

**Youth Activities Program  
2022-2023  
Amanda Smith**

It is my great honor to be the Department Youth Activities Chairman for our Incoming Department President Mary Anne Kreutz for 2022-2023.

Having been a member of the Veterans of the Foreign Wars Auxiliary for 22 years and a member of the Jr. Girls, I understand what it is like to work with the youth in our community and throughout the state. I cannot wait to see what our Auxiliaries will do through this year with our youth.

**Marie Klugow Scholarship:** The Marie Klugow Memorial Scholarship was established to encourage the family of our members to attend 4-year colleges.

In addition to a scholarship for a beginning college student and one for a continuing student, a scholarship specific to a new or continuing nursing student was created in response to the shortage of certified nurses in the VA Hospitals. All members of the Auxiliary or Post and their children and grandchildren are eligible to apply for these scholarships.

Three \$3000 scholarships are awarded:

- One to a graduating high school student
- One to a junior college graduate or a continuing college/university student.
- One to a student pursuing a nursing career

Deadline for Marie Klugow Scholarship Application:

- April 15, 2022, Mail applications to VFW Auxiliary Department of California. Applications can be found at [vfwauxca.org](http://vfwauxca.org)

**Get Excited for the Red, White, and Blue:** Do you know a Youth who is a singer and is in K-12? Then this contest is for them, the object is recording a video of the singing of the "National Anthem". They can sing it however they want but cannot change the lyrics. The contest consists of two grade divisions: k-8 and 9-12. The entry form

can be found on the website:  
[www.vfwauxiliary.org/what-we-do/youth-activities](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org/what-we-do/youth-activities).

The Deadlines are:

Local Auxiliary: March 31, 2023

Department: April 15, 2023

National Headquarters: May 5, 2023

**Creating, Sponsoring, and Working with**

**Youth Groups:** Did you know that as an Auxiliary you can sponsor a Youth Group? Groups that are service-oriented and wanting to work hard, by involving these groups and even their families, you can bring in not only new members but also help liven up your Post.

**Youth Groups Supporting our Veterans**

**Citations:** National has citations that can be given out to eligible Youth Groups in your area such as ROTC, Girl or Boy Scouts, Sports Teams or any other groups. You can visit [www.vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org/resources) to get the citations.

**Patriotic Youth Award:** This award was created to recognize individual youth who show true patriotism whether through supporting our troops or veterans and their families. These awards can be found at [www.vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org/resources).

**Patriotism Through Literacy:** Have you ever looked in a library and seen a little child reading and he or she is reading a book on American History without fully understanding what they are reading? Well, this is perfect for you: this allows you to sit and read to a group of children or even have an author come and do a signing and talk in your areas.

**Illustrating America:** This is the elementary and middle school version of the Young American Creative Art Contest, that encourages art and patriotism – the brochures and entry forms are available at [www.vfwauxiliary.org/what-we-do/youth-activities](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org/what-we-do/youth-activities)

**Deadlines for Illustrating America**

March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, for student entries to local Auxiliaries

April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Auxiliary winners to District

April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, District winners to Department  
May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Department winner to National

**Resources:** All contest pamphlets and entry forms can be printed or filled out online: [www.vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org/resources). All information including deadlines are available under Youth Activities. There are promotional fliers and posters on the website as well, and there is an excellent resource called *10 Tips for Working with Youth*, which shows your Auxiliary how to work with youth safely, while creating the best experience for them.

**Program Goals and Promotion:**

We can use our Auxiliary social media to show the youth in our area our auxiliary programs, including the programs specific to Youth Activities.

**Grave Beautification:** There is a new project in Youth Activities this year. I'm sure we have seen that at the cemeteries (whether National or public or even private) the grounds are well taken care of, but the headstones can be left in disarray, so we now have Grave Beautification. This new program allows Youth Groups in your area to be able to enter a National Cemetery or a local one to do this beautification task. Contact the cemetery to get permission to enter and to beautify the headstones. If this is a national cemetery, you must visit [www.cem.va.gov/hmm/cleaning.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/hmm/cleaning.asp). This website gives you in-depth guidelines into cleaning the headstones and what to products to use.

To report on this:

1. Take a photo of the stone before the cleaning and a photo of the stone after cleaning
2. Keep a log of the headstones beautified, record the names of the veterans in the log, include the name of the cemetery, city, and state.
3. Place a flag at the headstone and abide by the rules of the cemetery.

4. On flag placement, note whether in the ground or into a flag holder.

**Department Awards for the Auxiliaries:**

- Recognition of the Auxiliary for the best promotion in each of the following programs:
  1. Illustrating America
  2. Get Excited for the Red, White, and Blue
  3. Patriotism Through Literacy
  4. Grave Beautification
- Citations will be awarded to the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners for Best Overall promotion/execution of the program within each Auxiliary Membership Division.

**Department Awards for District Chairmen:**

- Citation to each District Chairmen with 100% participation by Auxiliaries.
- Recognition to Best Overall Performance to Auxiliaries.

**National Awards for Auxiliaries:**

1. Most Outstanding Veteran Grave Beautification Activity and or event by an Auxiliary with youth involved.
- Citation to every Auxiliary that hosts a Veteran Beautification Activity or event with Youth involved entry form due to the Department Chairmen by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023.
- Citation and \$25 to 1 Auxiliary in each Conference with the Most Outstanding Veteran Grave Beautification act or event with Youth involved, winners will be announced, and awards presented at the 2023 National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona.