

114th VFW National Convention Rolls Into Louisville

Jul 18, 2013

More than 10,000 members of the nation's oldest and largest major combat veterans' organization are rolling into the Blue Grass State this weekend to elect new leadership and to approve national resolutions that will guide its advocacy efforts on Capitol Hill and its veteran and military support programs across the country.

"Our organization is governed by its members and elected delegates to our annual convention," said John E. Hamilton, the national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and its Auxiliaries.

"We expect a great deal from every delegate, because the decisions they make help to guide our lobbying efforts that directly benefit veterans, service members and their families, as well as all the wonderful support programs we provide at no charge, such as our service officers, who last year helped 125,000 veterans to recoup an organizational record \$3.7 billion in earned disability compensation and pension from the Department of Veterans Affairs."

A number of national awards will also be presented at the VFW's 114th National Convention, to include:

- The VFW Dwight D. Eisenhower Award to Adm. Robert J. Papp Jr., the commandant of the Coast Guard.
- The VFW Americanism Award to retired Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, the former Army deputy chief of staff and now CEO of One Mind for Research.
- The VFW Armed Services Award to the Naval Special Warfare Command (the SEALs).
- VFW Aeronautic and Aerospace Awards to NASA's Mars Science Laboratory and to Pioneer Aerospace.
- The VFW Citizenship Award to Gordon Logan, founder and CEO of SportsClips.

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· VFW Teacher of the Year Awards to Matt Maddox, Columbus Elementary School, Edwardsville, Ill.; Hunter Jones, Will James Junior High School, Billings, Mont.; and Matthew Susin, Eau Gallie High School, Melbourne, Fla.

· And the VFW-supported VetJobs Outstanding Veteran Employer Award to Humana.

Guest speakers include elected politicians, such as Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer, U.S. Sen. Rand Paul and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell; foreign guests from Taiwan, Russia and Vietnam; Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel and Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki; Chief of the Army Reserve Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Talley; Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/MIA Affairs W. Montague Winfield; the commander of the Joint POWhttp://MIA Accounting Command, Maj. Gen. Kelly McKeague; the Adjutant General of Kentucky, Maj. Gen. Edward Tonini; Student Veterans of America Executive Director Michael Dakduk; and \$30,000 VFW Voice of Democracy scholarship winner Danielle Hayes, of Mercy High School in San Francisco, VFW Buddy Poppy Child Unity Heim, from the VFW National Home for Children in Eaton Rapids, Mich., and more.

The VFW National Convention is not open to the public, but a video link to the general session will stream live at www.vfw.org beginning at 8 a.m. (EDT), July 22-24. Only registered and credentialed media from bona fide news organizations will be approved to cover convention activities. Onsite registration begins July 20 in room 201 of the Kentucky International Convention Center, phones (502) 815-6833, 6834 or 6835. The attached Media Daybook contains additional registration information and convention agenda details. View the VFW Daybook