



Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary Scholarships Bulletin August-2026-2027

www.vfwauxmi.org

National Theme: Serving America's Heroes
Department Theme: Leading With a Patriots Heart

PROGRAM GOALS

Student Participation - Recipient Recognition - Community Awareness - Increasing the Fund

It is hard to believe that August is already here and the start of a new school year is just around the corner. If you have not already done so, it is important to begin contacting your local schools as soon as possible.

Please make every effort to deliver the **Voice of Democracy** and **Patriot's Pen** materials to both middle and high schools early in the school year. Entries for both contests must be submitted to your Auxiliary no later than **October 31, 2026**. This year's theme for both contests is:

"What A Veteran Taught Me about America?"

When delivering the application packets, please include the following materials:

- Official application
- School release form
- Student biography form
- Headshot/photo requirement

It is highly recommended that every student complete all required forms when they submit their entry. Doing so will make the advancement process much easier should their entry be selected to move on to the District level. All these documents are required for District competition along with those that go on to State level.

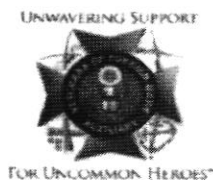
For the **Patriot's Pen** contest, it is also helpful to remind teachers that the essay should be submitted on a single page, following the contest guidelines.

While visiting the schools, please also introduce the **Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest** and the **3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest**. Providing this information early allows teachers the opportunity to incorporate these contests into their classroom curriculum and gives students ample time to prepare their entries before the later deadlines.

To assist you with your school visits, I have prepared two introductory letters to accompany the scholarship applications—one designed for high schools and another for elementary and middle schools. These letters explain the scholarship opportunities available through the VFW Auxiliary and highlight that students have the opportunity to compete for thousands of dollars in scholarships and additional awards.

The first deadlines of the scholarship year are the **VFW Voice of Democracy Audio-Essay Contest** and the **VFW Patriot's Pen Essay Contest**. Please remember that all entries must be received by your Auxiliary **no later than October 31, 2026**, to be judged and advance through the competition.

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Schools Are Back in Session – Have You Followed Up?

Now that school is back in session, have you returned to the schools to follow up after originally delivering the scholarship applications? If you haven't been back since the end of the last school year or your August visit, I encourage you to prepare another packet and schedule a follow-up visit.

Take a few minutes to meet with the principal, counselors, or teachers and reinforce the importance of these scholarship opportunities. Remind them that these programs not only recognize students for their patriotism, creativity, and writing abilities, but also provide the opportunity to earn scholarships and awards that can have a lasting impact on their future.

Don't forget the importance of promoting these scholarships through social media. The Department Scholarships Program page provides flyers, promotional graphics, and other valuable resources that are ready to download and share. Be sure to post them on your Auxiliary's Facebook page, Instagram, and YouTube accounts. Also utilize your personal social media pages, your District page, and encourage fellow members to share the posts to expand your reach.

Remember that these scholarship opportunities are open to students attending public schools, private schools, and homeschool programs. Every eligible student deserves the opportunity to participate.

Scholarship Promotion Idea

One of the best ways to reach students is by reaching their parents.

Ask your local school if you may set up an information table during a football game, volleyball match, or other school event. Display information about the Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, Continuing Education Scholarship, Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest, and the 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest. Highlight the scholarship amounts available at each level—especially that the national Voice of Democracy first-place winner receives a **\$35,000 scholarship**.

Parents often recognize the value of scholarship opportunities and can encourage their children to participate. A simple conversation with a parent may be all it takes to inspire a student to enter one of our programs.

While hosting your information table, consider including brochures about your VFW Auxiliary, upcoming community events, youth activities, and other Auxiliary programs that are open to the public. It's an excellent opportunity to promote both our scholarship programs and the important work of the VFW Auxiliary within your community.

Reporting

Accurate and timely reporting is a priority, and I strongly encourage all members to consistently report on their Scholarship activities.

Your cooperation and diligence in reporting are greatly appreciated, as they support both our mission and our organizational responsibilities.

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