New VFW Auxiliary Now Welcomes Men

Historic change reflects thoday's military and veteran families

Aug 21, 2015

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Today, John A. Biedrzycki Jr., national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) added his official signature to the new congressional charter of its Auxiliary organization in a historical event solidifying the VFW's commitment to membership equality for all military families.

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Watch the charter presentation ceremony.

The former Ladies Auxiliary VFW, founded in 1914, is the VFW's highly regarded support organization and is considered its "Partner in Service."

Under its former name Ladies Auxiliary VFW, membership within the organization was offered exclusively to female spouses and family members of any member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The gender-specific eligibility requirement remained for more than 100 years until July 20, 2015, when delegates to the VFW's 116th National Convention in Pittsburgh voted to amend the dated by-law to extend the same membership opportunity to eligible males.

Appropriately, the Ladies Auxiliary VFW has changed its official name to the VFW Auxiliary.

"It's an exciting time to be a member of the Auxiliary," said National President Francisca Guilford. "Women comprise nearly twenty percent of our nation's military, and this change allows all spouses, fathers, grandfathers, sons, grandsons and brothers to serve others in honor of their veteran."

Currently, the Auxiliary has more than 465,000 members, a number that is now expected to sharply increase over the next year. Its members represent all 50 states, the District of Columbia, several foreign locations including Germany, Guam and Panama, and have made an impact in local communities around the globe.

Last year alone, its members worked to provide $4.6 million dollars in monetary aid to veterans, active duty military and their families, and volunteered nearly 800,000 hours in VA Medical Centers, hospitals, nursing and veterans' homes. Auxiliary members also contributed greatly to cancer research, youth activities, civic patriotism and much more.

For more information about the VFW Auxiliary, please visit www.vfwauxiliary.org.