



Department of California
AMERICANISM
2020-2021



Promotion 1

June 1, 2020

2020-2021 Program Goals

**Flag Education – Promote Patriotism – POW/MIA Recognition
Smart/Maher National Citizenship Education Teacher Award**



Justine Robles, our National Americanism Ambassador has a terrific program for us this year. Justine's introduction focuses on five aspects within the program goals – defining Americanism, teaching America's patriotic traditions, community flag education, honoring Blue & Gold Star families and keeping patriotism alive. The National Americanism award this year for Auxiliaries is **most outstanding promotion of patriotic holidays in the community**. The National program book for 2020-2021 will be available at <https://vfwauxiliary.org/resources/> near the end of July.



Patriotic Holidays – While we continue to shelter in place in some areas, we need to get extra creative on how we can promote Americanism this summer. Most Auxiliaries were not able to hold traditional Memorial Day events this year. Upcoming Patriotic Holidays such as **Flag Day, June 14** and **Independence Day, July 4** may also be impacted. Think of new ways to promote these days such as social media posts remembering past events, making signs and banners that can be displayed in your community, or a coloring contest for youth with entries posted so they can be seen around town. I know you have great creative ideas – I look forward to your reports showing what you've done!

Don't forget to start planning ahead for the fall Patriotic Holidays! **Patriot's Day, Sept 11, POW/MIA Recognition Day, Sept. 18; Gold Star Mothers & Families Day, Sept. 27** (This is a great time to honor the families of our fallen comrades outside of our traditional Memorial Day events Look for more info in future blogs!); **Veterans Day, Nov 11** and **Pearl Harbor Day, Dec 7**.



Department Americanism Awards - This year, citations and awards include: a citation to each Auxiliary that conducts a POW/MIA ceremony; citations to each

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Division winner for Best Promotion of Patriotic Holidays & for Best Promotion of Blue & Gold Star Families; a \$25 VFW Store Gift Certificate to the Americanism Chairman for Best Promotion Over All of Blue & Gold Star Families. More information will be provided in future communications. The awards are listed in the Department Program Book and will be on the Department Website under Programs/Americanism at: <https://vfwauxca.org/di/vfw/v2/default.asp?pid=68802>



Promoting Patriotism - I encourage you to think outside the box, especially this year. What other events such as service branch birthdays, Auxiliary anniversaries, reaching full reopening of your community after the pandemic, etc. lead to new ways of promoting patriotism?



POW/MIA Recognition – Not just for the third Friday in September, POW/MIA Recognition Day. The Missing Man Table and honoring POW/MIA comrades can be done every day. Has your Auxiliary researched what POW/MIA comrades remain unaccounted for in your community? Places to look online include: the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency at <https://www.dpaa.mil/> and the National League of POW/MIA Families at <https://www.pow-miafamilies.org/>. Sign up for the VFW's Action Corps Weekly to receive updates that include retrieved POW/MIA's at <https://votervoice.net/VFW/register>



Flag Education – Our normal ways of reaching out to youth and our communities to provide Flag education may be interrupted right now, but that shouldn't stop us from reaching out through e-mail, social media and video conferencing to continue this important work. When was the last time your Auxiliary reviewed flag etiquette and the flag code? Maybe it's time to offer that again, especially for newer members! The VFW Auxiliary provides many resources to help us at <https://vfwauxiliary.org/what-we-do/americanism/>. Don't forget to look at the new POW/MIA Flag act signed by the President in February 2020: <https://www.vfw.org/media-and-events/latest-releases/archives/2020/2/president-trump-signs-pow-mia-flag-act-into-law>.



Smart/Mayer VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award – Start now! **Applications** are **due** to local posts by **October 31, 2020!** Brochure and more at: <https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/teacher-of-the-year>. More information and ideas will be posted on Facebook this summer to help you promote the annual Teacher Award!

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