic standing
- Satisfactory progress in the cadet program
- Outstanding achievement in community service and/or the cadet program
- Outstanding leadership in the cadet program
- High moral character
- Exceptional professionalism in appearance and actions (Officer Award)
- Outstanding military bearing and conduct in and out of uniform (NCO Award)
- Involvement in patriotic programs, drill team, color guard, etc.
- Demonstrated potential and willingness to assume higher levels of responsibility

Additional criteria for JROTC & SROTC awards:

- Positive attitude toward the ROTC program
- For JROTC, must be enrolled as a 10th - 12th grade JROTC student
- For SROTC, must be an undergraduate student enrolled in Military Science I through IV
- Must maintain a "B" average in ROTC curriculum and a "C" average in all remaining subjects with no failing grades in the previous semester
- Active in at least one other student extracurricular activity (music, athletics, government, etc.)

Upon receipt of the letter and documentation, VFW Department personnel will review the submitted materials. If all documents are in order, the Department or a VFW Post, close to the event, will purchase the award(s) through the VFW Store for presentation.

Awards, stock numbers and contact information are as follows:

JROTC Medal 01229 & JROTC Citation 04387

ROTC Medal 01226 & ROTC Citation 04386

Civil Air Patrol Officer Medal 01208 & CAP Officer Citation 04394

Civil Air Patrol NCO Medal 01209 & CAP NCO Citation 04395

Naval Sea Cadet Medal 01207 & NSC Citation 04393

Order citations and medals from:

VFW Store

406 W. 34th Street

Kansas City, MO 64111

Web: vfwstore.org

For phone orders call: 833-VFW-VETS (833.839.8387)

Other Youth Activities

The VFW's history with youth sports goes back decades. VFW formerly offered one of the largest marble tournaments in the U.S. Although marble shooting has become a lost ability, VFW Posts have supported youth with team and individual sports like competitive shooting, ice hockey, baseball, basketball, softball, boxing, wrestling, and almost any sport you can name.

Like most VFW Post activities, the key is to identify an interest or need in the youth of your community and offer your Post and its members as a resource. Efforts can be as brief as raising a few dollars to provide equipment to sponsoring a team and providing coaches.

The purpose of all these endeavors is two-fold. First, it encourages young people to pursue physical activity that also builds character. Second, it connects young people with America's veterans and their families thereby providing an opportunity to pass on our values of service, civic responsibility and patriotism to the next generation. These kinds of connections also offer a tremendous opportunity to promote our scholarship programs.

Various states have a history of VFW involvement in youth sports. Check with your Department office to determine what other Posts are doing and how your Post can become involved.

Scout of the Year Program

Annually, the Veterans of Foreign Wars recognizes Eagle Scouts, Girl Scout Gold Award recipients, Venture Summit Award recipients and/or Sea Scout Quartermasters who have risen above their peers in exemplifying the qualities of that rank.

To be eligible the candidate must:

- Be the recipient of the Eagle Scout Award, Girl Scouts Gold Award, Venture Summit Award or Sea Scout Quartermaster Award.
- Be a registered, active member of a Boy or Girl Scout Troop, Venturing Crew or Sea Scout Ship at the time the above award was received.

- Have demonstrated exemplary citizenship in school, Scouting and community.

Prior National Scout of the Year winners are ineligible. Applicants still in high school who reach their 18th birthday during the nomination year remain eligible if otherwise qualified. A Scout may enter through only one VFW Post.

A local Post can be identified by zip code at vfw.org/FindaPost.

Deadline for entries:

March 1 - Entry to the VFW Post.

April 1 - One candidate with full entry criteria must be submitted by a VFW Post to the next level of judging. The VFW Department (state) Scouting chairperson can provide this information.

May 1 - Department winner submission to VFW national organization from Department Scouting Chairperson.

Candidate entry forms are available from your VFW Department Scouting chairperson, by visiting vfw.org/Scout, by calling 816.968.2787, or by emailing scouting@vfw.org.

Required Documentation

The following documentation should be submitted to your local VFW Post:

- 3x5 photograph of the Scout - in correct, complete uniform for their current rank.
- High School Participation Record - a single page, one sided resume of the candidate's school activities indicating academic achievement, offices held, honors received and significant participation in other activities.
- Scouting Record - maximum of three pages, one side only, listing of all Scouting participation beginning with Cub Scouts/Brownies - years of participation, unit numbers and sponsors. Also include when Eagle, Gold, or Quartermaster Award was received and Palms. Identify leadership positions held at all levels, participation in Scouting activities (jamborees, Order of the Arrow conferences, etc.) and the candidates Eagle Scout, Girl Scout Gold Award, Venture Summit or Sea Scout Quartermaster Project.
- Community Service Record - a single page, one-sided resume listing participation in community and religious service organizations (excluding Scouting and school), noting leadership positions held and any recognition received.
- Letters of Recommendation - submit three letters, no more than two pages in length from:
 - A scout leader.
 - A community member.
 - A teacher/faculty member (If homeschooled, a parent letter is allowed.)

In addition, you may include one or two additional letters, no more than two pages, from local community members who have special knowledge of the candidate's abilities and accomplishments.

- Find the Entry Form at vfw.org/Scout.

VFW Department Scouting Chairperson

The backbone of Scouting in the VFW is the VFW Scouting Team. These VFW members are deeply involved in Scouting, most with decades of experience.

Appointed by their Department Commander, they are responsible for promoting Scouting in their state, and are available to encourage Posts to sponsor and support units and individual Scout projects. They should be the Department's "expert" on all phases of Scouting. Departments may have multiple members of the VFW Scouting Team, but every Department should have at least one individual to promote the values of scouting to youth and the VFW itself.

For more information call 816.968.2787 or email scouting@vfw.org.



For further information on Youth Programs contact:

John Linstra

Youth Programs Coordinator, Programs

VFW National Headquarters

406 W. 34th Street

Kansas City, MO 64111

816.968.2787

youthscholarships@vfw.org