



Veterans & Family Support

Spread the Word about National Veterans Service

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 for veterans and their dependents.

These highly skilled professionals assist all veterans, whether they are VFW members or not, in filing claims for:

- Disability compensation
- Rehabilitation and education 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 treatment
- Medical evaluation for disorders associated with military service, exposure to Agent Orange, radiation or other environmental hazards

Donate to NVS 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 and Military Support Programs (Previously known as VFW National Military Services)

Veterans and Military Support contains four programs initiated by the VFW: Sport Clips Help a Hero Scholarship, Unmet Needs, Operation Uplink™ and the Military Assistance Program (MAP). These programs serve active-duty and recently discharged military.

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 www.vfw.org/student-veterans-support.

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 at a cost the family cannot afford. These are the situations

Unmet Needs can address.

Grants of up to \$5,000 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.

Operation Uplink™

Operation Uplink™ is much appreciated by active-duty military and their spouses and children – a

“Be the change that you wish to see in the world,” Mahatma Ghandi said.

We can do that.

We can bridge the gap between our knowledge of resources and the needs of veterans if we make ourselves aware of what the VFW and Auxiliary can offer to people we might know who desperately need that assistance.

welcome way to stay connected. Free Call Days are scheduled for troops stationed overseas. Unlimited calls home three days each month are provided via more than 450 Internet cafes.

Plenty of virtual PINs for free call time are also still available for distribution from the VFW. Request them for hospitalized veterans.

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 those units by providing financial assistance for Posts, Districts and Departments to sponsor morale-boosting send-off, 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 NMS office at 816-756-3390.

Donations to support these National Military Services programs should be addressed to VFW National Headquarters, with checks made payable to National Military Services.

Any Day Can Be a “Buddy”® Poppy Day

“Buddy”® Poppy distribution has remained strong in the 90 years since its inception. The memorial flowers have raised millions for the welfare of veterans and their dependents.

Pamphlets and “Buddy”® Poppy distribution supplies can be purchased from the VFW Store at

www.vfwstore.org or by calling 1-800-821-2606. See the VFW’s “Buddy”® Poppy Chairman’s Guide for further assistance in setting up a “Buddy”® Poppy Drive, as well as other helpful resources. The guide can be found at www.vfwauxiliary.org.

Maintaining National Home Commitment

For more than 90 years, the VFW National Home for Children in Eaton Rapids, Michigan, has been there for military families and children. One way the Auxiliary supports the National Home is through gifts of 10 cents per member to the Health & Happiness Fund. Send H & H donations earmarked to:

**VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters
Attn: H & H Donations
406 W. 34th Street, 10th Floor
Kansas City, MO 64111**

Contributions are critical since the campus and its programs receive no government funding. For more information visit the National Home’s website at www.vfwnationalhome.org.

Even military families not living on campus can receive invaluable assistance through the Military and Veteran Family Helpline, which is staffed by caring professionals who help callers with pressing needs seek solutions in their own communities.

**Military & Veteran Family Helpline
1-800-313-4200
help@vfwnationalhome.org**



PROGRAM GOALS:

VFW National Veterans Service
VFW Veterans and Military Support Programs
“Buddy”® Poppy
VFW National Home for Children

Even just one can make a difference!

Q: Does my Auxiliary have to participate in everything in this program?

A: No. If your Auxiliary serves veterans and their families, then your Auxiliary has participated in this program. These are ideas and ways to serve veterans in your community. Try just picking one.

To meet the Veterans & Family Support Ambassador and National Conference Chairmen, and to see the awards, go to Page 37.

Veterans & Family Support Ambassador



KAREN DOTSON

Veterans & Family Support
Ambassador
19 Calgary Lane
Binghamton, NY
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What is the No. 1 way to connect with the community through your program?

The key components to connect the community to the Veterans & Family Support Program are through education, promotion and publicity. As Auxiliary members, we need to network with other community organization leaders, local church leaders and school officials the ability to offer consolidated solutions to enrich the community in order for the whole family to reap the benefits. Networking can be word of mouth, personal contact, open house at the Post, social media, or community public service announcements on radio, television, or newspaper. As a united group, we are able to achieve more when we join together as a cohesive team for the good of our community that includes our veterans, service members and their families. With each small step we take, we acquire success to meet the challenges of tomorrow. Our organization will become stronger and our resource solution toolkit expands when each new challenge becomes a success.

What are you most passionate about this program and why?

The Veterans & Family Support Program can be compared to the hoop of a Dream Catcher where the hoop is the circle of life. Likewise, the Veterans & Family Support Program is the flagship program that embodies

the circle of life for our veterans, service members and their families.

I am the most passionate about the Veterans & Family Support Program because collectively we can make an imprint on the lives of our heroes and their families through simple actions of compassion, comfort and charity. A smile to brighten the day of a veteran; providing daycare to a young family to do errands; lending an ear to listen; providing transportation to the barber, grocery store, bank, library, physician or dentist; providing a meal or just being a caring friend: We show our patriotism and love of country by taking care of those who have taken care of us without asking for anything in return. Let's show our love to our heroes by declaring every day Veterans Day.

If you could talk to every Auxiliary member at one time, what would you tell them about your program?

Our global environment changes constantly, but what remains steadfast is the Veterans & Family Support Program's basic premise which can be packaged in four words: simple acts of kindness. Each and every day, we as Auxiliary members share our time and unique talents with our veterans, service members and their families to meet their needs and daily challenges.

The abundance of benefits that are provided through the initiatives and components of the Veterans & Family Support Program directly influence and help sustain the circle of life for our veterans, service members and their families.

How can you involve families through this program?

Family members of all ages can become involved with each of the components. Families of all sizes and types (single, groups, multi-generational) can help distribute "Buddy"® Poppies, which promotes patriotism and love of country. As a family, they can help with the festivities

of welcome home and send-off events of active-duty personnel. With the support of Auxiliary members and the VFW, families can sponsor education sessions in support of the VFW Sport Clips Help a Hero Scholarship.

Invite families to attend planned activities to support our veterans and service members by raking leaves, shoveling snow, collecting non-perishable food items, or stuffing goody bags for our deployed service members. Encourage the children to create “thinking of you,” “thank you for your service,” or holiday cards for our veterans and active-duty members for their service to our country. The list of activities that can help brighten the day of a veteran or service member is lengthy; I encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas with your family, friends and Auxiliary members.

Encourage the Post Home to become family friendly and offer programs that will become inclusive to everyone. Extend invitations to families to join our organization and participate in programs that will provide friendship and support.

What are you most excited about for the 2017-2018 program year?

The 2017-2018 program year will creatively encourage our Auxiliary members to educate, celebrate and catch the dreams to make the lives of our veterans, service members and their families very memorable.

During the month of November 2017, we will celebrate Military Family Month and incorporate all Auxiliary programs to support our veterans, service members and their families. There is no better way to promote patriotism, our freedom and love of our country than to celebrate the love of our military family during this time period.

As the largest combat veterans’ organization auxiliary, we strive to continuously provide compassion, comfort, and charity for all veterans’ families. Let us celebrate our love of God, country and family for all to see. Let us set the benchmark for our Veterans & Family Support Program to reach as far as the dream catcher can hold to sustain the circle of life for Unwavering Support for Uncommon Heroes®.

Conference Chairmen



BIG TEN STATES
Sheila Allen
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SOUTHERN STATES
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WESTERN STATES
Stephanie Martin
13233 Cuyamaca Road
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Veterans & Family Support Awards

AWARDS FOR DEPARTMENTS AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN:

1. Citation to each Department Chairman for participation in this program.
2. *Catch the Dream Gift Certificate* to one Department Chairman in each Program Division for the best promotion of November as Military Family Month.
3. Outstanding Performance Award in each Program Division based on criteria listed on Page 1 and for the promotion of the Program Goals on Page 16.

AWARD FOR NATIONAL CHAIRMEN:

Catch the Dream for Our Veterans Keepsake to each National Chairman for participation in this program.

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|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Signed _____ Department Chairman | Conference _____ |
| Address _____ | Email _____ |
| City _____ State _____ Zip _____ | Phone Number (_____) _____ |