



The Veterans of Foreign Wars

Post 1555, Chico, CA.



VFW Programs

Benefit the Educational Community

Students are rewarded for learning to present their thoughts about Patriotic themes in essay format, or in essay format with an oral presentation

Teachers are rewarded for utilizing their skills to effectively teach and promote America's history and traditions, civic responsibility, flag etiquette, patriotism, and Americanism

VFW Educational Programs Overview

The VFW is dedicated to promoting and investing in our future generations. High school students interested in a \$30,000 scholarship, middle school students interested in winning \$5,000 or teachers interested in winning \$1,000 for themselves and their school. We have programs for you.

PATRIOT'S PEN

Each year more than 165,000 students in grades 6–8 enter the VFW Patriot's Pen contest to win a share of more than \$1.4 million in state and national awards. This program encourages young minds to examine America's history, along with their own experiences in modern American society and to present their thoughts in a written essay format. This program can be a stepping-stone to our next educational program – Voice of Democracy

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

Established in 1947, our Voice of Democracy provides high school students the unique opportunity to express themselves in presenting a democratic and patriotic-themed written and recorded essay. Yearly, over 64,000 9th–12th grade students from across the country enter to win their share of more than \$2 million in educational scholarships and incentives through this program. The National winner receives a \$30,000 college scholarship. Often Patriot's Pen winners have continued to show their abilities by entering and winning the Voice of Democracy contest

TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Established in 1999 the VFW invites elementary, middle, and high school teachers to participate in the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher program. The program rewards our nation's top educators for their professional behavior and commitment to teaching civic responsibility, flag etiquette, patriotism, and Americanism to their students. All current certified/licensed teachers in grades K-12 are eligible

PATRIOT'S PEN

2022-2023 Theme

“My Pledge to Our Veterans.”

Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2022

Patriotic Written Essay Competition Grand Prize: \$5,000 Award

What is the Patriot's Pen Program?

Conducted nationwide, this VFW-sponsored youth essay competition gives students an opportunity to write essays expressing their views on an annual patriotic theme. We invite you to join the more than 84,000 students who participated last year in this contest.

Why Should I Enter?

Prizes and scholarships can be awarded at the Post, District, State and national level. Department (State) winners receive a portion of \$55,000 in national awards. National Winners will receive at least \$500. **The first-place national award is currently \$5,000.**

The Internal Revenue Service requires a recipient awarded more than \$599 be given Form 1099 identifying the proceeds as taxable income. This may require the winner to provide their social security number.

How Does the Contest Work?

All entries begin at the VFW Post level. The only exception is where schools/classes/youth groups have large numbers of students and wish to conduct their own competition, submitting one winner for each 15 students to the VFW Post. Individual students may submit their entry directly to the Post.

The contest consists of four levels. The first level (entry) is sponsored by VFW Posts. Post winners advance, one for every 15 entries, to the VFW District (regional) level where the one first-place winner is advanced to the VFW Department (state) level. The first-place winner at the Department level is then advanced into the VFW national competition.

Who Can Enter?

Patriot's Pen is open to 6th, 7th and 8th-grade students enrolled by the Oct. 31 deadline in public, private or parochial schools in the U.S., its territories or its possessions. Home-schooled students also are eligible. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. (Foreign exchange students or former winners that placed in the National contest are ineligible.)

How Do I Get Started?

- Ask a teacher or youth group/club adult leader to supervise the Patriot's Pen writing contest.
- Contact a participating VFW Post and indicate your interest in participating.
- Establish a contact person who is a member of that VFW Post or its VFW Auxiliary.

- Make sure that your essay is submitted to the VFW Post before the contest deadline of Oct. 31, 2022. You can submit your essay and entry form by email upon the Post's approval. Entries sent to the VFW National Headquarters directly will be returned.

How Am I Judged?

Knowledge of the theme is worth 30 points:

You must show a thorough knowledge of the theme in your work. Demonstrate you have researched the issue extensively.

Theme development is worth 35 points:

Answer all relevant facts about the theme such as the who, what, where, when and why. Relate the theme to your own experiences.

Clarity of ideas is worth 35 points:

Write your essay in an easy-to-understand format. Leave your reader with a clear understanding of your explanation of the theme.

What Is the Theme?

VFW's Commander-in-Chief annually chooses the year's theme. The 2022-2023 theme is:

“My Pledge To Our Veterans.”

Deadline Information.

To qualify, all entries must be submitted to a sponsoring VFW Post by midnight October 31, 2022.

Note:

If you need help finding a participating VFW Post, follow these instructions:

First, visit vfw.org/FindaPost to “Find a VFW Post.”

If you don't have success in finding a Post, or if you have trouble contacting them, you can contact your VFW Department (state) headquarters office to see if they can offer any information or assistance. You can visit vfw.org/contactus to look for “Find a State Contact” to get your VFW state office's phone number and Email.

**For assistance contact
the VFW National Headquarters
at 816.756.3390 ext. 6155
Email: youthscholarships@vfw.org**

2022-2023 Official Entry Form Patriot's Pen Competition

Must Be Completed by All Contestants

Name: First, M.I., Last

Address

City, State, Zip

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Phone

Email

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy)

Grade in School

Essay Word Count

School Name, City, State

Teacher's name and Email (if applicable)

To Be Completed by Student's Parent/Guardian

(Required even if student is 18 or over)

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

()

Parent/Guardian's Daytime Phone

Parent/Guardian's Email

What Are the Rules?

- You must write your own essay.
- All essays should be typed in English with no color or graphics. 300 - 400 words in length (+ or - 5 word max). Every word is counted regardless of length. The essay title (theme) or added footnotes do not contribute to the word count.
- In no way may contestants identify themselves within their essay (including, but not limited to, your name, school, city, state, race or national origin.) Do not put your name on the essay. The entry form is your essays cover sheet. Secure the Official Student Entry Form with a staple or other fastener on top of your essay. Contestants are allowed to enter only once each year if otherwise eligible (one Post competition).
- The essay must be contestant's original work and a product of the contestant's own thinking. The approach to the Patriot's Pen theme should be positive and clearly focused. Poetry is not acceptable. Quotations may be used sparingly if plainly identified wherever used. A contestant's teacher, counselor or parent may check the essay for punctuation, grammar and/or spelling, but the content must remain the contestant's. Contestants will be judged on the basis of their essay alone and are not required to present the essay orally. All essays become the property of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The VFW retains non-exclusive rights to the use of your essay and likeness in the promotion and execution of the organization's programs and activities.
- At any time during the contest additional participant personal information (i.e. SSN, photo, etc.) could be requested by the VFW.

I Have Read and Understand the Contest Rules

Signature of Student Participant

Date

To Be Completed by the VFW Post

I certify that this student has an authorized entry in our VFW Post level Voice of Competition.

Post Commander's/Chairman's Signature

Post#

VFW Auxiliary President's/Chairman's Signature (if applicable)

Post Address

City, State, Zip

VFW Post Email

No. of participants

No. of winners

Amt. of Post/Aux. scholarships awards \$

Amt. of Post/Aux. additional expenses (Banquet, Pins, etc.) \$

To Be Completed by the VFW District

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected winner of the Voice of Democracy Contest District Competition and is our sole entry into the Departments.

District Chairman's Signature

Dist. #

Address

City, State, Zip

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Phone

Email

To Be Completed by the VFW Department Chairman

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected first-place winner of the Voice of Democracy Department Competition, is our sole entry into the National Judging.

Department Chairman's Signature

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Daytime Phone

Email

The winner ☐ has been ☐ will be (check one) notified that they are the first-place Department winner on _____.

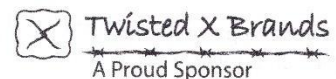
Local VFW Post Information:

Contact: _____

Phone: _____ Best Time To Call: _____

Alternate Contact: _____

Phone: _____ Best Time To Call: _____



Revised 03/2022

PATRIOT PEN AWARDS

- National
 - 1st Place - \$5,000
 - 2nd Place - \$4,000
 - 3rd Place - \$3,500
 - 4th Place - \$2,750
 - 5th Place - \$2,500
 - 6th Place - \$2,000
 - 7th Place - \$1,750
 - 8th Place – 10th Place - \$1,500 each
- Department (State)
 - 1st Place - \$1,000 and a plaque
 - 2nd Place - \$750 and a plaque
 - 3rd Place - \$500 and a plaque
- District (12 Posts)
 - 1st Place - \$150 and a certificate
 - 2nd Place - \$100 and a certificate
 - 3rd Place - \$50 and a certificate
- Post 1555/Auxiliary
 - 1st Place - \$300 and a certificate
 - 2nd Place - \$200 and a certificate
 - 3rd Place - \$100 and a certificate

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

2022-2023 Theme

“Why Is The Veteran Important?”

Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2022

Patriotic Audio Essay Competition Grand Prize: \$30,000 Award

What is the Voice of Democracy Program?

Since 1947, the Voice of Democracy has been the Veterans of Foreign Wars' (VFW's) premier scholarship program. Each year, nearly 80,000 high school students compete for more than \$2 million in scholarships and incentives. Students compete by writing and recording an audio essay on an annual patriotic theme. This year's theme is, “Why Is The Veteran Important?”

Why Should I Enter?

Prizes and scholarships can be awarded at the Post, District, state and national level. Department (State) winners receive an all-expense-paid trip to Washington DC, to tour the city, be honored by the VFW and its Auxiliary and receive their portion of \$156,000 in national awards, the top scholarship being \$30,000.

The Rules

Who can enter?

The Voice of Democracy is open to students in grades 9-12 by the Oct. 31 deadline who are enrolled in a public private or parochial high school or home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions; or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or over, previous Voice of Democracy first place state winners, GED or Adult Education Students are ineligible.

What do I need to enter?

Record your original 3-5 minute (+ or - 5 second max.) audio essay on a flash drive, or other electronic device. You will submit the recording, typed essay and this completed entry form. Provide these items to your school/group competition or VFW Post for judging. In addition you can submit your emailed entry form, essay, and audio file to the VFW Post upon approval. You must be the sole author of your essay. The recording must be in your own voice and in English. Hearing/speech impaired students should email the Voice of Democracy National Office at youthscholarships@vfw.org for special instructions. No music, singing, poetry or sound effects are allowed. The body of the essay must not identify you in any way, (including, but not limited to your name, school, city, state, race, or national origin) although the recording & typed essay should be labeled with your name, to show ownership.

Where Do I Submit My Entry?

All entries begin at the VFW Post level. The only exception is where schools/classes/youth groups have large numbers of students and wish to conduct their own competition, submitting one winner for each 15 students to the VFW Post. Individual students may submit their entry directly to the Post. Entries sent to VFW National will be returned. One winner for every 15 entries from each Post advances to District and one District winner advances to the state (Department) competition. If you need help finding a participating VFW Post, follow these instructions: First, visit this website vfw.org/FindaPost to “Find A VFW Post.” If you do not have success in finding a Post, or if you have trouble getting in touch with them, you can contact your VFW Department (state) office to see if they can offer any information or assistance. You can visit this link <https://www.vfw.org/ContactUs/> and look for “Find a State Contact” to get your VFW state office's phone number and email. If you still need assistance, please email us at VFW National Headquarters at youthscholarships@vfw.org

What Is the Deadline for My Entry?

All entries competing at the Post level must be in the hands of that VFW Post by midnight, **Oct. 31, 2022**. It is the responsibility of the student to meet this deadline by submitting their entry to the proper location by ensuring it is a participating Post.

What Are the Judging Criteria?

Originality is worth 30 points:

Treatment of the theme should show imagination and human interest.

Content is worth 35 points:

Clearly express your ideas in an organized manner. Fully develop your theme and use transitions to move smoothly from one idea to another.

Delivery is worth 35 points:

Speak in a clear and credible manner.

2022-2023 Official Entry Form Voice of Democracy Competition

Must Be Completed by All Contestants

Name: First, M.I., Last

Address

City, State, Zip

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Phone

Email

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy)

Grade in School

Age

Jacket Size

School Name, City, State

Teacher's name and Email (if applicable)

To Be Completed by Student's Parent/Guardian

(required even if student is 18 or over)

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

()

Parent/Guardian's Daytime Phone

Parent/Guardian's Email

Participant Agreement for Students Advancing to National Level

If selected as a first-place state winner, I have the consent of my parent/guardian and school to attend the Voice of Democracy National Finals in Washington, D.C., as a guest of the VFW National Organization. In consideration for permission to participate in the National Voice of Democracy Competition ("Competition") I do hereby, for myself, for my heirs, executors, administrators and assignees, waive, release and discharge all rights and claims which I have or which may hereafter accrue against the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and/or the Departments (state organizations) of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and their respective officers, agents, successors and assigns from any damages which may be sustained by me in connection with my participation in or association with the Competition and/or arising out of any travel related to the Competition. In the event of sickness, accident or injury in connection with the Competition, I consent to and accept the services of a duly licensed medical, surgical or dental specialist selected on my behalf and for such treatments, as they may deem necessary. I understand that VFW will not be liable for such treatment. I further understand that the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States retains non-exclusive rights to use my audio file, essay, name and likeness in the promotion and execution of the organization's programs and activities.

I Have Read and Understand the Rules and Participant Agreement

I certify that I am the sole author of the enclosed audio/essay entry and that I have only entered the competition once yearly if otherwise eligible. I understand that if it is found that I have entered any other Post's competition or used this essay for another VFW competition, I face elimination from the competition and will return any and all prizes or incentives awarded.

Signature of Student Participant

Date

To Be Completed by the VFW Post

I certify that this student has an authorized entry in our VFW Post Level Voice of Democracy Competition.

Post Commander's/Chairman's Signature

Post #

VFW Auxiliary President's/Chairman's Signature (if applicable)

Post Address

City, State, Zip

VFW Post Email

No. of students participating

No. of winners advanced to District

Amt. of Post/Aux. scholarship awards \$

Amt. of Post/Aux. additional expenses (banquet, pins, etc.) \$

To Be Completed by the VFW District

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected winner of the Voice of Democracy Contest District Competition and is our sole entry into the Departments.

District Chairman's Signature

Dist. #

Address

City, State, Zip

()

Phone

Email

To Be Completed by the VFW Department Chairman

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected first-place winner of the Voice of Democracy Department Competition, is our sole entry into the National Judging.

Department Chairman's Signature

()

Daytime Phone

Email

The winner ☐ has been ☐ will be (check one) notified that they are the first-place Department winner on _____.

For assistance contact:
816.756.3390 ext. 6155
Email: youthscholarships@vfw.org

Local VFW Post Information:

Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Best Time To Call: _____

Alternate Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Best Time To Call: _____



Twisted X Brands
A Proud Sponsor

Revised 03/2022

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AWARDS

- National
 - 1ST Place - \$30,000 scholarship
 - 2nd Place - \$16,000
 - 3rd Place - \$10,000
 - 4th Place - \$7,000
 - 5th/6th Place - \$5,000 each
 - 7th/8th Place - \$4,000 each
 - 9th/10th Place - \$3,500 each
 - Other sponsored scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$3,000 to other winning students.
- Scholarships of Department (State)
 - 1st Place - \$2,000 and a plaque
 - each of the other four finalists - \$1,000
 - the remaining 12 District winners - \$500
- District (12 Posts)
 - 1st Place - \$150 and a certificate
 - 2nd Place - \$100 and a certificate
 - 3rd Place - \$50 and a certificate
- Post 1555
 - 1st Place - \$300 and a certificate
 - 2nd Place - \$200 and a certificate
 - 3rd Place - \$100 and a certificate

TEACHER OF THE YEAR

VFW Cares About Education

Founded in 1899, the VFW highly supports the education of America's youth. VFW and its Auxiliary have developed a slate of programs dedicated to helping America's educators. VFW Citizenship Education programs stimulate interest in America's history, traditions, Americanism, civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism.

VFW wants to identify and recognize America's best educators who instill a sense of national pride in students. It offers cash awards, commemorative plaques and all-expenses-paid trips to the VFW National Convention for these worthy teachers. The trip provides an opportunity for winners to network with like-minded individuals.

Teachers care deeply about America and its children. They're concerned about the perpetuation of America's noblest traditions and highest ideals. Wouldn't you like to see them get the honor they deserve?

Now you can...

VFW annually recognizes the nation's top classroom elementary, junior high and high school teachers who teach citizenship education topics regularly and promote America's history and traditions effectively.

Teachers who promote civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism are prime candidates for this award. For example, do you know a teacher who plans field trips to city hall or organizes community volunteer projects? Maybe you know an instructor who invites veterans into the classroom to discuss their military experiences. Perhaps you are familiar with a teacher who fosters the development of democratic values and beliefs through special projects. If you know of such a teacher, honor him or her today with the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award.

How Does the Contest Work?

Based on the nominees submitted, VFW chapters, called Posts, will recognize teachers in the following categories, K-5, 6-8 and 9-12. Posts then submit these winners' names and required documents to their District-level judging, if applicable, who will forward their winners to the Department (or state) level. After judging, each Department then forwards their winners to VFW National Headquarters for consideration in the national awards contest.



Recognize teachers who care about America!

Who is Eligible?

All current certified/licensed teachers in grades K-12 are eligible. Previous national VFW winners are ineligible. Nominations can be submitted by themselves, fellow teachers, supervisors, family members or other interested individuals.

TEACHER OF THE YEAR

VFW Teacher Nomination Form

Please attach the required documentation.

Nominated Teacher

Name: _____

Email: _____

Subject and grade taught: _____

Current School: _____

School Address: _____

School Phone#: _____

We recommend, but not mandatory, please describe (type or print) why you feel your nominee should be selected for this award, then sign the nomination statement.

Submit nomination materials to your local VFW Post. Visit vfw.org/Find-a-Post for locations.

DO NOT SEND to the VFW National Headquarters.

Person Nominating Teacher

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

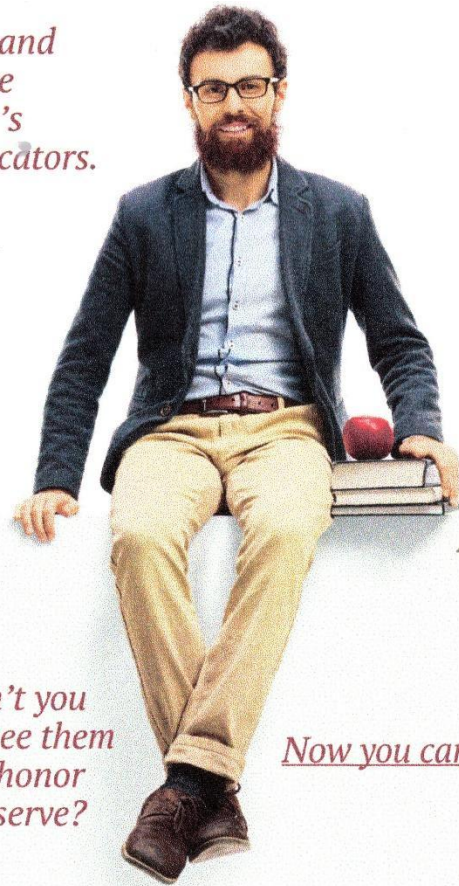
Phone: _____

Date Submitted: _____

Signature: _____

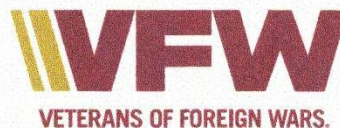
**Deadline: Submit to local VFW Post
by October 31.**

*Identify and
recognize
America's
best educators.*



*Wouldn't you
like to see them
get the honor
they deserve?*

Now you can!



For more information, contact your local VFW Post or its Auxiliary or visit our website at www.vfw.org.

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
816.756.3390 ext. 6287
tbeauchamp@vfw.org
www.vfw.org

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Revised 4/22

America's History | Civic Responsibility | Flag Etiquette | Patriotism | Americanism | Traditions

TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Nominate Someone Deserving

Have a teacher in mind? Complete the nomination form and see below for additional recommended documentation, then submit it to your local VFW Post. The investment that a teacher makes in today's youth will be the dividends we will all reap from future leaders.

How are Teachers Nominated?

Fill out the nomination form contained in this brochure, and provide a one-page resume as a minimum or up to five pages as a maximum of documentation of their teaching experience (for example: references, news articles, etc.) and a head-and-shoulder photo if available.

Please submit your completed nomination form signed, along with the required documentation to your local VFW Post. Visit vfw.org/Find-a-Post for Post locations or call VFW Programs Department at 816.756.3390 ext. 6287 to find the Post nearest you.

When is the Deadline?

Nominations must be submitted to your local Post by October 31. Post judging occurs November 1-15.

What are the National Awards?

Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Awards include the items below:

- A national \$1,000 Past Commander-in-Chief John Smart/Maher award for each of the top K-5, 6-8, and 9-12 teachers for professional development expenses.
- \$1,000 award for each winning teachers' school.
- Plaques for both the winning teacher and school.
- An all-expenses-paid trip to attend the VFW National Convention.

NOTE: (The winner will receive a 1099-MISC as a result of their award and all-expense paid trip.)

National – see above

- Department (State)
 - o \$500 and a certificate
- District 15 (12 Posts)
 - o \$250 and a certificate
- VFW Post 1555
 - o \$150 and a certificate

Entries for all competitions
MUST be RECEIVED by MIDNIGHT October 31, 2022

Mail to:
VFW Post 1555
554 Rio Linda Avenue
Chico, CA. 95926-1817

The Post is not open at all times
For further information
Please call or email

Ed Wrona – (530)966-0644 edwrona@hotmail.com

Pat Hurton – (530)343-4060 patrick.hurton@gmail.com

Mary Wahl – (530)342-1904 maryewahl@aol.com