



THE AMERICAN LEGION

ACTION PROGRAMS OF AMERICANISM



AMERICANISM COMMISSION



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Americanism is an unfailing love of country, loyalty to its institutions and ideals, eagerness to defend it against all enemies, individual allegiance to the U.S. flag and a desire to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.

Our forefathers laid the foundation for a civilization that is the envy of the world. It has brought us greater spiritual and material wealth than any people has ever known.

This is our heritage.

The activities of The American Legion's Americanism Commission acknowledge and preserve that heritage, recognizing inalienable rights of all.

This brochure briefly describes the Legion's many Americanism programs.



OPERATION COMFORT WARRIORS

The Operation Comfort Warriors (OCW) program has been aiding in the recovery of wounded, injured or ill military personnel since 2008 by providing them with comfort items not usually supplied by the government. Items include toiletries, clothing, electronics, rehabilitation equipment, adaptive sporting equipment and other necessities. OCW also hosts events for servicemembers who are recovering from their wounds at military hospitals, such as dinners and picnics.

One hundred percent of donations to OCW goes toward funding items and events for wounded servicemembers and veterans.

Donations and requests for assistance may be directed to The American Legion, Operation Comfort Warriors, P.O. Box 361626, Indianapolis, IN 46236 or online at www.legion.org/ocw.

For additional information

Visit www.legion.org/ocw or email ocw@legion.org.



AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL

American Legion Baseball began in 1925 and held its first national tournament the following year. Today, there are nearly 3,700 teams and more than 66,000 youth who participate in the program yearly from all 50 states and Canada. Legion Baseball teaches youth good sportsmanship, loyalty, respect for rules and decisions rendered, physical fitness, fair play, courage and citizenship.

The program is divided into two divisions — seniors (18- and 19-year-olds) and juniors (17-year-olds and younger). Tournaments are conducted in the senior division and the top eight teams who win their respective division's regional tournament advance to The American Legion World Series (ALWS).

Since 2011, Shelby, N.C., has become the permanent home of the ALWS where more than 100,000 paid attendees watch the 15-game tournament every year. Viewership of the ALWS has expanded in recent years thanks to ESPN3.com live streaming all games and television coverage of the two semifinal games and the championship game on ESPNU.

The national championship team is honored with a trip to the Major League Baseball (MLB) World Series and recognized on field, a tradition upheld since 1926 when American Legion Baseball and MLB formed a relationship.

Many current MLB stars such as Michael Cuddyer, Madison Bumgarner and Albert Pujols, and former MLB players such as Hall of Famers Bob Feller, Yogi Berra and Reggie Jackson, developed their skills on American Legion diamonds.

For additional information

visit www.legion.org/baseball or email baseball@legion.org



AMERICAN LEGION AND SCOUTING

The American Legion officially recognized Scouting as a positive youth program at its first national convention in 1919. Support has remained constant since then, with local posts chartering nearly 2,500 Scout troops and providing other forms of support.

Annually, an Eagle Scout is recognized as The American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year and is awarded a \$10,000 college scholarship. Scholarships of \$2,500 each are awarded to three runners-up.

American Legion, Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion members who are actively involved in Scouting and who have furthered the Scouting program in The American Legion are recognized with the Legion and Scouting Square Knot Award.

For additional information

Visit www.legion.org/scouting or email scouting@legion.org.



YOUTH CADET LAW ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM

Many American Legion departments conduct a weeklong Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program in conjunction with their state police or highway patrol academy. Program titles may vary, such as “Student Trooper Program” or “State Police Youth Week,” but they all share the same mission of educating high school students about law enforcement, providing a day-in-the-life of a trooper in training, and instilling respect for law officials.

Most departments host their programs at law enforcement training centers with law enforcement officers conducting the physical fitness training and classroom education. Cadets learn officer survival techniques, defensive tactics, firearms safety, precision driving, accident and criminal investigation, law enforcement technology and more.

The application process to attend the program varies by department, but typically Legion posts nominate a cadet(s).

For additional information

Visit www.legion.org/youthlaw or email youthlaw@legion.org.



AMERICAN LEGION JUNIOR SHOOTING SPORTS

The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports program is recognized as one of the premier amateur shooting programs in the country, teaching students under 18 years old (or high school seniors no older than 20) gun safety and marksmanship while fostering healthy competition.

More than 1,600 teams are currently affiliated with the Legion's Shooting Sports program and approximately 1,900 individual shooters enter the tournament each year. Shooters are trained to use a .177 air rifle and skill levels vary from beginners learning safety basics to regional champs competing shoulder-to-shoulder in the Legion's 3-Position Air Rifle National Championship, which is held at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Any recognized youth group (school or club) with responsible adult leadership can become involved with this program. The group/club must be sponsored by an American Legion post and affiliated with the national organization.

For additional information

Visit www.legion.org/shooting or email juniors shooting@legion.org.



AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE AND NATION

Boys State

Since 1935, American Legion Boys State has been one of the country's most revered and selective government instruction programs, teaching high school students about the operation of local, county and state governments. Forty-nine states conduct this program, serving almost 20,000 young men each year. The American Legion Auxiliary sponsors a similar program for young women called Girls State.

At Boys State, young men learn about the rights, privileges, duties and responsibilities of a franchised citizen. Elected and appointed local officials offer participants objective, practical training in city, county and state governance, and activities are conducted such as legislative sessions, court proceedings, law enforcement presentations, assemblies, band, chorus and recreational programs.

American Legion posts select participants to attend their respective Boys State program after receiving recommendations from school officials. Usually posts, local businesses or community organizations pay the cost of attendance.

Boys State participants go on to achieve success in a variety of fields. Notable alumni include astronaut Neil Armstrong, basketball legend Michael Jordan and national television news journalist Tom Brokaw.



Boys Nation

Two outstanding participants from each of the 49 Boys State programs are selected to attend American Legion Boys Nation in Washington, D.C. The program also provides an appreciation for and understanding of the U.S. system of government with emphasis on citizenship education and a two-party system of government.

Each Boys Nation delegate is assigned to one of two mythical political parties. The young men caucus, conduct party conventions, nominate and elect a president and vice president, introduce and vote on bills into the Boys Nation Senate, and meet with elected officials from their respective state.

The weeklong session also includes special visits to federal agencies, national shrines, memorials and historical sites.

Since its beginning in 1946, Boys Nation has seen many of its graduates elected to public office, such as former President Bill Clinton.

For additional information

Visit www.legion.org/boysnation or email boysstate-nation@legion.org.



THE AMERICAN LEGION HIGH SCHOOL ORATORICAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM: “A CONSTITUTIONAL SPEECH CONTEST”

The Oratorical Scholarship Program helps high school students develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of the U.S. Constitution, teaches the importance of leadership, and provides participants with an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship.

The contest has two phases: an eight to ten minute prepared oration and a three to five-minute assigned topic presentation.

Department level contests are usually held January through March. The national competition is conducted in Indianapolis in April.

Scholarships are awarded at most levels of the competition. At the national level, first place receives \$18,000; second, \$16,000; and third, \$14,000. In addition, each department winner who competes in the first round of the national contest receives a \$1,500 scholarship.

Since 2010, The American Legion has established a collaborative relationship with the National Speech and Debate Association, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit honorary society recognized as a premier high school speech and debate organization in the United States.

For additional information

Visit www.legion.org/oratorical or email oratorical@legion.org.



FLAG EDUCATION PROGRAM

The American Legion's Flag Education Program increases awareness of proper flag display and disposal and instills patriotism and honor in all Americans. Flag education has been a major activity of The American Legion since its inception, with thousands of flag education programs presented each year in classrooms across the country.

The American Legion encourages and supports efforts to display the American flag and daily recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in our nation's classrooms.

For additional information

The American Legion publishes flag literature and makes it available through American Legion Emblem Sales. Visit www.emblem.legion.org.

Flag education items include:

"Let's Be Right on Flag Etiquette": The booklet contains flag code and American Legion interpretations of proper flag etiquette in situations not specifically covered by the law.

Flag Code: The brochure illustrates and describes the correct way to display the American flag, as well as the history of the flag.

"For Which It Stands": The 20-minute interactive DVD provides flag etiquette training for classrooms.



SCHOOL AND STUDENT PROGRAMS

American Legion posts are encouraged to promote the importance of education and play an active role in activities at schools in their communities.

American Legion Legacy Scholarship

The American Legion Legacy Scholarship is available for children of servicemembers who have died while on active duty with the U.S. Armed forces on or after Sept. 11, 2001.

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For additional information and an application

Visit www.legion.org/scholarships or email scholarships@legion.org.

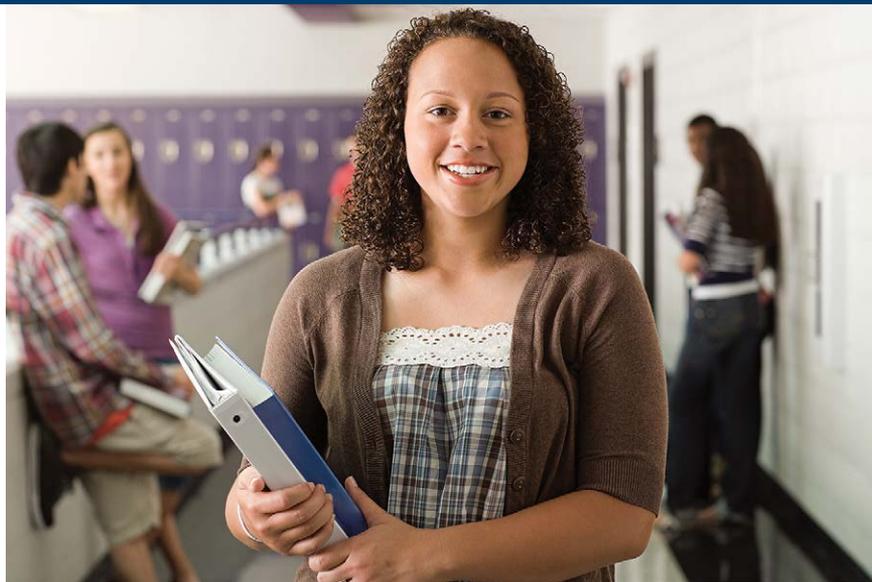
American Legion School Medal Award

Students who display courage, honor, leadership, patriotism, scholarship and service are recognized in the graduating classes of elementary, junior/middle and senior high schools, as well as at the college level.

Awards may be purchased from Emblem Sales at www.emblem.legion.org.

American Education Week

In 1921, The American Legion and the National Education Association organized American Education Week to address illiteracy and to recognize teachers and students who performed above the norm. Each year The American Legion distributes literature to departments for dissemination to posts on ways to celebrate the week.



Veterans in the Classroom

Connecting veterans with schools and classrooms gives students an opportunity to learn about life in the military, the rigors of war, and how the service of America's veterans affected their lives and the lives of others.

Students also gain a greater respect for and understanding of the veterans' sacrifices and commitment to service. The Legion's Veterans in the Classroom program crystallizes the true meaning of patriotism through study of real American issues and values.

Reinvigorating Veteran Awareness

This initiative places U.S. veterans at the heart of school curricula with weekly classroom visits from American Legion Day, Sept. 16, through Veterans Day, Nov. 11.

This is part of the Legion's nationwide effort to encourage young Americans to recognize the contributions and sacrifices veterans have made, and continue to make, to preserve our freedom.

For additional information and an application

Email legioned@legion.org.



CITIZENSHIP

As Americans, understanding and upholding the rights, privileges, duties and obligations of citizenship better our communities, states and nation. Legion posts are especially well-positioned and well-suited for assuming a strong, local leadership role in citizenship and development.

Get Out the Vote

The American Legion's *Get Out the Vote* program encourages Legion members to renew their commitment for continued service to this country by being politically active as individuals and by encouraging all Americans to register and vote in all elections.

Citizenship Outreach

Legionnaires play a significant part in growing America's diverse population. Since its founding, The American Legion has provided assistance and instruction to those following the lawful path to citizenship and assimilating into American society.

The Americanism Commission encourages posts to uphold a commitment to mentor candidates for U.S. citizenship and to support their assimilation into local communities.

For additional information

Visit www.legion.org/citizenship.

OTHER PROGRAMS

Posts and departments may conduct other Americanism programs, including sporting activities, participatory government education programs, mentoring activities, fund drives for community betterment, safety programs and school-related activities.

AMERICANISM PUBLICATIONS

Americanism publications are available at cost from American Legion Emblem Sales. To purchase publications, call (888) 453-4466, visit www.emblem.legion.org or email emblem@legion.org.

The Americanism Division also has numerous free publications available for download at www.legion.org/publications.

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & YOUTH

The American Legion remains focused on the welfare of our country's children and the issues facing our young people as it has ever been. The Americanism Commission's Committee on Children & Youth remains committed to serving the nation's youth.

The purpose of the Committee on Children & Youth is to formulate, recommend and implement plans, programs and activities designed to address three main areas: child safety, child well-being and family emphasis.

The "Children & Youth Programs" publication provides an overview of the major programs of the Committee on Children & Youth. The publication along with other American Legion children and youth program publications are available for download at www.legion.org/youth.

For additional information

Visit www.legion.org/youth or email c&y@legion.org.



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youths and others, please visit www.legion.org/donate.