

# American Legion Youth Award Medals Program

## Developing future leaders ... Today

V.2025.07.23

**Purpose:** The purpose of the American Legion *Youth Award Medals Program* is to develop America's future leaders by motivating and encouraging youth as well as recognizing exceptional performance in the areas of JROTC / ROTC, Citizenship, Americanism, Shooting, Athleticism, Scholarship, Music, Oracle & Essay endeavors. This program cannot be accomplished without at least minimal general guidelines for delineating the level of awards that would be appropriate commensurate with the youth efforts as acknowledged by parents, youth leadership, and school counselors. General guideline suggestions or recommendations are intended to assist the Post, citizens, family members, school counselors and youth leadership on acceptable criteria for awarding these awards from the Post, State, National or Legionnaire. These guidelines will assist the American Legion and the schools by facilitating communications between the American Legion Post(s) and the schools they are affiliated with.

**Background:** The American Legion does not have paid positions to oversee these programs. Many of the school counselors, coaches and parents cannot understand these programs even though introduced by the Legions, as most do not have a military background to support understanding of the core values, spirit and intent of these programs. Furthermore school counselors are not so inclined to promote these programs due to the previous vagueness of award criteria and the additional workload and time constraints imposed by the schools. All awards, without definitive award criteria, are highly subjective and make a program nearly impossible to understanding. For any program to succeed, the program must be simple – to understand, promote and administer.

Scholastic achievement, superior skills in the arts and athleticism, as well as Americanism and citizenship recognition is critical in the secondary schools, often measured by institutions of higher learning including Military Academies for admission to identify the best qualified high achiever. Notwithstanding, the critical function of motivating the primary school youth to excel is firmly imbedded in recognition for high achievement. This program will bridge the gap.

**Areas of Responsibility:** Posts are assigned regions that encompass the schools: elementary & middle (primary), high school (secondary) and colleges that exist within their local regional boundary, as dictated by the number of available Posts and reasonable division of the existing schools among the Posts. The responsible adult may submit the award requests to the local area Post, but in the absence of the Post or the inability of the Post to process the award, an alternate Post may be used to submit the award(s). Local / Regional Posts should support these awards as fully as practicable. In the absence or inability of a local Post to process the award(s), the award request may be submitted (digitally or telephonically) to the respective State American Legion office for approval.

The following are suggestions for consideration of recommended awards. Nothing herein should be considered to be absolute. The initial, (or in some cases the final), approval may come from the Legion Post where the award is submitted. Higher awards may need to be approved at the National Headquarters level.

### Authority and References:

American Legion:	<a href="http://www.legion.org/">http://www.legion.org/</a>
Medal Orders:	<a href="http://emblem.legion.org/Medals/products/164/">http://emblem.legion.org/Medals/products/164/</a>
JROTC/ROTC:	<a href="http://www.legion.org/rotc">http://www.legion.org/rotc</a> & <a href="http://members.floridalegion.org/programs/jrotc">http://members.floridalegion.org/programs/jrotc</a>
Boys State / Nation:	<a href="http://www.legion.org/boysnation">http://www.legion.org/boysnation</a>
Girls State / Nation:	<a href="https://www.alaforveterans.org/Programs/ALA-Girls-State---Girls-Nation/">https://www.alaforveterans.org/Programs/ALA-Girls-State---Girls-Nation/</a>
School Award Medal Program:	<a href="http://www.legion.org/documents/pdf/schoolaward.pdf">http://www.legion.org/documents/pdf/schoolaward.pdf</a>
Oratorical Contest:	<a href="http://www.legion.org/oratorical">http://www.legion.org/oratorical</a>
American Legion Baseball:	<a href="http://www.legion.org/baseball">http://www.legion.org/baseball</a>
Junior Shooting Sports	<a href="http://www.legion.org/shooting">http://www.legion.org/shooting</a>

## **Award Criteria Guidelines**

The Post Commander will appoint a committee of not more than three Post members to serve as an Award Committee for the Post to contact local school authorities. Through the Award Committee should endeavor to establish friendly cooperation on the part of the faculty and students to promote the YAMP. When successfully achieved, it will be possible to activate a smooth, coordinated program. Elements of a program would necessitate include the following:

A series of talks to the students, and faculty, on the fundamentals which are the basis of the Youth Award Medals Program. These talks should be delivered by Legionnaires, tuned to the students' level of understanding, of good grammatical structure, and short. The customary weekly assembly period would be an excellent opportunity for such presentations.

Arrangements on how the recipients are to be selected should be made well in advance of the end of the school year. Traits underlying the selection of the youth will be commensurate with the respective award criteria. The Post Award Committee upon the recommendation of school faculty members, coaches, youth leadership or parents should make the final selection or recommendation(s) the American Legion Post (or National Office, as appropriate) if required.

Students, patrons and the entire community should know and understand the entire program. Suitable publicity should be arranged to handle this. The sole purpose of the undertaking by The American Legion is the cultivation of high character and wholesome ideals in youth approaching active citizenship. No trace of politics, sectarianism or favoritism should be allowed to attach itself to the Youth Award Medals Program.

At the medal presentation ceremony, it is only fitting and proper that the local American Legion Post take the major role. A member of The American Legion Post should present the awards. The school principal is to be consulted before any speaker is named in order to be certain that the speaker is acceptable to the local school authorities. All speakers should be cautioned not to take up too much time on the commencement program. World War II, Korean, Viet Nam, Gulf War, Iraq or Afghanistan veterans can serve admirably in presenting awards.

Ideally, awards should be made to the outstanding youth of the class in primary & secondary schools and colleges at the end of the year awards ceremony. School recommending awards should normally be limited to the *maximum of one level each (bronze, silver & gold)* for *each type of medal (Scholastic, Music, Oratory, etc.)* requested. Awards should be submitted with enough time to approve, order & deliver the award, *normally 60 days prior to the end of the school year.* Awards out of the school year cycle may be considered with supporting documentation commensurate with the award request.

Thoughtful consideration should be given to matching the type and level (bronze, silver or gold) of the award with respect to the age, grade and accomplishment of the youth. Excessive awarding of medals will serve to cheapen the spirit & intent of the program, as well as the intrinsic value of the awards, particularly at the gold level.

Most of these awards are intended primarily to motivate the youth to excel in primary and secondary schools. Although they may be awarded to youth attending college, the college youth's award / reward for (scholastic) excellence would logically be their Degree conferred. By the time the primary / secondary school youth enters college, these awards should have served to highly motivate and identify the high achiever in various endeavors.

No medal shall be pinned on the chest or breast of a recipient under the age of 18, with the exception of JROTC medals, which may be pinned to the JROTC uniform coat by the Senior Instructor or Principal of the school. Youth award recipients may be handed the award in the case, or have it clipped to a suitable lapel, if appropriate. Attending parent(s) / guardian(s) may pin the medal on their child.

Second through fifth subsequent awards of the same level may be indicated by the attachment of a gold 5/16" star (procured locally at any military uniform shop or online vendors) centered on the suspension ribbon of the medal. The sixth award will be indicated by a silver 5/16" star in lieu of five gold stars. JROTC only: If maximum ribbons is reached or

multiple different American Legion medals awarded preclude the wearing of multiple ribbons. Cadet(s) may wear a single ribbon with the appropriate gold/silver star(s) indicating total number of different American Legion medals awarded.

### **American Legion JROTC / ROTC Medal Awards Overview**

The American Legion JROTC / ROTC (J/ROTC) Medal Awards were established by National Convention mandate as a way in which The American Legion can show its support for JROTC / ROTC programs throughout the nation. It is another way in which the Legion and the schools can work together in the development of our young leaders. The Legion is committed to this worthwhile community service.

After a Post has decided to participate in this program, an Award Committee member will contact the local school(s). In communities where there are two Posts serving a single school, the support program can be a joint venture. Although the emphasis of the J/ROTC Achievement Program is the awarding of medals to the outstanding individuals in the school J/ROTC UNIT, support for the units is by no means limited to this activity. By working closely with school officials and J/ROTC Instructors, Posts will be able to support their local units in other ways. Cooperation between the Post Awards Committee and the high school, community college, or college/university is beneficial to the school, the Post, the J/ROTC Unit, and most importantly, the young JROTC / ROTC cadet.

### **Medals**

The JROTC/ROTC medals and ribbon bars have been approved for wear by the Department of Defense and Departments of the Army, Navy and Air Force. Criteria for these decorations have been officially approved and are published in each of the respective Service regulations.

These medals, recognizing Military and Scholastic Excellence, are available for presentation to Army, Navy, Marine and Air Force JROTC / ROTC cadets at any college, university, or high school. They come in three forms:

**Bronze** – Normally awarded to the outstanding high school cadets of the JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps) that are selected by the Senior Instructor. It may also be awarded to college freshmen who have completed the freshman course (100) and qualified for admission to the sophomore (200) ROTC Course.

**Silver** - Awarded to the outstanding community college/four year college/university ROTC cadets who have successfully completed the Sophomore ROTC (200) course and qualified for admission to the junior (300) course. It can also be awarded to those outstanding cadets who have completed the JROTC (300) course in a junior/community college.

**Gold** - Awarded to the outstanding four year college/university ROTC cadets who have successfully completed the Senior ROTC (400) course. It can also be awarded to those outstanding cadets who have completed the junior (300) course and qualified for admission to the Senior (400) course.

### **RIBAR (Plain)**



American Legion Youth / School Award Medals may be represented by the plain Ribar (Ribbon), in order of precedence (Medal of Merit, Boy/Girl State, School Award, Patrick Henry Oratorical, Americanism, Citizenship then all other American Legion Youth Awards). For JROTC members, the JROTC Medals will take precedence on the JROTC uniform, as prescribed by the respective branch regulations.

**Item Number:** 717.325

**Price:** \$4.99

### **References:**

Army:	Army Cadet Command Regulation 145-2, pp 126
Air Force:	Air Force ROTC Instruction 36-2020, pp 21 - 23, Items 4.5 & 4.6
Navy/Marine Corps:	CNETINST 1533.9K, Ch. XI, Article 1106, pp 82 – 83, Items f. & g.

## 1. JROTC/ROTC Military Excellence Medal and Ribar (Bronze, Silver or Gold).

This award is normally recommended by the senior JROTC / ROTC instructor. It is awarded for outstanding cadet performance, demonstrated qualities of dependability and good character, adherence to military discipline, leadership ability; as well as a fundamental and patriotic understanding of the importance of JROTC / ROTC training.

The award level is normally a Bronze Medal and the recipient may be determined by the Senior Instructor at the JROTC Unit level. The Silver Medal may be awarded to those outstanding cadets who have completed the ROTC (300) course; the Gold Medal may be awarded to those outstanding cadets who have completed the ROTC (400) in a junior/community college. Award criteria and medal levels are dictated by the respective military branch instruction(s).

Each cadet must:

1. Be in the upper 25 percent of their class in academic standing, including all JROTC subjects.
2. Demonstrate outstanding qualities in military leadership, discipline, character and citizenship.



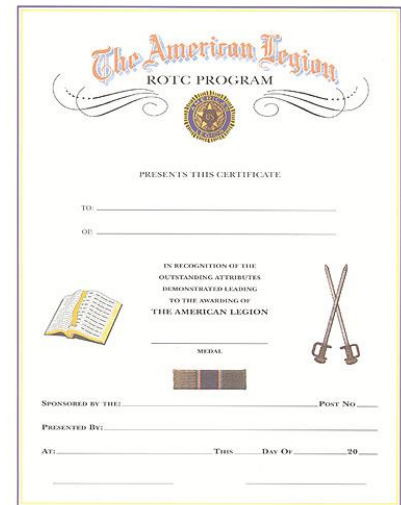
- Approved for wear by Department of Defense
- Features Legion emblem
- Includes presentation box
- **Gold: \$24.99 (Medal only)**
- **Silver: \$22.99 (Medal only)**
- **Bronze: \$20.99 (Medal only)**
- **Item Number: 717.100M**
- **Gold: \$31.99 (Medal/Ribar set with box)**
- **Silver: \$29.99 (Medal/Ribar set with box)**
- **Bronze: \$27.99 (Medal/Ribar set with box)**
- **Item Number: 717.100**



JROTC/ROTC Military Excellence Ribar

**Item Number: 717.100R**

Bronze/Silver/Gold - \$7.959



Devices awarded as part of an organizational award (Legion of Valor Bronze Cross for Achievement, American legion Awards, Reserve Officers Association, Military Order of World Wars, etc.) will be worn centered on the ribbon. No more than one device may be worn, even if the recipient has earned the award more than once. If various levels of the award have been earned denoted by different devices (bronze/silver/gold), only the highest level award device will be worn.

This medal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate and Ribar (ribbon).

### References:

Army: Army Cadet Command Regulation 145-2, pp 126

Air Force: Air Force ROTC Instruction 36-2020, pp 21 - 23, Items 4.5 & 4.6

Navy/Marine Corps: CNETINST 1533.9K, Ch. XI, Article 1106, pp 82 – 83, Items f. & g.

## 2. JROTC/ROTC Scholastic Excellence Medal with Rebar (Bronze, Silver or Gold).

This award is normally recommended by the senior JROTC / ROTC instructor. It is awarded for superior academic performance and excelling in JROTC course(s), demonstrate outstanding qualities in military leadership, and actively participate in constructive student activities such as student organizations, music/arts programs or sports.

The award level is normally a Bronze Medal and the recipient may be determined by the Senior Instructor at the JROTC Unit level. The Silver Medal may be awarded to those outstanding cadets who have completed the ROTC (300) course; the Gold Medal may be awarded to those outstanding cadets who have completed the ROTC (400) in a junior/community college. Award criteria and medal levels are dictated by the respective military branch instruction(s).

Each cadet must:

1. Be in the upper 10 percent of the high school class in all courses other than the JROTC/ROTC course(s).
2. Be in the upper 25 percent of all JROTC/ROTC course(s).
3. Demonstrate qualities of leadership.
4. Actively participate in constructive student activities, student organizations, or athletics.

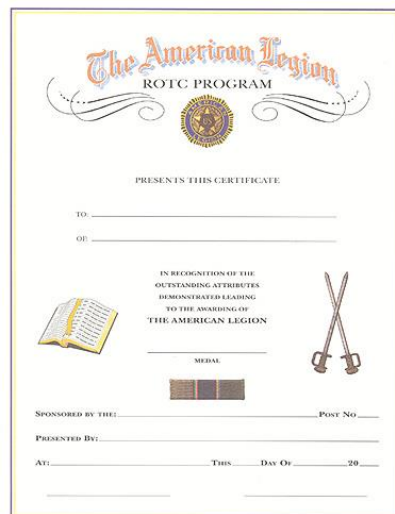


- Includes medal and matching Ribar:
- Approved for wear by Department of Defense
- Features Legion emblem
- Includes presentation box
- **Gold: \$24.99 (Medal only)**
- **Silver: \$22.99 (Medal only)**
- **Bronze: \$20.99 (Medal only)**
- **Item Number: 717.101M**

- **Gold: \$31.99 (Medal/Ribar set with box)**
- **Silver: \$29.99 (Medal/Ribar set with box)**
- **Bronze: \$27.99 (Medal/Ribar set with box)**
- **Item Number: 717.101**



ROTC Scholastic Excellence Ribar  
**Item Number: 717.101R**  
Bronze/Silver/Gold - \$7.99



Devices awarded as part of an organizational award (Legion of Valor Bronze Cross for Achievement, American Legion Awards, Reserve Officers Association, Military Order of World Wars, etc.) will be worn centered on the ribbon. No more than one device may be worn, even if the recipient has earned the award more than once. If various levels of the award have been earned denoted by different devices, only the highest level award device will be worn.

This medal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate and Ribar (ribbon).

### References:

- Army: Army Cadet Command Regulation 145-2, pp 126
- Air Force: Air Force ROTC Instruction 36-2020, pp 21 - 23, Items 4.5 & 4.6
- Navy/Marine Corps: CNETINST 1533.9K, Ch. XI, Article 1106, pp 82 – 83, Items f. & g.

## 16. Marksmanship Medal: (Bronze, Silver or Gold).



This medal may be awarded by **The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program**, an air-gun safety education and marksmanship program that encompasses the basic elements of safety, education, enjoyment and competition. This may also be awarded for achievements in other structured air-gun marksmanship competitions.

The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program is a gun safety education and marksmanship program that encompasses the basic elements of safety, education, enjoyment and competition. Shooters use the .177 caliber air rifle. Both males and females can participate, through Legion sponsorship; disabled youth are encouraged to join, as competitive shooting is a sport that creates an equal playing field for all competitors. Contact your local Legion post, Sons of The American Legion squadron or Auxiliary unit for information about affiliating as a club or individual.

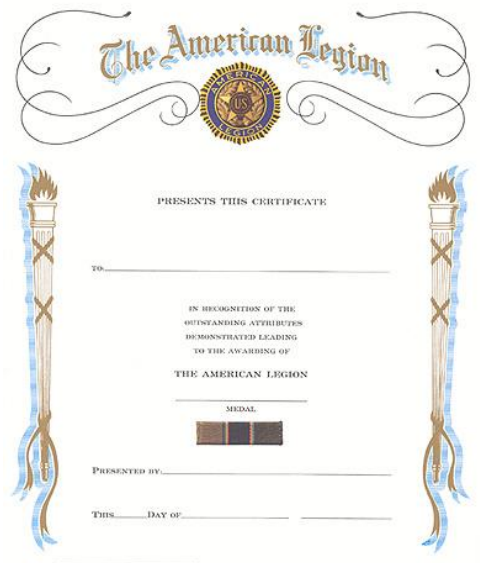
Junior Shooting Sports is a three-part program that combines the Basic Marksmanship Course, Qualification Awards and Air Rifle Competition into a well-rounded activity. More information may be found on The American Legion website Junior Sport Shooting Brochure: <http://www.legion.org/documents/legion/pdf/2008jssbrochure.pdf>

**Gold Medal:** May be awarded to the youth that qualifies at the highest (expert) level or achieves the winning level (first place) of the associated air-gun competition or marksmanship course.

**Silver Medal:** May be awarded to the youth that qualifies at the mid-level (sharpshooter) or achieves a runners up position (second-place) of the associated air-gun competition or marksmanship course.

**Bronze Medal:** May be awarded to the youth that qualifies at the minimum level (marksman) or achieves the third place of the associated air-gun competition or marksmanship course.

Courses that do not have a minimum qualifying course of fire will not be considered.



This medal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate.

**Item Number:** 717.307

**Gold:** \$29.99

**Silver:** \$25.99

**Bronze:** \$22.99

Furnished with regulation ribbon, pin back with safety catch, and presentation box.