

Membership

For this month's Commander's Challenge, the top Post in each division with the highest total of new members (Annual, Life or Installment Life) will receive a \$1,000 award deposited into their Post account. In addition, if the top Post also shares this challenge on your Post's Facebook page, they will receive an additional \$250 award! Get the word out and let's increase our Life membership!

Commander-in-Chief Hal Roesch is focusing on bringing lapsed members back into the fold in 2021. To this end, we're issuing a three-month challenge to every VFW Department. From Feb. 1 through April 30, we want you, as Department leaders, to get your Posts working those lapsed member lists and bringing former members back into the VFW. For this contest, we're going to be focusing on members whose dues lapsed prior to Jan. 1, 2021. We want to see how many of those lapsed members can be recovered by your Posts over these three months, either as dues-paying annual or Life members. We've split the Departments into two groups:

- Group A for those Departments who had over 20,000 members at the end of the last membership year.
- Group B for the Departments who had fewer than 20,000 members. After close of business on April 30, we'll look at how many members each Department has recovered; the top finisher in each group will receive a \$5,000 award, the second-place finisher will receive \$3,000, and the third-place finisher will receive \$2,000.

Three-Month Lapsed Member Challenge: From Feb. 1 to April 30, the Commander-in-Chief has tasked all VFW Departments to work their lapsed member lists and bring members back into the fold. The Departments who recover the most members over the next three months will receive a monetary award into the Department account, but in addition to that every Department who recovers at least three lapsed members for every Post in their Department will be entered into a drawing for a .30-30 Henry Rifle!

DEPARTMENT "100 PERCENT" INCENTIVE

Any Department that attains 100% in membership by close of business on March 31, 2021, will be entered into a random drawing. The Commander (plus guest) and the Quartermaster (plus guest) for the Department that is selected will each receive:

- **\$2,500 voucher through Veterans Travel Services (VTS) applied towards airfare, accommodations and transportation for a trip of their own choice.**

KANSAS CITY SPREE

The top two Post Commanders and the top two District Commanders in each division who achieve 100 percent membership by April 1, 2021, along with their spouse or guest, will be awarded:

- Round-trip airfare to Kansas City, MO, from the airport nearest the awardee's home.

- A fun-filled weekend (May 20-23, 2021) that may include but is not limited to – touring, shopping, and a complete tour of the VFW National Headquarters.

NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP MATERIAL ORDER FORM

As you get started in the new membership year, we have made it easier for you to get all the recruiting brochures you will need to make this membership year successful! It's as easy as one two three!

1. Go to vfw.org and click the login link in the upper right corner. Sign in when prompted.
2. Under "Membership Quick Links," select **Membership Online Order Form**.
3. Use the dropdown list to indicate items you need. The form will automatically calculate the cost of items and shipping. When finished, click SUBMIT and it will take you to a billing page if there are any charges.

Follow the simple steps and if you have any questions, you may contact Leticia Cortez at **1.888.564.6839** or email us at membership@vfw.org.

POST DEVELOPMENT

Please continue to let us know your achievements and the challenges you face working through these difficult times. If you have Posts in your Departments/Districts deserving of a Membership Shout Out, please send us details and pictures if you have them! The National Membership team would like to recognize those efforts by calling attention to them and passing along the lessons learned as well. Stay strong and stay healthy – we look forward to seeing the increase in activity as the COVID vaccine is distributed. If you have any questions about chartering a new Post or revitalizing a Post in your area, please give me a call at 816.968.2788 or email coreyhunt@vfw.org.

For any questions or further information, please contact the Membership department via email at membership@vfw.org or call us at 1.888.564.6839.

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook to view the latest membership news, Post Shout-Outs and important resource information throughout the year - facebook.com/VFWmembershipHQ/.

UPCOMING TRAINING

The next Membership Monday training webinar will be on March 8, 2021, at 2:00 PM CST, and we will be covering the topic **The Legacy Program**. Look for the Membership Monday Zoom meeting invite in an OMS Notification on March 4, 2021. All members can join. In addition, the Zoom link we be emailed as a meeting invitation to each Department's leadership and VFW Auxiliary President.

If you would like to suggest a Membership Monday training topic, please email us at membership@vfw.org.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TOP THREE RECRUITERS!

Top Three Recruiters (as of 2/23/2021)

Karol A. Carswell – 117
VFW Post 9983, Dept. of NC

Robert Allan Clark – 101
VFW Post 4876, Dept. OK

Timothy C. Peters – 101
VFW Post 1087, Dept. of MT

LEGACY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

CHECK OUT OUR LEGACY LIFE VIDEO! Go to vfw.org, click on JOIN, and scroll down to Legacy Life Membership and then click on the video on the right. This prestigious program is available to all Life members and is now available in memoriam for past Life and annual members. There are three levels of membership; each offer their own package of exclusive member benefits. Financial contributions to the Legacy Life Member Program are tax deductible to the maximum extent allowed by law.

Enrollment Cost:

Annual Payouts:

<u>Levels</u>		<u>Posts</u>	<u>Departments</u>	<u>National</u>
Gold-	\$1,200.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$18.00
Silver-	\$800.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
Bronze-	\$400.00	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00

What will your Legacy be?

VFW Foundation

- The Home Depot Community Impact Grant for 2021 is now open after suspension last year due to COVID-19. VFW Posts can receive up to \$5,000 toward maintenance and improvements to their Post building! We encourage all Posts to apply ASAP if you desire to remodel your building. Please note that this is a competitive grant program and not all applications will be funded. Moreover, the application this year has major revisions. To make the process easier, the VFW Foundation has produced an easy-to-understand how to apply guide that walks Post members through the online application process. For your copy or if you have any questions, contact Grants & External Relations Coordinator Jason Couch at JCouch@vfw.org or 816.968.1174.
- Fourteen Burger King franchises enlisted 296 of their restaurants to participate in the November 2020 Unmet Needs fundraising campaign and raised over \$175,000 for the program.
- The VFW Foundation is currently working with 60 Harley-Davidson dealers in AL, FL, GA, KY, LA, MO, MI, NC, SC, TN, TX, WI, and WV to raise money for the Unmet Needs program. This relationship was collaborated with Jesse James Dupree the lead singer, guitarist, and primary songwriter of the rock band Jackyl and his marketing extension Mighty Loud Enterprises which subsequently led to VFW sponsorship of the Daytona Motorcycle Rally. VFW Posts have been introduced to Harley-Davidson dealers in their geographic areas to schedule VFW/Harley-Davidson events which are on-going (even in this restricted COVID-19 environment). To date, \$104,350 total funds have been raised by Jesse James Dupree's efforts!

Contact: VFW Foundation Administrator Richard Potter at RPotter@vfw.org.

VFW National Convention

VFW NATIONAL CONVENTION HOUSING:

The 122nd National Convention housing will officially open on March 19, 2021. Housing reservation information will be located on the convention website accessed through the main VFW website at vfw.org/convention. The convention website will also have general convention information including the registration form and links to other convention related information for Baltimore, MD, July 31-Aug. 5, 2021, including a tentative agenda.

CONVENTION REGISTRATION: Section 222 of the National Bylaws and the Manual of Procedure states each Post will pay, in advance, a National Convention registration fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) which shall entitle the Post to a packet of convention information and materials and one identified registered delegate for the VFW National Convention. Each additional delegate attending the National Convention will pay a ten dollar (\$10) delegate fee provided the Post has paid the mandated \$25 advance registration fee. All advance registrations should be mailed to the VFW National Headquarters, 406 W. 34th Street, Kansas City, MO 64111, ATTN: Convention Registration or you may register online by going to vfw.org.

Development

Soon to Arrive – Special Edition VFW Birthday Cards – This spring the VFW is mailing the 2021 Birthday Card Collection and other gifts in recognition of your commitment to the VFW – and to struggling veterans of all generations. Also enclosed is a special Thank You card for a veteran or service member. Please sign and return it right away. We will deliver your signed Thank You card to one of America's service members or hospitalized veterans in time for Independence Day, this July 4th. It means so much to them to know their fellow veterans remember and care.

Approximately 2.7 million men and women have served in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Thousands of them have come home with injuries that will require a lifetime of care. Some injuries you can plainly see. Other wounds are invisible, but often just as devastating. Since 2000, more than 413,800 service members have suffered a Traumatic Brain Injury – and the numbers are rising every day. More than half of Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans treated by the VA have received care for mental health issues such as Post-Traumatic Stress.

The VFW wants to be sure when these newest veterans – and veterans from all wars and conflicts – turn to us for assistance, we have the programs available for them. Please send a donation in honor of your fellow veterans who now face a long road to recovery from injuries sustained in battle. Your gift will mean that these programs stay available and strong right in your Department.

2021 Voice of Democracy Grand-Prize Winner to be Announced – Watch your email for an announcement of the 2021 Voice of Democracy State winners to VFW Friends of Freedom. We hope you will take the opportunity to listen to the essay given by your state winner as well as the winners from other states. "The grand-prize winner will be announced live on the VFW's Facebook page during the virtual Parade of Winners event, April 1, at 7 p.m. CDT." If you are not currently a member of the VFW Friends of Freedom, you can sign up to receive these important alerts at vfw.org.

Helping the VFW for Generations to Come – One of the easiest ways to continue providing support for your brothers and sisters-in-arms, as well as their families, is to name the VFW in your will or trust. It only takes a few words, and you remain in control of your assets during your lifetime. Just a small percentage of your assets could go a long way in helping the VFW continue its mission into the future.

Free estate planning information is always available by contacting the VFW Planned Giving Office: call 816.968.1119, email plannedgiving@vfw.org or visit vfw.org/plannedgiving.

Have You Heard About the VFW’s Partners in Patriotism? – Commander-in-Chief Harold “Hal” Roesch II would like you to join with him in supporting the VFW’s life-changing programs for veterans, service members and their families and reduce the amount of mail you receive. The VFW has an option that allows you to support VFW programs on a monthly, quarterly, or yearly basis, as well as reduce expenses and eliminate the fundraising mail. It is called Partners in Patriotism. As a member of Partners in Patriotism, you choose a set dollar amount for your donation (minimum amount of \$10) that is either charged to your credit card or set up as an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) from your bank account. Once you join the VFW’s Partners in Patriotism, you will only receive the Quarterly Supporter newsletters to keep you informed of the many efforts your monthly gifts are making possible, and a Year End Tax Receipt mailed by the end of January. If you are interested in joining Partners in Patriotism, you may contact Donor Services in the VFW Development Department at 1.833.VFW.GIVE (1.833.839.4483) or email us at partners@vfw.org with “Partners in Patriotism Application” in the subject line.

VFW Friends of Freedom – If you are not already a member of the VFW’s online community, please visit vfw.org and look for the gold banner that says “**Find Out What’s Happening**” to sign up. As a member of the VFW’s Friends of Freedom, you will receive special emails with breaking VFW news, legislative alerts and unique opportunities to help the VFW in assisting our nation’s veterans, service members and their families. You may also visit vfw.org/VFWatWork and click on “**Read VFW success stories**” to learn how the VFW is fighting for veterans’ rights, assisting veterans in need, educating our youth and aiding military families across the nation. Check back often to see newly posted stories!

Department Resources – Many great resources are available for your Department to use in promoting fundraising programs. These resources are available at heroes.vfw.org/VFWTools. The latest fundraising program information, ideas and promotional tools from the Development Department can be found here. Download ad slicks, ready-to-use articles and other items for your Department publications and/or website. Recent mailings and mail schedules are also posted on a regular basis. Use the tools found on the VFW Department Resources Page to help strengthen your Department programs. Check it out today!

VFW Communications

VFW support is often best illustrated at the local level, in communities and cities all over the world. And as the VFW’s spring and summer calendar quickly fills up, now is the perfect opportunity to ensure you’re using the wide array of tools available to showcase the vital work VFW Posts provide and why our mission is so important.

If you’re looking for new ways to share our message, we’ve got you covered. In the [VFW Media Room](#), you’ll find everything from downloadable PSAs and promotional videos, to posters and print ads.

If you need logo resources or #StillServing promotional materials, visit the **VFW Training & Support** section of VFW.org and gain access to the many resources available to you. With TV and radio spots ranging

from general VFW and program awareness, to donation campaigns and appeals for membership, finding something to fit your needs is easy!

Veterans & Military Support Programs

As we plan for the 2021 National Convention in Baltimore, we want to remind all Veterans & Military Support Chairmen to get their money in for the 2020-21 lapel pins that were mailed.

Please contact the Veterans & Military Support office at 816.968.1102 if you have any questions on how much your Department needs to send in.

There will be a new design for the Veterans & Military Support lapel pin for 2021-22! Chairmen will be able to pre-order their pins to be mailed. If you have not turned in your donation for the 2020-21 lapel pins, you will need to pay for the 2020-21 pins before you can order your 2021-22 pins. Request forms will be provided sometime in April.

Reminder: All donations to Veterans & Military Support programs must be received by April 30, 2021, to qualify for the Veterans & Military Support Certificate of Appreciation. To qualify for All-American, a **minimum of \$100** must be donated to Veterans & Military Support by June 30, 2021.

VMS Formstack Links and Websites:

- **VFW Website Solution:** VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/websolutionapp
- **AUX Website Solution:** VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/auxwebsolutionapp
- **Chairman Report:** VFWPrograms.formstack.com/forms/vms_chairman_report
- **MAP Grant Application:** vfw.org/MAPGrantApplication
- **MAP Grant Report:** vfw.org/MAPGrantReport
- **Adopt a Unit Application:** vfw.org/AdoptAUnitApp
- **Adopt a Unit Report:** vfw.org/AdoptAUnitReport
- **VMS Online Donation:** heroes.vfw.org/page/22950/donate1

Donating to the VMS Program can also be done on the VFW Dashboard by going to the link “**VMS Donation**” on the upper right-hand corner of the screen. Your \$100 or more donation to the VMS Programs meets the eligibility for All-American in this category. Thank you for your support!

VFW Programs

DISPLAYING MILITARY SERVICE SYMBOLS. Military service flags, insignias, etc., should be displayed in the following order (left to right as you face the flags): Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and then Space Force. For military flags, go to vfwstore.org/products/GP238.

“SAVE THE DATE.” On April 16, the WW1 Centennial Commission will celebrate the inaugural raising of the flag over the newly constructed Memorial site in Washington, D.C. The First Colors Ceremony will be a virtual live stream event featuring notable speakers and entertainment. Exact time and link to watch this exciting ceremony will be provided at a later date.

50TH ANNIVERSARY VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATION PROGRAM. The Commemorative Partner Program is designed for federal, state and local communities, veterans' organizations and other non-governmental organizations to assist a grateful nation in thanking and honoring our Vietnam veterans and their families. As a Commemorative Partner, VFW Posts are encouraged to participate in the Commemoration of the Vietnam War by planning and conducting events and activities that will recognize the Vietnam veterans and their families' service, valor, and sacrifice.

Events and activities should be dignified, memorable occasions that show a sensitivity and appreciation for the solemnity of war and the losses suffered by many. Commemorative Partners should communicate how their events will achieve the congressionally-mandated objectives of the program. Events or activities should meet one or more of the following objectives.

1. To thank and honor veterans of the Vietnam War, including personnel who were held as prisoners of war or listed as missing in action, for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States and to thank and honor the families of these veterans.
2. To highlight the service of the Armed Forces during the Vietnam War and the contributions of Federal agencies and governmental and non-governmental organizations that served with, or in support of, the Armed Forces.
3. To pay tribute to the contributions made on the home front by the people of the United States during the Vietnam War.
4. To highlight the advances in technology, science, and medicine related to military research conducted during the Vietnam War.
5. To recognize the contributions and sacrifices made by the allies of the United States during the Vietnam War.

For the VFW Posts interested in becoming an official Commemorative Partner, they must submit an application and a signed Statement of Understanding.

Applications are available at VietnamWar50th.com on the Commemorative Partner Program. The approval process is usually less than 30 days. Partners will be kept informed through electronic notifications. Once approved as a Partner, the Commemoration will provide organizations with a starter kit of materials for developing and implementing their programs. If you have any questions regarding the Commemorative Partner Program application process, please direct them to: whs.vnwar50th_cpp@mail.mil. For Vietnam War commemorative items, shop the VFW Store at: vfwstore.org/searchresults?q=vietnam.

SMART/MAHER VFW NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION TEACHER AWARD.

Nominations for this award and the judging at the Post, District and Department level (if applicable) are completed. The Department Teacher winners that are received at National Headquarters will receive a VFW National citation for both the winning teacher and their school in each grade category.

Order the Citizenship Education Teacher Recognition Citation from VFW Store, product #4320, vfwstore.org/products/23980. Present to all teachers nominated at all levels for the national award.

VFW SPECIAL PROJECT PROGRAM. This program was put in place to recognize VFW units for creating and completing unique and extraordinary community service projects.

Record book entry nominations that are found to be complete and well-substantiated should be endorsed by the Department Adjutant or VFW Department Community Activities Chairman and forwarded to National Programs Department. Deadline for entries is April 30 of each year.

Every Post Special Project receiving the Award of Excellence in the May judging will be entered in the Fred C. Hall Memorial Outstanding Post Special Project Competition. Complete information can be found in the VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairman's Manual.

NATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION PROGRAM. This program is designed to provide recognition and awards to VFW members who volunteer their time to outside organizations. Recognition is in the form of certificates and/or lapel pins which are given to volunteers who have completed the number of hours prescribed for those awards. For more information, see the VFW Community Activities and Citizenship Education Chairmen's Manual or contact Tammy at 816.756.3390, ext. 6287 in the VFW Programs department for a nomination form.

WORLD WAR I CENTENNIAL NEWS:

Is Your Post Named for a Veteran of the Great War (World War I)? If so, we want to hear from you! The U.S. World War I Centennial Commission is collecting information on VFW Posts named after WWI veterans. If your Post is honored by the memory of a local doughboy, marine, sailor, or nurse who served and sacrificed their lives, we want to know more. Please send your information and material on the history of your Post to: David Hamon, Veterans and Military Affairs Director, U.S. World War I Centennial Commission, at david.hamon@worldwar1centennial.org or you may call him at 540.379.8584. The Commission is collecting historical and archive information on the Great War to observe and commemorate those 4.7 million who served in that conflict. America never forgets its veterans. Help them build a national memorial in Washington, D.C. To learn more, go to: ww1cc.org/memorial.

Help Build America's World War I Memorial in Washington, D.C. The U.S. World War I Centennial Commission recently announced the creation of the AEF (Allied Expeditionary Forces) Memorial Corps. The program is a special designation for Posts, patriotic organizations, local chapters of civic organizations, among others, to be recognized as an official "AEF Memorial Corps Post" for making a donation to build the national WWI memorial in Washington, D.C. Your Post will be certified with a special Centennial Certificate commemorating your contribution in "going over the top" to get the memorial built. For more information, please write Mr. David Hamon: david.hamon@worldwar1centennial.org or call him at 540.379.8584. To view the progress of the memorial, go to: ww1cc.org/memorial. Your VFW Post will forever be enshrined in history as having pushed to get the memorial built. America never forgets her veterans!

POW/MIA FLAG -- OFFICIAL DISPLAY DAYS. Public Law 105-85 (Nov. 16, 1997) indicates the days that federal agencies, military installations and U.S. post offices are required to display the POW/MIA flag. The days are: Armed Forces Day, May 15, 2021 (third Saturday in May); Memorial Day, May 31, 2021 (last Monday in May); Flag Day, June 14; Independence Day, July 4; National POW/MIA Day, Sept. 17, 2021 (third Friday in Sept.); and Veterans Day, Nov. 11. To purchase a POW/MIA flag, go to vfwstore.org/products/GP237.

IRS AND VFW AWARD MONIES. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires that any recipient that receives more than a \$599 award should receive a Form 1099 identifying the proceeds as taxable. This will

include the VFW programs Patriot's Pen and Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award.

VFW Member Benefits

[According to the National Cancer Institute](#), approximately 39.5% of men and women will be diagnosed with cancer.

With these odds, it makes sense to be prepared, and the VFW makes it easy.

The VFW Cancer Care Insurance Plan, administered by AGIA and underwritten by Securian Life Insurance Company, helps relieve the financial burden of cancer care, so you can focus on your health and recovery should you be diagnosed with cancer.

Cash benefits are payable for cancer related events and are yours to use as you see fit, including hospital bills, operations, mortgage, car payments or other expenses.

Help protect your future and finances against the costs associated with a cancer diagnosis. For additional information including costs, features, limitations, and exclusions of the Cancer Care Insurance Plan, click [here](#) or call 1.800.821.2606.

"Buddy"® Poppy

"BUDDY"® POPPY CAMPAIGN. Although we emphasize Buddy Poppies on Veterans Day and Memorial Day, it is important to realize that the distribution of Buddy Poppies should be a year-round exercise. Each time a Post participates in an activity where the public will be present, Buddy Poppies should be present as a fundraising tool and simply to recognize our fallen comrades. Where the VFW appears, Buddy Poppies should be a constant reminder that we will never forget those who have perished in the name of liberty. Just as "They Gave, Will You?" is a year-round thing, so should the distribution of VFW Buddy Poppies.

Remember that your poppies should be ordered a minimum of 8 weeks in advance of your distribution date. Be sure to specify a date by which the poppies are required, do not use "ASAP." Miscellaneous items (coin cans, buttons, posters, etc.) should be ordered directly from the VFW Store at vfwstore.org/category/programs/buddypoppy or the VFW Store/Emblem and Supply Catalog.

The Manual of Procedure provides that Post relief funds may be used for programs such as Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, Citizenship Education, and Community Service as long as suggestions in the chairmen guidebooks are used as an example of promoting these programs.

Posts are further reminded that Section 711 of the Manual of Procedure provides that non-profit organizations, exempt from taxes under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, may assist with the distribution of Buddy Poppies, provided there shall be no division of proceeds. A donation to these groups may be made from the Post general fund.

Contact information: BuddyPoppy@vfw.org or 816.756.3390, ext. 6722 for any questions or concerns.

VFW SILVER, GOLD AND DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY POPPIES. The silver, gold and diamond anniversary Buddy Poppies are for Posts that are currently in their 25th, 50th or 75th anniversary years. For

Posts currently in their 100th year anniversary, they can order any color and as many as they need. The anniversary poppies are approximately three times as expensive for us to produce, but because of the small quantities we deal in, we don't pass those costs on to the Posts. Please limit your order of anniversary poppies to 1,000 to ensure stock does not run out, unless you are currently in your 100th year. These are ordered through the Department and processed the same as the red poppies. Annotate on the order to National that it is for anniversary poppies and specify which one.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS JOINS "WORLD WAR I POPPY PROGRAM." The Veterans of Foreign Wars is joining the U.S. World War I Centennial Commission in announcing the WWI Poppy Program to raise awareness about World War I and generate funds for local VSO chapters all over the country.

The VFW is proud to share with you the WWI Poppy Program; an opportunity to generate resources for your Post while helping to honor the 4.7 million Americans who wore the uniform during WWI.

Poppies grew across the war-torn battlefields of Europe after World War I. From 2017 to 2019, the U.S. World War I Centennial Commission will tell the story of those American veterans, through events, exhibits, and memorial efforts, and the VFW is proud to be a partner in this important commemoration.

Click on the following link to learn about the WWI Poppy Program and how your purchase of a Poppy Kit helps build the new National World War I Memorial in Washington, D.C., while also helping to raise money for your Post.

Link: ww1cc.org/poppy

Here is a quick video that can help people understand why it is so important that we honor those who served during World War I: [youtube.com/watch?v=l_y4l49mZso](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_y4l49mZso).

The red poppy is an internationally recognized symbol of veteran remembrance. Its use began in World War I and was captured in the war poem "In Flanders Fields," by Lt. Col. John McCrae.

National Veterans Service

Seeking Nominations for VFW Service Officer of the Year

Now more than ever the role of an accredited veterans service representative is of vital importance to the continued well-being of our nation's veterans and their families. Even during the ongoing global pandemic, our accredited representatives have continued to counsel veterans, complete paperwork, and submit VA claims for earned entitlements and benefits. In many cases easing the hardships our veterans and their families are facing due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is the opportunity for your Department to nominate one accredited representative from your Department for the John A. Biedrzycki Accredited Service Representative of the Year Award for 2020-21.

We encourage every Department to put forth a candidate. A nomination shows that Department leadership is aware of the significant contributions your program makes in your community every day, even during these times when many of us are working from our homes.

ELIGIBILITY:

Eligible nominees include:

- Department Service Officers
- Assistant Department Service Officers
- Claims Consultants/Representatives
- Veterans Service Officers/Representatives

Individuals **NOT** eligible for this award are:

- VFW National Staff
- VFW Contractors
- VFW accredited representatives whose primary employer is other than the VFW or a State veterans agency

SELECTION CRITERIA:

1. Nominees for the annual award must have demonstrated exceptional efforts in assisting veterans and their families during the 12 months preceding the April 30 deadline.
2. A brief summary (no more than 2 pages) is to be submitted which explains the who, what, when, where, and how the nominee's efforts are considered exemplary. Suggested items for consideration (but not limited to):
 - Number of individuals with VFW POAs assisted
 - Community outreach conducted
 - Examples of excellent customer service provided
 - Meticulous use of VetraSpec or another electronic claims processing system (specify system)
 - Submission of **TIMELY** monthly reports (if located in a VA regional office)
 - Number of VFW members recruited
 - Innovative methods of assistance provided during the COVID-19 pandemic

AWARDS:

Each Department Commander may nominate one eligible individual for this award. The individual who is ultimately chosen as the recipient of the award will be furnished round-trip travel (for the winner and one guest) and two night's hotel accommodations to attend the VFW National Convention (if an in-person event is held) where the award will be presented. In addition, the award recipient will receive \$599 in recognition of their accomplishments and to offset travel expenses.

Please note that the selection committee will review NVS databases to understand how candidates served clients. Additionally, the results of test scores at NVS training, the results of any site visits, and other criteria be considered in making the final decision.

Nominations may be sent to the Director, VFW National Veterans Service, either by email to taldana@vfw.org, by mail (200 Maryland Ave., NE, Washington, DC 20002 ATTN: Service Officer Award), or by fax to 202.547.3196 (ATTN: Service Officer Award).

Nominations must be received not later than April 30.

Past winners of this award have been service officers from the Departments of New Hampshire, Rhode Island, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah. These service officers stood out from our worldwide cadre for not only meeting the challenge daily, but exceeding it through exemplary commitment, technical knowledge, and customer service.

National Legislative Service/Action Corps

VFW Virtual March Legislative Conference

The VFW's Virtual March Legislative Conference provides an opportunity for VFW leaders from each state to virtually meet with their respective lawmakers and advocate for VFW legislative priorities. Though this year is different due to the COVID-19 pandemic, VFW will continue to fight for veterans, while pivoting on how we connect, to ensure that VFW's voice is heard on Capitol Hill.

We encourage members to prepare for their meetings with their senators and representatives by familiarizing themselves with the [VFW 2021 Legislative Priorities](#). The priority goals provide our organization's overview of the areas of focus regarding military benefits and quality of life programs. It is imperative that Congress provide sufficient funding for the DOD and VA programs needed by service members, veterans, and families, and that VA is held accountable for the timeliness and quality of services it delivers to our veterans.

VFW Store



ORDER YOUR VFW UNIFORM CAP TODAY! Officer changes will be taking place soon. The peak season for ordering caps is April to August, when the VFW Store processes more than 7,000 cap orders. During this period, it can take up to 10 weeks to receive your cap. To order today, go to vfwstore.org/category/vfw/uniformcapandnametags or call 833.VFW.VETS.

Roll Call of Departed Comrades

MAC DONALD, JAMES T. "JIM," Adjutant/Quartermaster, Department of Kentucky, 2005-2006 through 2020-2021 and a Bronze Legacy Life member of Middletown Post 1170, Middletown, Kentucky, February 6, 2021.

CURRY, JAMES M. "JIM," All American Commander, Department of Kentucky, 2016-2017 and a Gold Legacy Life member of Bell County Veterans Memorial Post 11139, Middlesboro, Kentucky, January 31, 2021.

KOLNIAK, STANLEY F., All American Commander, Department of Louisiana, 1971-1972 and a Life member of Gandy-Brown Post 4588, Bossier City, Louisiana, January 26, 2021.

CROWELL, DOUGLAS W. "DOUG," Commander, Department of Louisiana, 2006-2007 and a Life member of Metry Post 6640, Metairie, Louisiana, December 18, 2020.

DICK, JR., HAROLD A., All American Commander, Department of Louisiana, 1992-1993 and a Life member of Hammond Post 3652, Hammond, Louisiana, December 4, 2020.