

**American Legion Auxiliary  
Department of Indiana  
Americanism  
Programs Action Plan  
2019-2020**

**What is this program and why do we have it?**

The Americanism program promotes patriotism and responsible citizenship.

The Auxiliary is a member of the Citizens Flag Alliance and advocates for a constitutional amendment to protect the flag by supporting the federal legislation and encouraging other people to do so.

Elements of the Auxiliary Americanism program include teaching flag etiquette and encouraging proper disposal methods of the flag. The program also promotes the observation of patriotic holidays and encourages active participation in elections and the voting process.

**What can you do?**

- 1. Be knowledgeable on flag history, etiquette, and proper disposal methods, and promote the observation of patriotic holidays so your community will look to the ALA for information.**

**Ideas for the Member:**

- Publish flag etiquette tips in your newspaper and on social media
- Purchase and donate the book *Let's Be Right on Flag Etiquette* and the Flag Education DVD from the American Legion Emblem Sales and donate to local schools and libraries
- Purchase and distribute Flag Replacement Post cards from the American Legion Emblem Sales - these allow you to discreetly tell a neighbor or business that their flag is old and needs to be replaced
- Visit local schools at the beginning of the school year to give some basic facts about our flag, our national anthem, and when we stand and put our hands over our hearts at parades and ball games
  - ask to present to individual classrooms or put on a session for the whole school to attend
    - include Legion Family Members (Juniors, Legion, SAL, and Riders)

- Sign up at [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org) to receive notifications on when to display your flag at half-staff
- Recruit others to support the flag amendment by explaining what it is and why it is important. Sign up for The American Legion's Legislative action alerts and follow flag issues
- Write and send letters to State/Federal representatives asking for their support of the Flag Protection Amendment
- Vote!
  - Take your children/grandchildren with you when you vote - many places have kid-related voting
  - Volunteer to help at the poles
  - Encourage members to participate in Get Out and Vote and Kids Voting USA campaigns guidelines: [www.legion.org/vote](http://www.legion.org/vote) and [www.kidsvotingusa.org](http://www.kidsvotingusa.org)
  - Purchase and donate the book *One Vote, Two Votes, I Vote, You Vote* by Dr. Seuss to local schools and libraries
  - Publish Get Out and Vote messages in your newspaper and on social media
- Paint and distribute Patriotic Rocks
  - Paint some rocks at a Unit meeting using a patriotic theme and lay them around your community for someone to find (make sure you put something about your Unit on one side)
- Share photos of how you display patriotism on social media
  - Use the hashtags #ala100 and #americanismINala
- Always wear your American Legion Auxiliary apparel (jewelry, pins, etc.) or patriotic apparel (jewelry, pins, etc.); it reinforces our brand promise by telling people **Who We Are, What We Do and Why We Matter**.
  - *Note:* If you are ordering anything with the ALA name or emblem from a source other than Emblem Sales, remember that a request first must be submitted through Department Headquarters to National Headquarters for approval by the national secretary. Contact your Unit for more information on this process.

#### **Ideas for the Unit:**

- Work with your Legion Post to increase respect for the flag in your community
  - Invite the public to participate in a flag retirement ceremony
  - Invite other organizations such as Boy Scouts to come together to perform a community flag retirement ceremony

- Sponsor an event to teach proper handling, displaying, and respect for the American Flag, as well as our National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance
    - Include kid friendly activities
    - Include community members to work on an Americanism project such as folding pocket flags
    - Printable brochures are available for purchase at emblem sales that can be passed out
- Organize an event/party that revolves around the U.S. Constitution for children
  - Print and distribute pocket constitutions to school children
  - Invite local politicians
- Organize a patriotic holiday event or participate in local patriotic holiday events (i.e. march in a parade)
  - Share list of patriotic holidays with any corresponding events in your local newspaper and social media
- Volunteer to keep up the area around the flag pole at your community's civic government area by planting seasonal flowers and collecting trash
- Collect bottle cap lids to get a bench made and donate to the community to place by the flag pole at your community's civic government area
- Encourage local businesses to fly the American flag, especially on patriotic holidays
  - Recognize those businesses that continue to fly their flag
- Encourage Legion Family members and members of the community to fly the American Flag at their home
  - Recognize those the in community that fly their flag
    - Reference the "I Spy Americanism" program on YouTube
- Provide American Flags to your local schools
- Order pocket flag kits and distribute to members and schools
  - Identify and distribute assembled pocket flags to active-duty military overseas
- Visit local schools at the beginning of the school year to give some basic facts about our flag, our national anthem, and when we stand and put our hands over our hearts at parades and ball games
  - Ask to present to individual classrooms or put on a session for the whole school to attend
    - Include Legion Family Members (Juniors, Legion, SAL, and Riders)
- Work with local businesses and store fronts volunteering to set up a patriotic display during Patriotic Holidays

2. **Increase participation in the Americanism Essay Contest. The 2019-2020 Theme: "How can we address the health and well-being of our veterans, military, and their families?"**

**Student Award: Americanism Essay Contest**

**Type of Award: Citation, \$50 prize and additional \$50 donation added to the Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship Fund**

**Presented to: 30 students total, six from each division, one student for every class in each division**

**Materials and Guidelines:**

- The contest shall include six classes

Class	Grade Level	Word Requirement
I	3 and 4	150-250
II	5 and 6	250-300
III	7 and 8	350-400
IV	9 and 10	450-500
V	11 and 12	450-500
VI	Students with special needs	Word count should correspond with student's grade level

**All entries must include the Americanism Essay Contest cover sheet**

**Unit winning Entries are to be sent to your District American Chairman by March 15th, 2020. District winning entries are to be sent to me by March 30, 2020.**

- Students with special needs are defined as:
  - Those in special education classes
  - A student recommended for special education classes, but who has not been admitted due to a waiting list or various other factors
  - A child identified as having a disability, but not in a special education class due to lack of facilities; identification contingent upon direction of school officials

### **Ideas for the Member:**

- Encourage your children/grandchildren to participate in the essay contest
- Offer to contact schools or other organizations
- Help judge the essays

### **Ideas for the Unit:**

- Contact schools and other organizations such as Young Marines, Girl and Boy Scouts, and 4-H about the essay contest
- Encourage Junior members to participate in the essay contest
- Create information packets explaining contest rules, deadline dates, theme, and award opportunities to pass out to schools and other organizations
- Publish essay contest information in your newspaper and on social media
- Contact essay winner(s) and their parents. Invite the parents to bring their child to your next Auxiliary meeting to read his/her winning essay. Provide refreshment and a small token of appreciation from your Unit
- Work with school administration to identify guidance counselors, history teachers, etc. whose students would be interested in participating.
  - Arrange for a day with the schools (preferably during a student assembly) to present the essay winners with their prizes. Provide cash award and/or savings bond
    - Consider doing this during their year-end awards program

### **3. Participate in the promotion of the American Legion Americanism programs**

#### **Ideas for the Member:**

- Support American Legion Baseball
  - Help with statistics
  - Work the concession booth
  - Donate to a team
  - Contact local sports shops and ask if they would be willing to make donations toward a fundraiser or offer a discounted price to purchase needed items
- Support the Oratorical Contest
  - Help prepare post home to sponsor local or district contest
  - Offer to be a judge or timekeeper
  - Offer to help with refreshments

- Provide transportation for candidates
- Help recruit candidates at local schools and other organizations
  - Contact history teachers or debate coaches
- Support the Junior Shooting Sports, which promotes gun safety and other marksmanship training for youth
  - Volunteer to help with scoring, supervision, or transportation
  - Help recruit candidates at local schools and other organizations (4-H, Girl and Boy Scouts, etc.)
    - Contact JROTC at local schools

**Ideas for the Unit:**

- Work with the post and/or district Americanism chairman to collaborate on promoting and supporting the program
- Support American Legion Baseball
  - Sponsor a team
  - Help with statistics
  - Work the concession booth
  - Hold a fundraiser
  - Drive the team to games
- Support the Oratorical Contest either at your post level or district level
  - Offer to provide volunteers as timekeepers or judges
  - Offer to help with refreshments
  - Offer to host a contest
  - Help recruit candidates at local schools and other organizations
    - Contact history teachers or debate coaches
- Support the Junior Shooting Sports, which promotes gun safety and other marksmanship training for youth
  - Offer to provide refreshments on event day
  - Arrange transportation and/or supervision on event day
  - Host an event at your post/unit home, if you have the space

Mid-Year Reports

Each **Unit Chairman** shall submit a report to your district chairman by **December 1, 2019**.

Each **District Chairman** shall submit a report to me by **December 15, 2019**. Combine the Unit reports and tell me everything they are doing to work collaboratively with the American Legion to build the Americanism program.

### Annual Reports

Each **Unit Chairman** shall submit a narrative report along with your annual report form to your district chairman by **April 15, 2020**.

Each **District Chairman** shall submit a narrative report along with your annual report form to me no later than **April 27, 2020**.

**As part of your narrative report, please include answers to the following questions:**

1. How did you promote the Americanism essay contest?
2. How did units promote the flag program?
3. How did you promote patriotic holidays?
4. How did units encourage support of the flag amendment?
5. Did units support The American Legion Americanism programs? How?
6. How did units promote Americanism in their community?

### **\*PLEASE INCLUDE PICTURES & NEWSPAPER ARTICLES WITH YOUR NARRATIVE REPORT\***

#### **National Awards:**

Taking the time to share a favorite story about the positive impact you or someone you know has had on our mission is worth doing! It helps us tell the world **Who We Are, What We Do, and Why We Matter**. Just three simple steps to add your part to our Department success story:

1. Please follow instructions as you fill out any Awards Cover Sheet.
2. Provide details/examples about the activity as outlined in the award's materials and guidelines section.
3. Submit as indicated

National Report and Awards Cover Sheet, deadlines, and Americanism committee contact information may be found on the Americanism committee page on the national website, [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).

**Unit Award:** Dorothy Pearl Most Outstanding Unit Americanism Program

**Type of Award:** Citation Plaque

**Presented to:** One Unit in each division (5 overall awards)

#### **Materials and guidelines:**

- Include pictures and newspaper articles
- Deadline June 1, 2020 postmarked or emailed by 5 p.m. EST
- Send to the National Division Chairman Lynda Lancaster  
PO Box 151 Matthews, VA 23109  
(304) 676-3979  
LancasterL@aol.com

**Department Awards:**

**Vickie Koutz Monetary Award** to the Unit reporting the most consistent Americanism program.

**Personal Awards:**

- A. To the Unit that submits the best report of thinking outside the box in promoting patriotism in the community
- B. To the Unit that best demonstrates their support for the American Legion Baseball, Oratorical Contest, or Junior Shooting Sports
- C. To the Unit that best demonstrates their support for the Americanism Essay Contest
- D. To the Unit over 250 members that assembles & distributes the most pocket flags
- E. To the Unit less than 250 members that assembles & distributes the most pocket flags
- F. To the District with the highest percentage of units supporting the flag amendment by sending letters to state and federal representatives

\*Department and Personal Awards will be presented at Department Convention – July 2020.

**Resources:**

1. See your national Americanism Committee page of the national website [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org):
2. American Legion Flag and Emblem Sales: [www.emblem.legion.org](http://www.emblem.legion.org)
  - a. Flag education DVD: explains the history, significance, meaning, proper display, and treatment of the U.S. flag
  - b. *Let's Be Right On Flag Etiquette* - a question and answer booklet on proper flag etiquette
3. The American Legion Flag Advocacy: [www.legion.org/flag](http://www.legion.org/flag)
4. The American Legion's Action Programs of Americanism brochure: [www.legion.org/publications](http://www.legion.org/publications)
5. Capitol Building flags: To order flags flown over the Capitol, contact your congressional representative(s) or senator or visit his/her website. Flags are available for a nominal fee; four to six weeks should be allowed for delivery.
6. Pocket Flag Project: [www.pocketflagproject.com](http://www.pocketflagproject.com)
7. Follow us on Facebook:
  - a. American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters
  - b. American Legion Auxiliary Americanism Program
  - c. American Legion Auxiliary Department of Indiana

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