

# VETERANS & FAMILY SUPPORT

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November 2022

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Greetings VFW Auxiliary Brothers and Sisters

First, I would like to thank everyone that participated in the Face Mask drive for McVet. Between the in-kind donations and the monetary donations, the Department of Maryland have provided a total of \$

I have been asked by some of you on where and who to send the donations for the following programs. I hope this will make things a little easier for you to find:

## **Spread the Word about Nation Veterans Service (NVS)**

Online: [vfw.org/ways-to-help](http://vfw.org/ways-to-help), then select National Service, click “Contribute”.

Mail check to: VFW National Headquarters

Attn: NVS

406 W. 34<sup>th</sup> Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor

Kansas City, MO 64111

## **VFW Veterans & Military Support Program**

Online: [vfw.org/ways-to-help](http://vfw.org/ways-to-help), then select Veterans & Military Support, click “Contribute”

Mail check to: VFW National Headquarters

Attn: Veterans & Military Support

406 W. 34<sup>th</sup> Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor

Kansas City, MO 64111

As the holiday season is fast approaching make sure you include a veteran and their family in your planning. I know that during this time things can be a little difficult for many with sickness, the loss of loved ones, loneliness, and the economy. But you can always find ways to give them the glimpse of hope. Surprise them and hang some decorations up for them, they will be so

eager to let people know what the VFW Auxiliary has done to put a smile on their face. Send them a card or telephone call; you can even read to them. Sponsor free or discount haircut through Sport Clip. Provide them with a meal, visit with the caregiver or relieve them so they can get some time for themselves. It's the little things that means a lot.

This month I want to focus on the VFW "Sport Clips" Help A Hero Scholarship. Although they have learned a skillset while serving our country some are looking for away to enhance or farther their education. The Help A Hero Scholarship is a great way with less of a final bearded.

### **VFW "Sport Clips" Help A Hero Scholarship**

November 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for applications for scholarship of the 2023 Spring semester. Don't forget to reach out to the VFW Post and the local Sport Clips location to share this information with their student clients. Contact the Colleges and Universities and ask if the have an ROTC program or and Veteran support group or club on campus that you might share this information with. This information can be found on the [VFW National website Student Veteran Support page](#).

The VFW Help-A-Hero Scholarship Program will award scholarships of up to \$5,000 to help veterans complete their educational goals. In order to qualify for the scholarship, you must be: Active duty, retired or honorably discharged or a member of the National Guard/Reserves; Military rank E-5 or below; Demonstrate a need for financial assistance; Participate in, be accepted to or currently enrolled in a VA approved program or school. Applications are accepted for the fall semester January 1 through April 30. Applications for the spring semester will be accepted August 1 through November 15. Scholarships are restricted for tuition and fees only and will be paid directly to the accredited schools. Application must be made online.

Each Auxiliary should promote/inform your auxiliary members about this scholarship. Please write about this scholarship in your newsletters, include on your website/Facebook Page, Twitter, Instagram, as well as Tic Toc, etc. Promote as well in your auxiliary meetings. Don't forget to report that you promoted/informed others about this scholarship opportunity.

### **Student Veteran Support Grant**

The VFW's Student Veteran Support Grant offers needed assistance to support specific student veteran events. The grant focuses on supporting the overall student veteran population within the community, which consists of many student veterans at campuses across the country that are not affiliated with an SVA chapter. The grants will be disbursed to a VFW Post or Department that has submitted an application, to support the student veterans at the university or college.

## Veteran & Military Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Awareness

Mental health Awareness and advocacy is an important cause not only in our local communities but in the military community as well.

There are many ways you can support the military community. Actions as simple as putting a gun lock on any firearm in your household, promoting safe storages of firearms, medications and other lethal items. Know what the signs are of a suicidal crisis such as:



- Changes in mood and activities
- An increase in alcohol or drug use
- Expressions of hopelessness or agitation
- Engaging in risky activities without thinking
- Withdrawing from family and friends

It's important that Veterans know they're not alone and support is available. Here are some of the actions you can take to help reduce gun and other household safety risks:

- Ask them directly: "Are you thinking about suicide?"
- Encourage them to seek help. Suicide prevention coordinators (SPCs), specially trained licensed mental health providers, are available at all VA medical centers across the country.
- Talk about safe gun and medication storage options, such as using a gun lock, or disposing of unused or expired medication.

It is not only important that you know, but it is important that we educate others and especially those in our Veteran communities.

Mental/Behavioral Health thankfully does not have the same negative stigma now as it used to. Many of us suffer from depressive disorders and we should not be embarrassed or ashamed by it. We should be helping each other and our veteran community. Explore various treatment options, keep yourself. You can check out these websites for resources:

- VFW Mental Wellness Campaign, [vfw.org/assistance/mental-wellness](http://vfw.org/assistance/mental-wellness)
- The Campaign to Change Direction, [changedirection.org](http://changedirection.org)
- Give An Hour, [giveanhour.org](http://giveanhour.org)
- Patients Like Me, [patientslikeme.com/join/vfw](http://patientslikeme.com/join/vfw)
- One Mind, [onemind.org](http://onemind.org)
- The Elizabeth Dole Foundation, [elizabethdolefoundation.org](http://elizabethdolefoundation.org)

- Help Heal Veterans (Therapeutic Craft Kits), [healvets.org](http://healvets.org)
- Veterans Voices Writing Project, [veteransvoices.org](http://veteransvoices.org)

You can also purchase the Auxiliary Suicide Awareness Prevention Pin (Product Code—01724) from the VFW Store. Or Wear a Suicide Awareness Teardrop Sticker that I included in last month's promotion.

### **VFW Veterans & Military Support Recognition Program**

The VFW will recognize Auxiliaries for their support of the programs under the Veterans & Military Support Programs umbrella. Auxiliaries will be recognized for donations made from May 2022 through April 30, 2023.

#### **Recognition Levels—VFW Post & Auxiliaries**

Certification of Appreciation—Donations of \$100--\$1,499

Bronze Certificate—Donations of \$1,500--\$2,999

Silver Certificate—Donations of \$3,000--\$5,999

Gold Certificate—Donations of \$6,000 and above

### **Military Assistance Program (MAP)**

Is your Auxiliary, and/or District sponsoring an event for an Active-Duty Military Unit, National Guard or Reserves? Wouldn't it be nice to receive monetary help to put on a event? This is where the VFW Military Assistance Program comes into play. The VFW has funding available for projects such as Welcome Home Events, Family Days, Holiday Events, as well as, sending of care packages. I encourage you to join with your local VFW Post to sponsor these activities. To apply MAP funding, you may contact the VFW Veterans & Military Support office at 816-756-3390 or locally you may contact Tom Kimball, Department of Maryland VFW MAP Chairman.

### **Unmet Needs**

Unmet Needs is there to help America's service members who have been and have run into unexpected financial difficulties as a result of deployment or other military-related activity. The program provides financial aid of up to \$1,500, payable directly to the creditor, to assist with

basic life needs in the form of a grant—not a loan—so no repayment is required. Monies are paid directly to the creditor. For information you may visit [vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants](http://vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants) or locally you may contact Tom Kimball who can give you more information.

As we are approaching the winter months, continue to put on your boots as we show and share our Veterans' and their families' support by reporting the activities that we do for them. Who will be next to win the boot jewel.

Peace and Blessings,  
Felicia Weeks, PDP  
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