

STATE of MICHIGAN VFW

2025-2026 DAY of CHALLENGES PROGRAM

The Day of Challenges Program is a one-day Michigan youth activity program sponsored by the State of Michigan VFW with local support from VFW District 15 and area VFW Posts. Additional support from VFW Posts and members through their donations and team sponsorship is encouraged and welcome. The Michigan Tech Army ROTC cadets organize various challenge events, assisting with the challenges and leading each of the teams while helping to build leadership and problem-solving skills with each of the participants. The Army ROTC Cadre observes the events along with the VFW Program Director.

The program is designed to challenge teams in physical fitness, coordination, team building and leadership as a group. The Junior Division (middle school grades 5, 6, 7 and 8) and Senior Division (high school grades 9, 10, 11 and 12) teams are limited to 6 members per team. Disability is accepted in team memberships. A maximum of 30 teams may compete on the Day of Challenges due to facility constraints. Events included are fitness test, obstacle course, relay race, swimming, escape room and tug of war. Leadership reaction is tested on each team using limited equipment to solve a simulated scenario.

The Program is marketed by mailings to school principals with return mail and on-line registration from those schools desiring to participate. Any VFW Post may request school team registration information by contacting the Director. Cost of travel of team members will be the responsibility of the sponsoring Post.

Team event awards will be presented in each Division. The top scoring team in each Division will be presented with an engraved traveling trophy that can be displayed in their school until next year's Day of Challenges. In addition, all team participants will receive a Day of Challenges Certificate of Completion, a Medallion, a custom T-shirt and a VFW State Commander's Pin. The Iron Boy trophy and Iron Girl trophies are awarded to the top-scoring boy and girl.

The State of Michigan VFW pays for all awards and the hot meal for the 200 plus youth participants and an estimated 50 ROTC cadets.

VFW Posts that donate to the Day of Challenges to support the program will receive All-State Program credit for their donation per the All-State Program criteria. Posts may also submit a report of their donation on the State community service activity report as a youth activity.

The Day of Challenges Program will be conducted at Michigan Technological University in Houghton, MI. The date in 2026 is TBA. The events are conducted in the University Student Development Center, followed by a lunch and awards ceremony at the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) building to complete the day.

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