

2021 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship Application Period Now Open

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WASHINGTON – The Veterans of Foreign Wars and Student Veterans of America are now accepting applications from student veterans who are interested in participating in the upcoming 2021 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship Program.

The fellowship, now in its seventh year, will bring up to 10 student veterans – who must be VFW members – to Washington, D.C. early next March to meet face-to-face with their members of Congress and senior policy makers.

Student veterans interested in applying for the 2021 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship must complete an application package that includes a 400- to 600-word essay that proposes legislative improvements to one of the following four specific veterans’ issues:

- Student veteran success on campus and beyond;
- Improving veteran’s health care and benefits;
- Transition from military to civilian life; or
- Challenges for service members and military families.

The essay proposal should include a discussion of why the issue is important to the veterans’ community, and how the fellowship candidate plans to address the issue through federal policy solutions and community-based advocacy.

VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship opportunities are open to all currently-enrolled student veterans. Fellowship candidates must be eligible for or already are VFW members in order to be considered, the eligibility criteria for which can be found here. Selected fellows will be flown to Washington, D.C., to ensure the veterans’ voice is delivered to Capitol Hill alongside 500 fellow veterans’ advocates as part of the upcoming VFW Legislative

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
Office 816.756.3390
Fax 816.968.1157

WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
Office 202.543.2239
Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org
www.vfw.org

Conference, Feb. 28-March 5, 2021.

“The VFW’s advocacy efforts have led to the creation of every significant veteran and military quality of life program in this century and last,” said VFW National Commander Harold “Hal” Roesch II. “The VFW is proud to continue sharing these opportunities with a new generation of veteran leaders through our strong partnership with SVA, which over the past six fellowship classes has produced positive legislative changes for our unique community.”

“Since our founding, SVA has partnered with the VFW to advance and improve benefits for student veterans and military-affiliated students by making sure their voices are heard on Capitol Hill,” said SVA National President and CEO Jared Lyon. “The VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship empowers motivated participants to develop and execute a comprehensive action plan to research an issue they are passionate about then advocate for lasting change in Washington, D.C., and back home with local leaders.”

All applications must be submitted by close-of-business Oct 23. Selected fellows will be notified before Thanksgiving, with a formal announcement of the 2021 fellowship class at the SVA National Conference in Orlando Florida, in January. For full details about the VFW-SVA fellowship and to apply, visit [VFW.org/StudentFellowship](https://www.vfw.org/StudentFellowship) or contact Matt Doyle, VFW, at mduoyl@vfw.org or Lauren Augustine, SVA, at lauren.augustine@studentveterans.org.

Past fellows have earned academic credit, found internships, accepted additional academic opportunities, and landed fulltime employment as a result of their fellowship experience. Several fellows have even had their research integrated into laws, which makes an everlasting impact on veterans, service members and their families.

The VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship is another example of the strong collaboration between VFW and SVA that resulted from a memorandum of understanding signed by the two organizations at SVA’s 2013 National Conference.