

VFW Announces its Freedoms Foundation High School Teacher Award Winners

More than 1,200 nominations were received

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The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) is pleased to announce that five high school teachers have been selected to receive a special grant as part of a new initiative with the [Freedoms Foundation](#).

Annually, since 1999, winners from the VFW's Voice of Democracy audio essay contest have attended the Spirit of America Youth Leadership Program hosted by the Freedoms Foundation. This year the VFW Foundation has granted the top high school teacher nominees to the VFW Smart/Maher Teacher of the Year Award program the opportunity to attend one of the Freedoms Foundation's Medal of Honor Legacy graduate programs.

For nearly 50 years, Freedoms Foundation has presented critically-acclaimed, accredited-graduate courses for teachers. This summer's curriculum focuses on character-building and the development of responsible citizenship through the study of history and the social sciences. Each program provides educators with an interactive, collaborative and enriching learning experience to assist teachers in providing better instruction to their students.

The winners of the VFW's 2016 Freedoms Foundation Award are:

William Ellery, a history teacher at Carmel High School in Carmel, Ind., and the national winner for the high school category of the Smart/Maher VFW Teacher of the Year Award.

Beth Piccolo, a retired Marine and MCJROTC instructor at A.C. Mosley High School in Lynn Haven, Fla.

Barbara M. Lindauer, retired Navy Reservist and high school history teacher from Collinsville High School in Collinsville, Ill.

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Maj. (Ret.) John R. Cook, VFW member and Senior Army Instructor of the JROTC program from Pemberton Township High School in Pemberton, N.J.

Kimberly M. Hammers, history teacher and Guinness Book of World Records Holder for hosting the largest in-person civics lesson at Grassfield High School in Chesapeake, Va.

Director of VFW Programs, Lynn Rolf III said when asked about the tuition grant, that it's "not just to thank our educators, but to help shape our youth."

For more information on the VFW Teacher of the Year program, [click here](#).