



2016-2017 American Legion Auxiliary Programs Action Plan

Americanism

Americanism and the 2014-2019 Centennial Strategic Plan – Promoting patriotism and responsible citizenship help us fulfill our brand promise (Goal 5) by giving U.S. citizens a chance to participate in our mission by feeling patriotic and demonstrating their support in an active, visible way.

Committee Contact Information

Americanism@ALAforVeterans.org

**Department Chairman**

Amy Luft
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What is this program, and why do we have it?

The Americanism Program promotes patriotism and responsible citizenship.

What can you do?

1. Be knowledgeable on flag history, etiquette and proper disposal methods; and promote the observance of patriotic holidays so your community will look to the ALA for information.

Ideas:

- Publish flag etiquette tips in your newspaper and on social media.
- Communicate information regarding flag etiquette to your units.
- Practice respect for our flag at public events, such as sporting events.
- Compile a list of patriotic holidays and events and share with your units.
- Educate others on how to respect the flag.
- Volunteer for a local patriotic event.
- Sign up to receive notifications on when to display your flag at half-staff at www.legion.org.
- Assemble pocket flags to be distributed by units.
- Conduct a flag disposal ceremony.
- Host flag awareness events and communicate information:
 - In schools
 - At your post home
 - At public functions
- Participate in local patriotic holiday events.
- Organize a patriotic holiday event.
- Encourage local businesses to fly a flag, especially on patriotic holidays.
- Encourage members to fly a flag.

2. Encourage members to vote and to support the amendment to protect the United States flag from desecration. The amendment currently reads, “The Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States.”

Ideas:

- Vote and encourage others to vote.
- Take your children/grandchildren with you when you vote – many places have kid-related voting.
- Attend the annual ALA Washington DC Conference (see www.ALAforVeterans.org for details).
- Encourage members to contact state and federal representatives, asking them to support the flag amendment.
- Encourage members to participate in Get Out the Vote and Kids Voting USA campaigns.
 - Guidelines: www.legion.org/vote and www.kidsvotingusa.org

3. Increase participation in the Americanism Essay Contest. This year’s theme is “How does learning about government and our America help you become a future guardian of the liberties of our country?”

Student Award: Americanism Essay Contest

Type of award: Cash awards

Presented to: Five (5) students - one from each class.

Materials and Guidelines:

- The contest shall include six classes.

Class	Grade Level	Word Requirement
I	3 and 4	150-250
II	5 and 6	250-300
III	7 and 8	350-400
IV	9 and 10	450-500
V	11 and 12	450-500
VI	Students with special needs	Word count should correspond with student's grade level.

- Students with special needs are defined as:
 - Those in special education classes
 - A student recommended for special education classes, but who has not been admitted due to a waiting list or various other factors
 - A child identified as having a disability, but not in a special education class due to lack of facilities; identification contingent upon discretion of school officials
- Entries must include the Americanism Essay Contest Cover Sheet found at the end of this program plan.
- **Entries must be sent to the Department Americanism Chairman, Amy Luft, 366 Indigo Dr., Port Washington, WI 53074 by March 15, 2017.**
- The Department Chairman will forward the Department winning entries to the National Division Chairman by April 15, 2017.
- National winners will be informed of their award via communication from National Headquarters directly following National Convention
 - At this time, a copy of the letter sent to the student along with a citation will be sent to the department to forward on to the unit. The department and unit should arrange a public recognition of the student's achievement.

Ideas:

- Encourage your children/grandchildren to participate in the essay contests.
- Offer to contact schools or other organizations.
- Help judge the essays.
- Contact schools and other organizations such as the Young Marines, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, and 4-H about the essay contest.
- Offer incentives for essay winners.
- Encourage Junior members to participate in the essay contest.
- Create information packets explaining contest rules, deadline dates, theme and award opportunities.
- Contact the essay winner and their parents. Invite the parents to bring their child to your next Auxiliary meeting to read his/her winning essay. Provide refreshments.
- Work with school administration to identify guidance counselors, history teachers, etc., whose students would be interested in participating.
 - Arrange for a day with the schools (preferably during a student assembly) to present the essay winners with their prizes. Provide cash award and/or savings bond.
 - Invite media to attend the event
- Be sure to include this information on your unit report to your district, department and national chairman.

4. Participate in the promotion of American Legion Americanism programs.

Ideas:

- Work with the Post and/or District Americanism Chairman.
- Support American Legion Baseball.
 - Help with statistics.
 - Work the concession booth.
 - Donate to a team.
 - Contact local sports shops and ask if they would be willing to make donations toward a fundraiser or offer a discounted price to purchase needed items.
- Support the Oratorical Contest.
 - Help prepare Post home to sponsor local or District contest.
 - Offer to be a judge or timekeeper.
 - Offer to help out with refreshments.
 - Provide transportation for candidates.
 - Help recruit candidates at local schools and other organizations.
 - Contact history teachers or debate coaches.
- Support the Junior Shooting Sports, which promotes gun safety and marksmanship training for youth.
 - Volunteer to help out with scoring, supervising or transportation.
 - Help recruit candidates at local schools and other organizations.
 - Contact JROTC at local schools.

Americanism Reporting

Mid-Year Reports

Mid Year reports reflect the program work of Units in the Department. Each Unit is asked to submit to the Department Americanism Chairman a narrative report by **December 5, 2016**.

Annual Reports

Annual reports reflect the program work of Units in the Department. It is requested that photos of select unit projects accompany these reports. Members and Units should follow their Department's protocol and deadlines. Each Unit is required to submit a narrative report by **April 15, 2017**, to the Department Americanism Chairman.

As part of your narrative report, please include answers to the following questions:

How did your Unit

- Promote the Americanism essays contest?
- Encourage support of the flag amendment?
- Promote the flag program?
- Promote patriotic holidays?
- Support the American Legion Americanism programs?
- Promote Americanism in their community?

Americanism Awards

NOTE: Please be sure each award entry includes a Cover Sheet found at the end of this program plan, and make arrangements for the return of materials in advance, if desired.

Award: Dorothy Pearl Most Outstanding Americanism Program

Type of award: Citation Plaque

Presented to: One Unit Americanism Chairman that reports the most outstanding Americanism program targeted to children and youth

Materials and Guidelines:

- Entries must include the Award Cover Sheet located in this program plan.
- The entry must be typewritten in narrative format, not to exceed 1,000 words.
- The entry may include no more than five pictures and five news articles.
- **Deadline: April 15, 2017**
- Send to Department Americanism Chairman, Amy Luft (address found on the front page of this program plan).

Award: Most Outstanding Overall Americanism Program

Type of award: Citation Plaque

Presented to: One Unit Americanism Chairman

Materials and Guidelines:

- Entries must include the Award Cover Sheet located in this program plan.
- The entry must be typewritten in narrative format, not to exceed 1,000 words.
- Include pictures, clippings, scrapbooks, folders, etc.
- **Deadline: May 1, 2017**
- Send to Department Americanism Chairman, Amy Luft (address found on the front page of this program plan).

Additional Resources You Can Use

1. Emblem Sales: www.emblem.legion.org - flag education DVD: explains the history, significance, meaning, proper display and treatment of the U.S. flag. *Let's Be Right on Flag Etiquette* - a "question and answer" booklet on proper flag etiquette.
2. The American Legion Flag Advocacy: www.legion.org/flag
3. The American Legion's *Action Programs of Americanism* brochure: www.legion.org/publications
4. Capitol Building flags: To order flags flown over the Capitol, contact your congressional representative or senator or visit his/her website. Flags are available for a nominal fee; four to six weeks should be allowed for delivery.
5. Your National Americanism Program Plan (alaforveterans.org)
6. Promote the Pocket Flag Project. www.pocketflagproject.com. *At time of publication of the Programs Action Plan the pocket flags are \$90.00 per 300 flags.*



**AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST
2016-2017 Cover Sheet**

Each year, the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) sponsors an Americanism Essay Contest for students in grades 3-12. Grade levels are divided into six classes.

Department: 1st place winning entry in each class will receive \$50 from Department and will be forwarded to Central Division for further competition. 2nd place winning entry in each class will receive \$25 from Department and 3rd thru 5th place winning entries in each class will receive \$10.

National: One award in each of the six classes will be presented in each division. Winners will receive \$50 and a \$50 donation in the student's name will be made to the Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship fund. National winners will be posted at www.ALAforVeterans.org at the start of September.

Essay Title: "How does learning about government and our America help you become a future guardian of the liberties of our country?"

Class	Grade Level	Word Requirement
I	3 and 4	150-200
II	5 and 6	250-300
III	7 and 8	350-400
IV	9 and 10	450-500
V	11 and 12	450-500
VI		Word count to correspond with student's grade level.
	Students with special needs	

Essay Checklist/Guidelines:

- Class competing in _____
- Sponsoring ALA unit _____
- Typed or neatly written essay conforming to the word requirement for class
- Completed essay coversheet as first page of essay
- Word count of essay _____
- Due date for student to return to ALA unit: March 1, 2017

To Be Completed by the Student/Parent:

Student name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email address: _____


Phone: _____

School name: _____

School city/state: _____

Teacher's name : _____

Teacher's signature: _____

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Sponsoring Unit City: _____	Unit number: _____
Signature of Unit Americanism Chairman _____	
Entries due to Department Chairman on: <u>March 15, 2017</u>	Department: <u>Wisconsin</u>
Submit to: Amy Luft, 366 Indigo Drive, Port Washington, WI  amyjlufft@gmail.com	
Signature of Department Americanism Chairman: _____	
<i>Department winner due to National Americanism Division Chairman by April 15, 2017</i>	

**American Legion Auxiliary
2016-2017 Dept. Americanism Award Cover Sheet**

Send completed form to:
Amy Luft, Americanism Chairman
366 Indigo Drive
Port Washington, WI 53074
Email: amyluft@gmail.com ♦ Ph: 414-651-7300

This cover sheet should be attached to each narrative submitted for a national award. Please fill out the information as completely and accurately as possible.

Award certificates will be completed using the information given on this sheet, so please write carefully. All awards will be mailed to the Department office after national convention. Department Presidents may wish to recognize award recipients by presenting them at a Department function.

National committee sponsoring award: **AMERICANISM**

Type of Award: District Unit

Name of the award you are applying for: _____

Complete the following if you are applying for a District award:

District #: _____ Name of Department: _____

Name of District chairman: _____

Chairman's phone number: (_____) _____ ALA member ID#: _____

Chairman's email address: _____

Please complete the following if you are applying for a Unit award. Be sure to give the complete name of your unit. The award certificate will be prepared using the information you include below.

Unit #: _____ Full official unit name: _____

Unit president/chairman (circle one) name: _____

Phone number: (_____) _____ ALA member ID#: _____

Email address: _____