

**Veterans & Family Support
2022 -2023
Carol Steinhauer**

PROGRAM GOALS

- **VFW National Veterans Service**
- **VFW Veterans & Military Support Programs**
- **Assist Veterans, Service Members & Their Families**
- **Promote Veteran & Military Suicide Prevention & Mental Health Awareness**

Many members join the Auxiliary to be able to help veterans and their families. To me, Veterans & Family Support is one of the most important programs that we have. Too many veterans are unaware of the services and benefits they can receive so we, as Auxiliary members, can help them in this area. We need to keep reminding people who serve our veterans how important they are so all veterans receive the services and benefits they were promised for serving our Country and keeping it free for all. We all need to become knowledgeable of the various services that are provided so that we can help our veterans. We need to:

Communicate with each Auxiliary in your District. If you have a newsletter, put an article in it. Give information at your District meetings. Send emails or phone your auxiliaries with information as you receive it. Explain the different areas that are in this program.

Offer help to your Auxiliary Chairperson. Some may have served before, but reminders are always welcome. New chairpersons may need your help on what to do so they are successful.

Help them with reports. Help them know what to report. Explain why we need to report. They may not know that “to retain our non-profit status the IRS requires us to report what we do.” Remind Auxiliaries what reports are needed so they can receive awards or be 100% in reporting.

Work with your Post and outside organizations.

Thank your Auxiliaries for doing reports either in a newsletter and/or at your District meetings. They need to know you appreciate them.

Spread the Word about National Veterans Service (NVS)

The VFW’s National Veterans Service (NVS) helps veterans, service members and their families obtain the benefits they deserve – at no cost.

NVS provides a nationwide network of nearly 300 VFW Service Officers who help veterans navigate the Veterans Affairs system. Those VFW Service Officers recover more than \$1 billion annually in VA benefits, whether they are VFW members or not, in filing claims for:

- Disability compensation
- Rehabilitation and educational programs.
- Pension and death benefits.
- Employment and training programs.

NVS also works to ensure veterans receive quality, timely and accessible VA health care, including:

- Hospital care.
- Outpatient care.
- Specialized health care for female veterans.
- Alcohol and drug dependency treatments.
- Medical evaluation for disorders associated with military service, exposure to Agent Orange, radiation, or other environmental hazards.

Donations to NVS can be made online or by mail. NVS can be made online or by mail.

- Donate online at vfw.org/ways-to-help, select National Veterans Service, click “Contribute.”
- Donate by mail by sending funds to the VFW earmarked for NVS. Mail check to”

VFW National Headquarters
Attn: NVS
406 W. 34th Street, 11th Floor
Kansas City, MO 64111

VFW Veterans & Military Support Program

Veterans & Military Support contains programs initiated by the VFW Military Assistance Program (MAP), Unmet Needs and the VFW “Sport Clips

Help A Hero Scholarship.” These programs serve active-duty and recently discharged military. Donations to Veterans & Military Support can be made online or by mail.

Donate online at vfw.org/ways-to-help, select Veterans & Military Support, click “Contribute”.

Donate by mail by sending a check to VFW earmarked for Veterans & Military Support.

VFW National Headquarters
Attn: Veterans & Military Support
406 W. 34th Street, 9th Floor
Kansas City MO 64111

Military Assistance Program (MAP) Funds Ways to Connect with Troops

MAP helps VFW and Auxiliary members give more to their local military units. It helps forge and nurture bonds with these units by providing financial assistance for Posts, Districts, and Departments to sponsor morale-boosting send-offs, homecomings, and casual get-togethers.

Post and Auxiliaries participating in Adopt-a-Unit and Family Readiness Group events can also receive assistance. MAP keeps care packages circulating by covering postage costs.

For guidelines to apply for MAP funds, contact the VFW Veterans & Military Support office at 816-756-3390.

Unmet Needs Can Help in a Crisis

A soldier is serving on foreign soil, but the rent is due back home. A soldier is driving a tank on alert for IEDS, and the family car needs a new radiator the family cannot afford. These are the situations Unmet Needs can help.

Grants up to \$1,500 payable to a creditor can bridge the gap to make a mortgage or rent payment or to fund home and auto repairs, insurance, utility costs, food and clothing. To learn more, visit: vfw.org/assistance-grants.

VFW “Sport Clips ® Help A Hero Scholarship” Program

The VFW and Sport Clips are giving the gift of scholarships to our nation’s heroes as a way of thanking them for their dedicated service to our nation. The VFW “Sport Clips ® Help A Hero Scholarship” awards scholarships of up to \$5,000

to qualifying veterans and service members to help them complete their educational goals without incurring excessive student loan debt. To learn more, visit vfw.org/assistance/financial-grants.

Veterans & Military Suicide Prevention & Mental Health Awareness

Make a difference in the life of a veteran or service member in crisis by educating yourself and others about the warning signs off suicide. The Veterans Crisis Line connects veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat or text. Veterans and their loved ones can:

- > Call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1,
- > Chat online at veteranscrisis.net or
- > Send a text message to 838255.

Confidential support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Support for deaf and hard of hearing individuals is available. Tip: Add the Veterans Crisis Line number as a contact in your cellphone for easy referral.

You can purchase the Auxiliary Suicide Awareness Prevention Pin from the VFW Store. When someone asks you about your pin, it’s a good way to tell them about suicides among veterans and military service members. We want everyone to be aware of the unique stress they face.

Mental Wellness Support & Resources

A staggering 20 veterans commit suicide each day, and the VFW and VFW Auxiliary are committed to helping change the conversation and stigma surrounding mental health in the United States Change the stigma, improve research, support your community, and explore treatment options at the resources below:

- VFW Mental Wellness Campaign: vfw.org/assistance/mental-wellness
- The Campaign to Change Direction: changedirection.org
- Give An Hour: giveanhour.org
- Patients Like Me: patientslikeme.com/join/vfw
- One Mind: onemind.org

The Elizabeth Dole Foundation:
elizabethdolefoundation.org

- Help Heal Veterans (Therapeutic Craft Kits):
healvets.org
- Veterans Voices Writing Project:
veteransvoices.org

Department of California Auxiliary “Civil Disaster Grant”

The “Civil Disaster Grant” is available for any member who sustains a major disaster to their home to help with repairs due to a fire, major water damage, or to other natural disasters such as an earthquake. It will also help if a member was forced to evacuate their homes and area, but sustained no actual damage to their homes but incurred costs for lodging. Remember to keep all receipts. Fill out the grant application, have it signed by your Auxiliary President, send to VFW Auxiliary Department Headquarters address on the form and keep a copy for yourself. Have it signed by your Auxiliary President. The form is in the Program book or in resources on Department web site.

“There is no doubt that it is around the family and the home that all the greatest virtues... are created, strengthened and maintained.”

— [Winston Churchill](#)