

**AMERICANISM  
PROGRAMS ACTION PLAN  
2018-2019  
Peggy Eagen – Chairman**

The Americanism Program is intended to promote patriotism and responsible citizenship so we may fulfill our brand promise by giving U.S. citizens a chance to participate in our mission by feeling patriotic and demonstrating their support in an active, visible way.

- 1. Be knowledgeable on flag history, flag etiquette, and proper disposal methods; and promote the observation of patriotic holidays so your community will look to the ALA for information.**
  - Work as a team with your American Legion Family to conduct a flag disposal ceremony and invite the community to participate.
  - Teach proper handling, displaying, and respect for the American Flag, as well as the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance.
  - Visit schools to give basic facts about the American flag and National Anthem, as to when to stand and to place your right hand over your heart, especially at parades and ball games.
  - Organize or participate in local patriotic holiday events, including parades.
  - Encourage American Legion Family members to fly the American flag at home and especially on patriotic holidays.
  - Encourage local businesses to fly the American flag, especially on patriotic holidays.
  - Provide American flags to your local schools for classrooms.
  
- 2. Encourage members to vote and to support the amendment to protect the flag of the United States from desecration. The amendment currently reads, “The Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States.”**
  - Contact members to ask both state and federal representatives to support the flag amendment.
  - Recruit others to support the flag amendment by explaining what it is and why it is so important.
  - Sign up for The American Legion’s Legislative action alerts and follow the flag issues.
  - Encourage members to participate in the Get Out the Vote and Kids Voting USA campaigns. For more information go to [www.legion.org/vote](http://www.legion.org/vote) and [www.kidsvotingusa.org](http://www.kidsvotingusa.org)
  - Work with local schools to educate students about the Constitution, especially the Bill of Rights and the Preamble.
  
- 3. Increase participation in the Americanism Essay Contest. This year’s theme is, “*How can we address and prevent veteran homelessness in our communities?*”**

The contest shall include six classes.

**Americanism Essay Contest Categories are:**

<b><u>Class</u></b>	<b><u>Grade Level</u></b>	<b><u>Word Requirement</u></b>
Class I	Grades 3 and 4	150-250 words
Class II	Grades 5 and 6	250-300 words
Class III	Grades 7 and 8	350-400 words
Class IV	Grades 9 and 10	450-500 words
Class V	Grades 11 and 12	450-500 words
Class VI	Students with Special Needs*	word count should correspond with Student's grade level

\*Student's with special needs are defined as:

- Students 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 discretion of school officials.

**\*\*All entries must include the Americanism Essay Contest cover sheet at the end of this Program Plan.**

**Suggestions for Promoting Americanism Essay Contests**

- Contact schools and other organizations such as Boys Scouts, Girl Scouts, Young Marines, and 4-H about entering the essay contest.
- Encourage your Junior members to enter the essay contest.
- Create information packets explaining contest rules, deadline dates, theme, and award opportunities.
- Contact the essay winner and their parents. Invite the parents to bring their child to your next auxiliary meeting to read his/her winning essay.
- Contact local school guidance counselors, history teachers, etc. whose students would be interested in participating.
- Be sure to include this information on your unit report to your district, department and national chairman.

**\*Unit Winning Entries are to be sent to your District Americanism Chairman by March 15, 2019. District winning entries are to be sent to the Department Americanism Chairman by March 30, 2019.**

**4. Participate in the promotion of The American Legion Americanism programs.**

- Support American Legion Baseball: sponsor a team, volunteer at the concession booth, donate to the team, contact local sport shops to ask for donations for a fundraiser or offer discounted prices to purchase needed items.
- Support Oratorical Contest: prepare the post home for contest, be a judge or timekeeper, supply refreshments, provide transportation, or help recruit candidates from local schools-talk to history teachers or debate coaches.
- Support Junior Shooting Sports: host the event, volunteer to help with scoring, supervision, or transportation on event day.
  - Contact JROTC at local schools.

## All Narrative Reports

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

- How did you promote the Americanism essay contest?
- How did your unit promote the flag program?
- How did you promote patriotic holidays?
- How did your unit encourage support for the flag amendment?
- Did your unit support American Legion Americanism programs? How?
- How did your unit promote Americanism in the community?
- Number of hours serving American Legion Family youth activities?
- Dollars spent to benefit children?
- Total number of children served?

## **Americanism Reporting**

### Mid-Year Reports

- Each Unit Americanism Chairman is required to submit a Mid-Year Report by **December 1, 2018** to her District Americanism Chairman.
- Each District Americanism Chairman is required to submit a Mid-Year Report by **December 15, 2018** to the Department Americanism Chairman.

### Annual Reports

- Each Unit Americanism Chairman is required to submit an Annual Report by **April 15, 2019** to her District Americanism Chairman.
- Each District Americanism Chairman is required to submit an Annual Report by **April 27, 2019** to the Department Americanism Chairman.

### National Awards:

The **Dorothy Pearl Most Outstanding Americanism Program** will be presented to one unit Americanism Chairman that reports the most outstanding Americanism program targeted to Children and Youth. The type of award is a Citation Plaque announced at National Convention. The entry must be typewritten in narrative format, not to exceed 1,000 words. The entry must include no more than 5 pictures and 5 news articles and must attach the Award Cover Sheet (located at the end of this program plan), including the name of the award, as well as the name and contact information for the department and unit Americanism Chairman. Entries must be **sent to the Department Americanism Chairman by April 15, 2019.**

### Department Awards:

The Vickie Koutz Monetary Award to the unit reporting the most consistent Americanism program.

### Department Chairman Personal Awards:

A citation to the District Americanism Chairmen who submit a Mid-Year Report to the Department Americanism Chairman by December 15, 2018.

An award to the Unit with the most overall participation in the Americanism Essay Contest.

An award to the unit sending the most folded pocket flags to active-duty military overseas.

## Additional Resources You Can Use

1. American legion Flag and Emblem Sales: [www.emblem.legion.org](http://www.emblem.legion.org)
  - Flag education DVD: explains the history, significance, meaning, proper display, and treatment of the U.S. flag.
  - *Let's Be Right on Flag Etiquette* – a question and answer booklet on proper flag etiquette.
2. The American Flag Advocacy: [www.legion.org/flag](http://www.legion.org/flag)
3. The American Legion's Action Programs of Americanism brochure: [www.legion.org/publications](http://www.legion.org/publications)
4. Capital Building flags: To order flags flown over the Capitol, contact your congressional representative(s) or senators or visit his/her website. Flags are available for a nominal fee; allow four to six weeks for delivery.
5. Pocket Flag Project: [www.pocketflagproject.com](http://www.pocketflagproject.com)
6. Your national Americanism committee members (see Americanism program page on the national website or Annual Supplement for contact information).

The Americanism program is a wonderful opportunity for our members to promote patriotism and citizenship in our communities. Let's set a good example this year as we promote proper respect for our nation's flag and teach others as we fly our flag proudly every day, especially on holidays.

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