

YOUTH ACTIVITIES PROGRAM PROMOTION

August 2025

Gaylene Ramos - Chairman

Hello VFW Auxiliary Department of California,

Many of us are preparing to leave for Convention in Ohio but I wanted to share some information with you as school is getting ready to start in many areas.

At the first Council of Administration for 2025 – 2026, it was brought onto the floor to have a line item for Youth Activities “Illustrating America Art” Program. The reason being we as a Department were not recognizing our winners as they should be recognized. National VFWA gives out gift cards and certificates.

We have an account for Patriotic Art but that is for the High School Students and is a Restricted Account. So now that it has been approved to start something for the K – 8th grade students, I need to ask you, the membership, to bring it on your floor to put “Illustrating America Art” into your yearly obligations and Standing Rules / Budget. Please earmark it or make a note of it when sending in your obligations. We would like to have a great start for this new year with donations. The budget for it is \$600 a year, so we need at least that and more. This includes the cost of the gift cards, certificates, folders, packaging and mailing to National. That is nine (9) Awards for 1st, 2nd, 3rd Place in grades K – 2, 3- 5 and 6 – 8, respectively.

Your help would be deeply appreciated to make this part of the Youth Activities program successful in recognizing our future Patriotic Art contestants. These students will be our future high school winners.

You can find the updated Illustrating America Art applications/rules online in the Department website : www.vfwaca.org under the Youth Activities Program or also in MALTA in the Youth Activities Program.

- **Please print the applications in COLOR.** The reason for this is there are “KEY” items that are very important and to not be overlooked.
- **Participating / Sponsoring VFW Auxiliary contact information:** Please also include your District Number.
- **To Avoid Entrant Disqualification** – It is vital that you get your entries judged and to me by April 15th. Please send directly to me, not to the Department Office. Please do not put the entry in a roll tube as it does not help the entry. Also, look at the sizing of the entry, not to exceed 18x24 inches.
- **Look under Contest Rules** – Take a highlighter and highlight – Paper entries must be reinforced with heavy paper. Entries may **NOT** be smaller than 8x10 inches and **NOT** larger than 18x24 inches. Coloring sheets, digital art, and photography are **NOT accepted**. Completed typed or printed legible entry form including parent and/or guardian signatures.

- **Student's Name, age, and grade level must be PRINTED on the back of art entry**

Patriotism Through Literacy

Now is the time with school starting to promote this program. The updated list of books is also on the Department website but each District Chairman and Auxiliary should have received a packet with the list in it.

National Read a Book Day is **September 2, 2025**. Celebrate the Day by hosting children and veterans at your Post. Maybe have some books on hand to hand out to the children. Get members to dress up in historical costumes that can be used every year.

Start working on and promoting for Students to read to Veterans or Veterans reading to students for the month of November. Every day in November is Veterans Day.

Maybe check with the schools about starting a Reading Buddies Program to help those students who have trouble reading and learning. Let us give a hand by helping them to achieve their goals.

Let's get off to a running start and keep it going!