

**VFW's Mission:** To foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts. To serve our veterans, the military, and our communities. To advocate on behalf of all veterans.

**VFW's Vision:** Ensure that veterans are respected for their service, always receive their earned entitlements, and are recognized for the sacrifices they and their loved ones have made on behalf of this great country.

VFW National Headquarters  
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Kansas City, MO 64111  
1.888.JOIN.VFW  
membership@vfw.org

Place Membership Applications Here

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**NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.**

## **RECRUITER SUCCESS POCKET GUIDE**

Best practices for recruiting new members into the VFW.

[vfw.org/join](https://vfw.org/join)

## Recruiting Tips

The strength of the Veterans of Foreign Wars lies within our membership. We must continue to build a strong membership base to ensure our voices are heard and our programs remain effective and viable. The following guide was developed to assist you in understanding and successfully communicating the benefits of membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars to prospective members.

### 10 Tips for Success

**1 KNOW THE VFW** - As a recruiter, being aware of our programs and purpose will prepare you to successfully engage prospective members.

**2 NETWORK FOR PROSPECTS** - Ask family, friends and coworkers if they know veterans who may be eligible. Follow up on leads quickly.

**3 MAKE PERSONAL CONTACT** - Try to meet prospective members face-to-face whenever possible.

**4 DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK** - Many veterans have never been asked to join the VFW. If you speak up and ask them to join, you may be pleasantly surprised at their response.

**5 BE PERSISTENT, NOT PESTERING** - If they decline to join at this time, respect their decision.

## VFW.org

VFW.org - The home of the Veterans of Foreign Wars on the World Wide Web, VFW.org provides information about our mission and achievements, and provides many tools for our members, such as:

**Quick Renew** - VFW members can renew and upgrade their membership swiftly and effortlessly by going to [vfw.org](http://vfw.org), clicking the RENEW link, and entering their name and membership number - no hassle required!

**Find A Post** - Looking to find a place to connect with other veterans in your area? Use the Find A Post feature at [vfw.org](http://vfw.org) and get in touch with your local Post.

**Make A Donation** - Contribute to the success of VFW's programs for our veterans with a donation by visiting [vfw.org/Contribute/](http://vfw.org/Contribute/) and showing your support for those who've earned it.



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## Recruiting Tools

**Recruiting Just Got Easier** - Find everything you need for your recruiting efforts through the VFW Membership Department. From membership applications to posters and fliers, everything you need can be requested directly from the National Headquarters.

**Mobile Recruiter App** - Have a smartphone? Then you can download the VFW Mobile Recruiter App to sign up a new member-at-large or send a prospective member's information to your Post. Go to [vfw.org/oms/TrainingMaterials.aspx](http://vfw.org/oms/TrainingMaterials.aspx) to learn more about this useful recruiting tool!

**Recruiter Training** - Whether live in a classroom or online via webinar, the VFW Membership Department will provide recruiters in the field with the tools and training they need for success. To set up a recruiter training seminar, contact the Membership Department at 816.756.3390 ext 6752.

**6 LOOK FOR COMMON EXPERIENCES**

- Ask questions to learn about military experiences, family and daily life. Describe the benefits of membership in a way that relates to the prospective member.

**7 LISTEN CAREFULLY**

- The best sales people are active listeners. Listen for excuses and objections, and then be prepared to overcome them with facts.

**8 SHARE YOUR STORY**

- Consider why you are a part of VFW and tell others why you're so committed to the organization. Your experiences with VFW are the greatest recruiting tool available.

**9 BE PREPARED**

- You may meet potential members anywhere so be sure to keep an application with you at all times. If you use a smartphone, learn about the Mobile Recruiter App and how it can be used to recruit new members. Stay current as VFW National Membership provides updates and assistance on these new processes.

**10 ENJOY YOURSELF**

- If you are enjoying yourself, prospective members will sense your enthusiasm and be more likely to join.

ALWAYS REMEMBER,  
**NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.**

# VFW Facts

Founded in 1899, the Veterans of Foreign Wars is the nation's oldest major combat veterans' organization.

For over 110 years, the VFW has successfully fulfilled its mission as stated in our Congressional Charter, "to assist worthy comrades; to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead, and to assist their widows and orphans; to maintain true allegiance to the government of the United States, and fidelity to its constitution and laws; and to foster true patriotism."

The VFW and the VFW Auxiliary have more than 6000 Posts and over 1.2 million members spanning all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Europe, and the Pacific.



The Cross of Malta is the VFW's official insignia. Each design element symbolizes something special.

The cross, radiating rays, and the Great Seal of the US together symbolize the character, vows, and purposes distinguishing the VFW as an order of warriors who have traveled far from home to defend sacred principles. Its eight points represent the beatitudes prescribed in the Sermon on the Mount: Blessed are the poor in spirit, the meek, the pure, the merciful, the peacemakers; blessed are they who mourn, seek righteousness, and are persecuted for righteousness' sake.

The VFW added the sun's rays between the eight points and the cross. These emphasize the vigor and warmth with which the present day brotherhood is pledged to defend the nation and to extend its mercy. Superimposed over the cross is the bald eagle-the symbol of a proud nation of people.

While the Maltese Cross has religious origins and was used by the crusading Knights of St. John as a battle standard centuries ago, it's equally relevant today as a symbol of all those battling for noble ideas.

# Member Benefits

- **VFW TRAVEL SERVICE (VTS)** - A network of highly trained professionals to assist you with your travel needs
- **VFW MAGAZINE** - Ten issues per year keep you informed on current military and veterans issues as well as what the VFW is doing for you.
- **INSURANCE BENEFITS** - \$1,000/\$1,500 no-cost personal accident protection & voluntary personal accident protection (AD&D).
- **RETAIL DISCOUNTS** - Special discounts for VFW members at participating establishments.
- **VFW STORE** - All your VFW apparel, American flags, patriotic apparel, gifts and more.
- **USAA** - VFW logoed MasterCard and a variety of other financial and insurance services. Visit [www.usaa.com/vfw](http://www.usaa.com/vfw) to see a complete list of services.

**SportClips**<sup>®</sup>  
HAIRCUTS



**Sprint** 

## A VFW MEMBERSHIP GIVES YOU SAVINGS ON:

- CELL PHONE SERVICES
- HOME COMPUTERS
- COMMERCIAL MERCHANDISE
- DIGNITY MEMORIAL PROGRAMS
- FINANCIAL SERVICES
- HAIRCUTS
- HEALTH CARE SERVICES
- HOTEL, MOTEL, AND CAR RENTALS
- IDENTITY THEFT PROTECTION
- REAL ESTATE AND MORTGAGE SERVICES
- SAT/ACT COLLEGE TEST PREPARATION
- VETERAN EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE
- VFW SPONSORED INSURANCE PROGRAMS

Member  
Benefits

\*For complete member benefit information please visit: [vfw.org/MemberBenefits](http://vfw.org/MemberBenefits)

## Veterans & Military Support Programs

**The VFW's Veterans & Military Support Programs** department unites 4 successful, long-standing programs; Operation Uplink, Unmet Needs, the VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" program and Military Assistance Program (MAP). These initiatives focus on troop support.

**Military Assistance Program (MAP)** is the link between VFW and the community. MAP is designed to promote VFW interaction within the local military community through the Adopt-A-Unit program. MAP Grants are available to Posts, Districts, and Departments who participate in a variety of morale boosting function such as farewell and welcome home events.

**Operation Uplink** keeps military members in contact with their loved ones by distributing "virtual PINs" which enable wounded warriors and veterans in VA facilities to call from home at no cost.

The VFW's "**Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship**" program provides service members and veterans with the financial assistance they need to complete their educational goals without incurring excessive student loan debt. Scholarships of up to \$5,000 will be awarded to eligible applicants.



**Unmet Needs** assists military service members and their families who run into unexpected financial difficulties as a result of deployment or other hardships directly related to military service. Unmet Needs assists with basic life needs such as: mortgage and rent, home and auto repairs, insurance, utilities, food and clothing. There is also a one-time grant available for those on a fixed income who are suffering financial hardship related to their military service.

### Did You Know?

**Unmet Needs** has distributed over \$4.3 million in emergency grants for housing since 2004.

The VFW's "**Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship**" has awarded over \$4.9 million in scholarships to over 1,115 service members and veterans since January 2014.

# Veterans Service

As the nation's largest organization of combat veterans, we understand the frustrations that can arise with making a VA claim. That's why our **National Veterans Service (NVS)** was created. Our nationwide network of skilled VFW Service Officers can help you wade through all the bureaucratic red tape, offering you a better opportunity to get the disability claim you deserve. You don't even need to be a VFW member to take advantage of this free service. As a veteran, this is a service you've earned.

**VFW's Service Officers** are your liaisons to the Department of Veterans Affairs. With our Veterans Service Officers covering every VA Hospital and facility across the country, we are standing by to help our veterans navigate an ever-changing health care system.

**Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) Program**, introduced in 2001, provides claims assistance to separating armed forces personnel at military installations throughout the country.

**National Veterans Employment Service** works to ensure veterans preference in federal and other government hiring.

**VetJobs.com**, supported by the VFW since 2001, is a free service designed specifically for veterans and employers seeking to hire veterans.

## Did You Know?

VFW recovered over \$4.5 billion from the VA on behalf of veterans in the last three years.

There are over 250 claims representatives and 19 Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) offices across the United States.

**Notes:**

# Programs

The good will of the Veterans of Foreign Wars reaches far beyond the realm of veterans helping veterans. In fact, direct involvement with America's youth and communities has always been — and always will be — a VFW priority.

**Community Service** - The VFW celebrates Americanism in communities across the nation. Through local and national events, VFW members help others understand the sacrifices made by veterans and the importance of patriotism.

**Voice of Democracy** - Each year, more than 39,000 high school students from across the country enter to win a share of the \$2.2 million in educational scholarships and incentives awarded through the VFW's Voice of Democracy audio-essay competition.

**Patriots Pen** challenges students from grades 6-8, to enter to win one of 46 national awards totalling \$50,000, as well as an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. for the national first place winner. Students draft a 300-400 word essay, expressing their views based on a patriotic, annual theme chosen by the VFW Commander-in-Chief.

**Scout of the Year** selects three young people — of the Boy or Girl Scouts, Sea Scouts or Venturing Crew — who have demonstrated practical citizenship in school, scouting and the community. The first-place winner receives a \$5,000 award, the second-place

winner receives a \$3,000 award and the third-place winner receives \$1,000.

**Teacher of the Year** recognizes three exceptional teachers for their outstanding commitment to teach Americanism and patriotism to their students. The VFW recognizes the nation's top classroom elementary, junior high and high school teachers who teach citizenship education topics—at least half of the school day in a classroom environment—and promote America's history, traditions and institutions effectively.

### Did You Know?

VFW Members contribute over \$52 million annually in community service projects.

The VFW's Buddy Poppy program raises over \$12 million for needy veterans each year.

Each year the Voice of Democracy awards over \$1.9 million in scholarships.

# Legislative Services

The VFW continuously advocates on behalf of veterans. By testifying at committee hearings and interacting with congressional members, the VFW has played an instrumental role in nearly every piece of veterans legislation passed in the 20th century, as well as bills developed in the 21st.

The location of our Washington, D.C., office allows us to monitor all legislation affecting veterans, alert VFW membership to key legislation under consideration and to actively advise Congress and the administration on important military and veteran's issues.

One of the VFW's most successful legislative pushes was making college education affordable for military service members with the signing of the 1944 GI Bill of Rights, the signing of the Montgomery GI Bill in 1984, and the signing of a new 21st Century GI Bill in 2008. In 2013, the VFW was instrumental in reinstating military Tuition Assistance programs and getting the new Stolen Valor Act signed into law. In 2015, the VFW fought on Capitol Hill to ensure that military retiree pensions were not subject to any cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) reductions.

## Each Year the VFW sets Priority Goals

The VFW's legislative initiatives center on quality of life and health initiatives for all the nation's veterans, past and present. Here are VFW's current legislative priority goals:

- VA Health Care
- Budget and Quality of Life issues
- VA Benefits and Compensation
- Seamless Transition
- Military Quality of Life
- Education and Employment
- Defense and Homeland Security
- POW/MIA

### Did You Know?

#### **Some of VFW's Most Recent Accomplishments Include:**

GI Bill for the 21st Century signed into law

2011 VOW to Hire Heroes Act. The VFW stopped TRICARE premiums from increasing annually

2013 Supported the Stolen Valor Act to protect the honor of veterans

2015 Eliminated COLA reduction for military retirees

# Membership Eligibility

## **WWII-Current Campaign Medals**

- Afghanistan Campaign Medal
- Air Force Combat Action Medal
- American Campaign Medal
- American Defense Service Medal (with foreign service clasp)
- Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal
- Army of Occupation Medal
- Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal
- China Service Medal
- European-African-Middle-Eastern Campaign Medal
- Global War On Terrorism Expeditionary Medal
- Inherent Resolve Campaign Medal
- Iraq Campaign Medal
- Korea Defense Service Medal
- Korean Service Medal
- Kosovo Campaign Medal
- Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal
- Navy Expeditionary Medal
- Navy Occupation Service Medal
- Southwest Asia Service Medal
- Vietnam Service Medal



## Badges and Ribbons

- Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with Gold Border
- Coast Guard Combat Action Ribbon
- Combat Action Badge
- Combat Action Ribbon
- Combat Infantryman Badge
- Combat Medical Badge
- SSBN Deterrent Patrol Insignia

## Other Service

- 30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days in Korea since 1953
- Received Hostile Fire or Imminent Danger Pay

### Did You Know?

Vietnam veterans are the largest segment of VFW membership.

Over 44,000 veterans worldwide made the commitment to join the VFW in membership year 2017-2018.

Women veterans are one of the fastest growing segments of VFW membership.

# Student Veterans of America

The Veterans of Foreign Wars continuously advocates on behalf of veterans. Testifying at committee hearings and interacting with congressional members has led the VFW to play an instrumental role in the passage of nearly every piece of veterans' legislation passed in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Among the VFW's most notable legislative efforts in making college education affordable for service members are the signing of the 1944 GI Bill of Rights, the Montgomery GI Bill in 1984 and the Post-9/11 GI Bill in 2008. The VFW also fought to reinstate military Tuition Assistance.

Since Student Veterans of America's founding in 2008, the chapter network has grown from 20 campuses to over 1300 institutions of higher learning in all 50 states. Chapters provide a peer-to-peer support network that empowers veterans to achieve academic success. In just a few years, SVA has grown to be the premiere advocate for veterans seeking better jobs and brighter futures through education.

Both the VFW and SVA share a deep commitment to ensuring veterans succeed in post-secondary education programs, secure gainful employment and grow as leaders in the veteran community.

The VFW and SVA defend the GI Bill and support policies that best empower student veterans to achieve their educational goals and improve veterans' quality of life.

The nation's renewed focus on veterans' welfare has ignited change on campuses and in Congress. Both the VFW and SVA are committed to capitalizing on this momentum.

The VFW and SVA also created the 1StudentVeteran program to assist any student veteran experiencing difficulty accessing their GI Bill or other VA benefits. They are encouraged to e-mail the VFW at [1studentveteran@vfw.org](mailto:1studentveteran@vfw.org) and a VFW Service Officer will provide immediate assistance.