

'We Are All About Working Together'

A new Auxiliary in the Philippines is demonstrating how to best work with its Post

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Since 1914, VFW has benefited from the support of the VFW Auxiliary. Together, members work tirelessly on behalf of communities around the world.

The Auxiliary's nearly half a million members promote VFW programs such as Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen. According to Auxiliary National Secretary-Treasurer Ann Panteleakos, Auxiliaries may report service hours for specific Auxiliary projects to their VFW Posts.

"We are all about working together," Panteleakos said. "Auxiliaries are responsible for so many good deeds that help our communities. Collectively, our projects need to be counted to effectively show the importance of the local VFW and VFW Auxiliary to the community."

Noting a friendly competition between VFW Commander-in-Chief Timothy Borland and VFW Auxiliary National President Jane Reape, Panteleakos encouraged Posts and Auxiliaries to do something "fun and different" with their partnerships.

Borland and Reape are currently in a competition to see who will raise the most money to support a Voice of Democracy scholarship in honor of the VFW and Auxiliary Class of 2022, Panteleakos said.

Promoting membership in both organizations is another way the VFW and the Auxiliary work together.

Any Auxiliary member who recruits a VFW member will receive a pin for their recruiting efforts. Likewise, the Heart-Shaped Hands pin is awarded to each VFW and Auxiliary member who recruits five new Auxiliary members through May 31. Those VFW and Auxiliary members recruiting 20 new Auxiliary members will be presented the National Membership Achievement Award.

"Our membership eligibility comes from VFW member's eligibility," said Panteleakos, who

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earned her eligibility through her father. “I encourage all VFW members to look to their families to recruit for the Auxiliary.”

On average, Panteleakos said, one VFW member has multiple family members eligible for membership in the VFW Auxiliary, but they often do not know about it. Step- and adopted parents, children, siblings (and half-siblings), grandparents and grandchildren are considered the same as if they were all biologically related. Family members must be at least 16 years old to join the Auxiliary. (See the eligibility wheel on page 49.)

If you have someone in your family who would like to join the Auxiliary, there are four ways to do so:

- If your VFW Post has an Auxiliary, go directly to it and ask for a membership application to fill out. No proof of eligibility is needed if they join through a current member of the Post.
- If no Auxiliary is available at your Post, go to the Department Auxiliary treasurer. This option would make the individual a Department at-large member. Or the treasurer may suggest another Auxiliary in your area.
- Visit www.vfwauxiliary.org and click on “Join Us” to learn more about becoming a member.
- To be a national at-large Auxiliary member, go directly to the Auxiliary’s National Headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri.

Panteleakos added that veterans should make sure their family members know where their military discharge documents are stored, in case they have a family member who wants to join the Auxiliary after the veteran has passed away.

PHILIPPINES AUXILIARY IS ESTABLISHED

Thanks to a 2021 change to the National Bylaws allowing non-U.S. citizens to join the VFW and Auxiliary, the eligibility pool is even broader.

In the Philippines, VFW Auxiliary Post 2485 in Angeles City was instituted on May 24, 2022. As of press time, it is the newest foreign-based Auxiliary.

Rowena Lancelot, the secretary, historian and patriotic instructor for Auxiliary Post 2485, told *VFW Auxiliary Magazine* that there is a great number of veterans who have married Filipinas and settled in the Philippines.

“We are all honored and grateful for what we have learned about our husbands’ cultures and ways of living, and we are proud to be part of it,” Lancelot said. “We are not just housewives of military veterans, but proud VFW Auxiliary officers, too. In this Auxiliary, we will do our

best to support VFW members within the VFW world and hopefully recruit others who are eligible to join.”

Auxiliary members have stayed true to their word. Since May, they have worked alongside the Post on a variety of endeavors. They donated school bags and safety kits to more than 200 at-need students and raised funds for a child cleft lip/palate surgery program. They also joined veterans and Boy Scouts on the Bataan Death March route.

Established in 1987, VFW Post 2485 is located near the former Clark Air Base. The Post boasts a membership of more than 1,700, making it one of the largest in the Pacific Areas.

“We believe in the mission of the Auxiliary, which is to serve and improve the lives of veterans, service members, their families and our community,” VFW Auxiliary 2485 President Irene Shaffer told *VFW Auxiliary Magazine*.

“Military veterans risked their lives. It is to show them how grateful we are for what they did for us and [that] the Auxiliary programs are designed to bring needed services, information and assistance to these target groups.”

For more information on the VFW Auxiliary, visit vfwauxiliary.org.

This article is featured in the March 2023 issue of [VFW magazine](#), and was written by [Janie Dyhouse](#), senior editor for VFW magazine.