

How Do I Get My Students Involved?

To encourage as many students to participate as possible, the VFW provides a number of ways to enter.

Direct Student Entry

Students can enter directly by submitting the required entry form, along with their essay and (in the case of the Voice of Democracy their recording) to a local Participating VFW Post. The local VFW Post's number can be obtained from the white pages of your local phone directory or by calling the VFW National Programs office during normal business hours at (816) 968-1117. Entry forms and instructions can be obtained by calling the same number or can be downloaded from the VFW national Web site at www.vfw.org.

Patriotic Project

Teachers and youth leaders may obtain student entry forms in the manner indicated above. You may then select from the following options: Encourage your students to write an essay or a broadcast script on this year's theme.

Patriot's Pen (Grades 6-8): 300-400 word essay. Use the competition as a patriotic assignment and encourage the best single essay from each fifteen students to complete the entry forms and forward those, along with the essay, to the local VFW Post competition.

Voice of Democracy (Grades 9-12): write a broadcast script on the annual theme available online at www.vfw.org or by calling (816) 968-1117. Again, use the competition as an essay contest and encourage the best single essay from each fifteen students to record their essay, complete the entry forms and forward them, with the recording and typed script, to the local VFW Post competition.

Local VFW Post Information

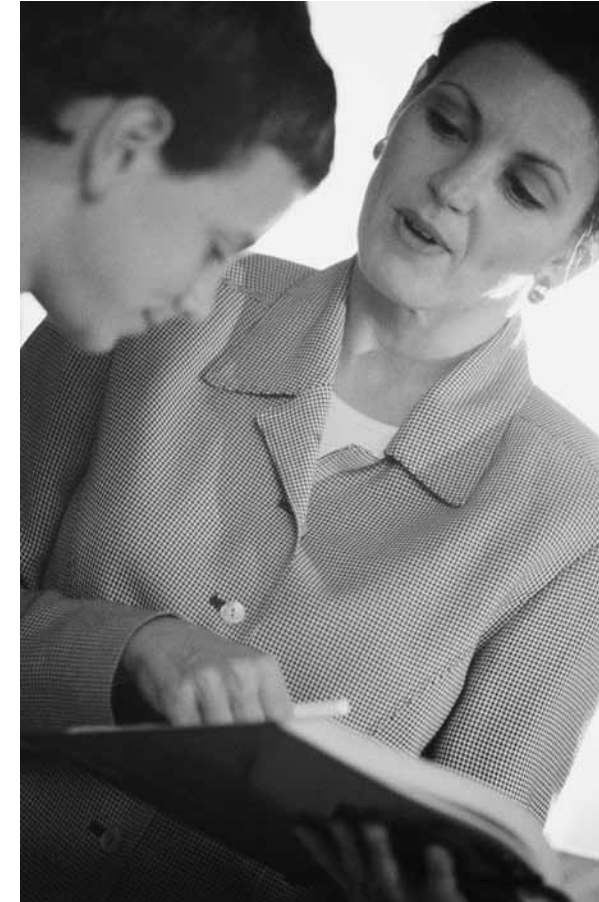


Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

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Veterans of Foreign Wars National Scholarship Programs



How to **help** your
kids get a head
start on their
future.

How to Help Your Kids Get a Head Start on Their Future

An Open Letter to Teachers and Youth Leaders:

Thank you for the time, effort and commitment you invest each year in America's young people. Because of you, our nation continues to produce scholars, dreamers and leaders who benefit the entire world. We, the over 2 million members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and its Ladies Auxiliary share your commitment to America's youth. Each year, the VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary provide millions of dollars worth of awards, U.S. Savings bonds and college scholarships to students across the U.S. and overseas. The purpose of these awards is to encourage personal growth and foster a greater understanding and appreciation for America, its history and values. This brochure is provided to acquaint and equip you to use the VFW's programs to benefit those young lives you touch each day. Again, thank you for all you do. If we can serve you in any way, please contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Steve Van Buskirk

Steve Van Buskirk
National Director of VFW Programs
svanbuskirk@vfw.org

Patriot's Pen Essay Contest

Patriot's Pen provides 6th-, 7th- and 8th-grade students the opportunity to express their opinion on a patriotic theme and improve their writing skills while they compete for worthwhile awards and prizes. Awards are given at the local, district, and state levels. The state winners compete for \$92,000 in U.S. Savings bonds at the national level. The first place national winner receives a \$10,000 U.S. Savings Bond and an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington D.C. where they tour the city. **Deadline is Nov. 1.**

Voice of Democracy Scholarship Competition

The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) started the Voice of Democracy Scholarship Competition in 1946. The Veterans of Foreign Wars became a national sponsor in the late 1950s and assumed sole responsibility for the program in 1961. Many notables have participated in the Voice of Democracy including journalist Charles Kuralt, Miss America Anita Bryant and U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft.

The Voice of Democracy competition provides high school freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors the opportunity to write and record a broadcast script on a patriotic theme, competing for more than \$2.3 million in college scholarships and incentives. State winners receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C. to enjoy our nation's capital and compete for \$151,000 in scholarships—first place receiving a \$30,000 scholarship. **Deadline is Nov. 1.**

Teacher of the Year Program

Each year three exceptional teachers are recognized by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) for their outstanding commitment to teach Americanism and patriotism to their students.

The VFW annually recognizes the nation's top classroom elementary, junior high and high school teachers who teach citizenship education topics—at least half of the school day in a classroom environment—and promote America's history, traditions and institutions effectively. The VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award recipients are selected from entries submitted by local VFW Posts in every state and overseas.

The VFW's National Citizenship Education Teacher Awards include the following items:

- A national \$1,000 award for each to the top K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 grade teachers for professional development expenses.
- \$1,000 award for each winning teacher's school.
- Plaques for both the winning teacher and school.
- An all-expenses-paid trip to attend a VFW conference and receive their award.

Nomination must be received by November 1 by a local VFW Post. For additional information about our program please refer to our Web site, www.vfw.org.

