



Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary Veterans & Family Support Bulletin - June/July, 2024

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Veterans and family Support-Michigan

National Theme: *From Our Roots to Our Branches Extending Service to Our Veterans*

Department Theme: *Aspire to Inspire*

Our National Veterans & Family Support Ambassador Evan Smiley, is challenging all of our Auxiliary members to be innovative thinkers, be creative and be like a shark in water that needs to survive by: **Always Keep Moving Forward!**

June is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Month with June 27th being Post Traumatic Stress Awareness Day. Post Traumatic Stress can ultimately lead to suicide if not diagnosed or treated. Some Post Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms are:

- Being easily startled
- Feeling tense, on guard or on edge
- Having difficulty concentrating
- Having trouble sleeping or staying asleep
- Feeling irritable and having angry or aggressive outbursts
- Engaging in risky, reckless or self-destructive behaviors (alcohol or other substance abuse)

Because our veterans have been trained to hide their emotions, it is important for us to make a difference in the lives of our veterans or service members who may be in crisis by educating ourselves and others about the warning signs of suicide, and by helping to change the conversation and social stigma surrounding mental health in the United States.

Veterans Crisis Line

- Call **1 800 MyVA411** to access all VA departments
- Call **988** and press **1**
- Chat online at **veteranscrisisline.net** or
- Send a text message to **838255**

More Mental Wellness Support and Resources

- **VFW Mental Wellness Campaign** vfw.org/assistanve/mental/wellness
- **The Campaign to Change Direction** changedirection.org
- **Give an Hour** giveanhour.org
- **Patients Like Me** patientslikeme.com/join/vfw

The topic of **Suicide Awareness and Mental Health for Veterans, Military and their Families** directly ties into this year's National Award Opportunity for your Auxiliary; so start brain storming, planning, and thinking about how your Auxiliary can put together an activity or event to increase awareness of suicide and mental health for veterans, military and their families. Please review your Veterans & Family Support **Guide Sheet** often and don't hesitate contacting me for any questions or concerns you may have. My contact information is on your V&FS guide sheet and V&FS bulletins.

Hopefully this Independence Day on July 4, you will be able to spend time with your veteran and or family. Whether or not veterans or active military are home safe or currently deployed elsewhere, there are a few good ways to support our heroes and their families by donating to these organizations:

VFW Veterans & Military Support Programs

Veterans & Military Support contains programs initiated by the VFW-Military Assistance Program or MAP, Unmet Needs, and the VFW “Sports Clip Help A Hero Scholarship.” These programs serve active duty and recently discharged military. Donate online at vfw.org/ways-to-help, select Veterans & Military Support, click “contribute”. You may also donate by mail by sending funds to the VFW earmarked for Veterans & Military Support. Mail Check to:

VFW National Headquarters
Attn: Veterans & Military Support
406 W. 34th Street, 9th Floor
Kansas City, MO 64111

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 offs, 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 on how to apply for MAP funds, contact the VFW Veterans & Military Support office at 816 756 3390.

***** Review your Guide Sheet, Don't forget to Report and Thank You!**

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