

2024-2025 COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

The goal of the VFW Community Service Program is to promote all forms of community service amongst our members and recognize those members and Posts that excel at doing so. Reaching out into our communities is vital to our organization, developing relationships with community leaders, media, school faculty and local civic groups can greatly assist each post in achieving the VFW mission. Each post is expected to engage in and report their Community Service projects and activities. All Post projects and activities must be reported using the Department Activity Report form online, using the guidelines set forth by the Activities Evaluation Director.

The Community Service Program reporting period for Department Awards is 1 May 2024 through 30 April 2025.

Post Division Awards:

Three (3) Post awards for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place will be given in each division for the most credited reports using the 30 April 2025 Department Activities Reports. These Post Division Levels will be based on the June 30, 2024 National membership report.

DIVISION I	10 to 65 members
DIVISION II	66 to 125 members
DIVISION III	126 to 225 members
DIVISION IV	226 members and over

In addition to the Post Division Awards above, there are several other separate and distinct segments of the Department Community Service Program. Each of these programs will be listed on this webpage under their own document heading. Each of these programs is valuable in their own right serving to recognize outstanding Post and individual member achievement as well as deserving members of your community.

- Department Outstanding Community Service Post Awards
- New Member Community Service Volunteer of the Year Award
- VFW Member of the Year Award:
- VFW Employer of the Year Award:
- Fred C. Hall Memorial Award for Community Service:
- National Outstanding Community Service Post Award:
- Special Community Service Projects

The Department Community Service Committee is dedicated to provide you with the support and encouragement your Post/District needs for a successful year.

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Department Outstanding Community Service Post Awards:

The Department will recognize three (3) Posts meeting the below criteria as Department of Michigan Outstanding Community Service Posts. Selection for this award is based on the 30 April 2025 Department Activities Report.

The selection criteria for this award are as follows:

1. Must be 100% reported in Community Activities
2. Must be 100% reported in Hospital
3. Must be 100% reported in Youth Activities
4. Must be 100% reported in Drug and Safety
5. Must be 100% reported in Legislative
5. Must actively support and participate in Voice of Democracy, Patriot Pen and Teacher of the Year Programs
6. Must participate in the Buddy Poppy Program
7. Must demonstrate an active involvement in the community
8. Must support the Commander's Special Project with donations
1. Other criteria as may be determined by the Department Commander

New Member Community Service Volunteer of the Year Award:

The Department will recognize a "New Member Community Service Volunteer of the Year". A new member for the purpose of this award is any VFW member in good standing who has been a member of the VFW for less than two (2) years. (A VFW member who has been a member of your Post for less than two (2) years but has been a member of the VFW for two (2) years or more, is not eligible for this award). Each Post is asked to nominate at least one (1) new VFW member for this award, using the entry form found at the link below. Post nominations will be submitted using the guidelines established by the Department of Michigan Community Services Director, described below. Any Post member in good standing can submit a nomination form to their Post Commander and Post members in good standing who meet the award criteria may nominate themselves. District Commanders will establish the deadlines for Post Commanders to submit their nominations to them and will notify the Department Community Service Director of these deadlines NLT 15 September 2024. The deadline for submission to the Department Community Service Director is 1 April 2025.

Every Post will receive ten (10) All State points for submission of their first nomination for this award and five (5) All State points for each additional nomination submitted. Post Commanders will submit all nomination forms directly to their District Commander. If a Post nominates two (2) or more members for this award, a Post winner must be selected, the Post Commander will clearly indicate on the nomination form which nominee is their Post winner and the Post will receive an additional ten (10) All State points. If a Post only submits one nominee for this award, no additional All State points will be awarded for the Post winner.

Each District will select a District winner from among the Post submissions. District Commanders will establish the procedures for selecting their District winner; for example, the District Commander may select the winner, let a committee select the winner or have a committee pick the top three (3) or (4) candidates from which the District Commander will select a winner. The Post that submitted the winning entry in each District will receive an additional fifteen (15) All State points.

District Commanders will sign and date all nomination forms submitted to them, check the yes or no box to indicate whether or not the entry was their District winner and forward all nomination forms, and the required narratives, to the Department Community Service Director, Joseph L. Tebor. One (1) entry, from among the District winners submitted, will then be selected as the Department of Michigan New Member Community Service Volunteer of the Year. The Post that

submitted the winning entry at Department level will receive an additional twenty (20) All State points. The Department winner will be appropriately and publicly recognized at the State Convention. New Member Community Service Volunteer of the Year Award Nomination Form

VFW Member of the Year Award:

Purpose: This award is to recognize a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars who has exemplified in their actions and accomplishments, the true spirit of our Organization in serving the needs of their Post, and Community, and who has dedicated themselves in a professional manner to addressing the Pillars of our Organization. Post Commanders are encouraged to submit to VFW Department Community Service Director a narrative write up on a comrade from their Post that is leading from the front and supporting one or more of the purposes of our Congressional Charter.

Eligibility: This award is intended to recognize a member in good standing of the Veterans of Foreign Wars who has been a member a minimum of one full membership year, and has received a nomination for their activities during the award Year according to the Award guidelines. Posts are encouraged to submit their winners from their own contest if they have a current member of the year process. Award candidates holding any of the following elected or appointed office during the award year, are not eligible. (Specifically - Commander, QM, Adjutant, Service Officer or Chaplain) In addition, Past State Commanders and Past National Council members are ineligible for nomination.

Type of Recognition: The nominator's Post will receive ten (10) All State points for their first nomination and five (5) All State points for each additional nomination submitted. If a Post nominates two (2) or more members for this award, a Post winner must be selected, the Post Commander will write "Post Winner" on the nomination form of the nominee selected as the Post winner and the Post will receive an additional ten (10) All State points. If a Post only submits one nominee for this award, no additional All State points will be awarded for the Post winner. Post Commanders will submit all nominations including those not selected for awards, to the Department Community Service Director no later than 28 March 2025. One nominee will be selected as the Department of Michigan Member of the Year. The Post of the member selected as the Department winner will receive an additional twenty (20) All State points.

The Department winner will receive a plaque from the Department Commander at the Department Convention and a \$100 cash award.

Criteria: This award recognizes exceptional performance as a member of the VFW. Examples of service that would be considered in judging the nominee include the following:

- Nominee presents themselves in a professional and helpful manner within the Organization and within the Community.
- Nominee shows an active interest in their Department by attending meetings and showing a willingness to consider leadership roles.
- Nominee participates in activities and events within the Department to help raise awareness of the Organization in the Community.
- Nominee has shown a willingness to work together with other VFW, Auxiliary, and Riders Members in a spirit of cooperation to accomplish the same goals.
- Nominee volunteers for and participates in activities and events that address the needs of target groups and individuals in the Community.
- Nominee has demonstrated actions which contribute to improving the quality of life for those we are intended to serve, whether they are children or adults, and whether they are homeless, hospitalized, handicapped, in need of a job or education.

- Nominee encourages members of the Community to support VFW programs and continually encourages others to become members.
- Nominees are encouraged to submit for #StillServing campaign recognition at <https://todaysvfw.org/>

Process: Any VFW member in good standing may be nominated as a Member of The Year candidate using the Member of The Year Nomination Form by the Department Commander. Nominations may be made by another VFW member, a Post Commander or a District Commander. Award candidates holding any of the following elected or appointed office, during the award year, are not eligible. (Specifically the following officers: Commander, Adjutant, Service Officer or Chaplain). In addition, Past State Commanders and Past National Council members are ineligible for nomination. Complete nominations must be received at Department Headquarters by 28 March 2025. Nomination Criteria and Nomination Form may be obtained from Department Headquarters. If you have any questions, please contact the Department Adjutant at 517-485-9456 or adjutant@vfwmi.vet.

VFW Employer of the Year Award:

The Purpose of Award: To confer recognition on one employer for outstanding records in the hiring and retention of veterans.

Nomination Procedure: Any member in good standing may nominate an employer for this award.

- The nominator will include all of the information that is requested in the Judging Criteria section below.
- The nominator should provide a copy of the company's written policy on employment of veterans if available, a description of how the employer supports veterans' activities in the community, and any other reasons why the nominee should be selected to be the Employer of the year Award winner.
- The nominator will provide their first and last name, phone number, email address, position, VFW Post # and District #.
- The nominator will provide the employer's business name and address and the name, phone# and email address of employer's Point of Contact (POC),
 - Nominations that arrive without supporting information will not be eligible for the national awards.
 - Only those nominations that include adequate documentation on the nominee's employment practices concerning veterans will be considered for the National VFW Employer of the Year Awards.
- The nominator will attach a narrative telling why they feel the employer deserves this award
- Governmental agencies are not eligible for this award.

Awards: Fifteen (15) All State points will be awarded to a Post for its first nomination and ten (10) All State points for each additional nomination submitted. An additional fifteen (15) All State points will be awarded to the Post of a Post winner when a Post submits two (2) or more nominations. No additional points are awarded if a Post submits only one (1) nomination. Post Commanders will submit all nominations to the Department Community Service Director on 28 March 2025. A Department Employer of the Year will be selected and the Post that submitted it will receive 25 All State points. The Department Employer of the Year will receive a plaque from the Department Commander at the State Convention. The business will be highlighted on

the Department website and recognized in the State Convention Ad Book, the Fall Conference Ad Book and the Mid-Winter Conference Ad Book.

Judging Criteria:

2. Identify and describe the employer's programs and or benefits designed to recruit veterans, including innovative business practices used to increase veteran recruitment.
3. Describe the employer's policies that give a preference to hire veterans, referring veterans, or any other veteran policy (VA veteran sick leave hours). Provide the positive and significant impacts these policies have on the employer's business results.
4. Describe the employer's policies or initiatives that improve the current and future veteran employer's career opportunities.
5. Provide the number of veterans employed, the total number of employees, and the percentage of veterans employed during a set time period: 1 January 2024 to December 31st, 2024.
6. Describe collaborative efforts with business organizations, educational partners, and community organizations that improve veteran employment opportunities.
7. Explain why veterans would choose this employer over other employers.
8. Provide documented endorsements, newspaper articles, awards, or letters of support highlighting the nominee's contributions to veteran friendly employment or retention.
9. Provide the number of veterans employed with the employer for over one year.
10. Provide the number of veterans employed with the employer for five years.

Deadline: The deadline for submission of nominations of VFW Employer of the Year to the Community Service Director is 28 March 2025.

Fred C. Hall Memorial Award for Community Service:

There will no longer be a Post Special Project application for the Fred C. Hall Award for Community Service. Each year on 1 July, the National Programs Office will determine the top Community Service Posts in each Conference, based off their community service reporting and total impact (Dollars Donated + Volunteer Hours + Mileage = Total Impact) from 1 July to 30 June. The winning Post receives a plaque at the VFW National Convention and a \$1,000 service scholarship for community projects. The Post Commander (or designated representative) and a guest will receive round-trip air fare, hotel accommodations for 5 nights and a \$599 stipend to receive the award at the National Convention.

National Outstanding Community Service Post Award:

Each Department will have an Outstanding Community Service Post (OCSP) winner based on Total Impact (Dollars Donated + Volunteer Hours + Mileage = Total Impact). National Programs Office will select the Department winner based on end of year reports on 1 July 2025 (1 July to 30 June). National will select one Post from each Department to receive the National Outstanding Community Service Post Award at the VFW National Convention. The award includes a plaque inscribed with the name of the VFW Post and its Auxiliary (if applicable), a \$599 stipend to cover part of the Post Representative's expenses to National Convention, publication of the Post's name in the Convention program booklet and a street sign identifying this national award for the Post to put up in their community.

Special Community Service Projects

Commander's Special Project:

This year's Commander's Special Project is FOXHOLE. This is an award winning nonprofit organization operated by Moe Modesta, a VFW member from Post 1370 in our Department. One (1) All State point will be awarded for each \$25 or \$1 per member donation to the Commander's Special Project. Donations must go through Department of Michigan VFW earmarked for Commander's Special Project, FOXHOLE, to receive points toward All-State Honors.

Gold Star Mothers Program:

Gold Star Mothers is composed of American mothers who lost a son or daughter during any war, hostile conflict or while in service to our country. Gold Star Mothers serve an important role in our VA healthcare system.

The Commander suggests supporting Gold Star Mothers though financial contributions which can be made from the Post Relief Fund. One (1) All State point for each \$25 or \$1 per member donated to the Gold Star Mothers. Donations must be made through the Department of Michigan VFW earmarked Gold Star Mothers to receive points toward All-State Honors.

The Department Community Service Committee is dedicated to provide you with the support and encouragement your Post/District needs for a successful year.

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