

# **Youth Activities**

Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary  
Promotion September / October 2020  
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National Theme: Honoring Our Mission to Serve Veterans

Department Theme: Fulfilling Our Commitment of Unwavering Support

**CAN YOU HEAR THEM??? DO YOU SEE THEM??? THEY ARE OUR  
YOUTH!!!**

The VFW Auxiliary is in a unique position to help teach our youth the skills to become responsible adults through serving our country, communities, and Veterans. Today's youth are the future of our nation. Let's all encourage and educate them.

Hello everyone!!

I am guessing everyone is either back to school or not far from starting! What an interesting year this will be for our youth. Are your kids going to school or doing virtual learning?

With all of the uncertainty in our nation right now, it is important that we keep reaching out to our youth as much as we can. With all of our contests and scholarships, let's get out there and get these kids involved.

**National Youth Activities Ambassador Jodie Hollinger states "By encouraging, engaging and enriching the youth of today, you are helping them develop into our nation's leaders of tomorrow."**

National Program Goals for Youth Activities this year are as follows: **1.** Creating, Sponsoring and Working with Youth Groups **2.** Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans National Citations **3.** Patriotic Youth Award **4.** Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue! **5.** Patriotism through Literacy **6.** Illustrating America

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. Talk to your kids, stay involved in their activities and pay attention to any changes in their behavior. Kids tend to bottle up their feelings, adults do too for that matter. Check out the website [www.changedirection.org](http://www.changedirection.org), they show the Five signs of Emotional Suffering. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Ask schools if you can put information out about "Know the 5 Signs" posters.

Other important dates for the month of September:

Patriot Day – September 11

Constitution Day & Citizenship Day – September 17

POW/MIA Recognition Day – 9/18 (always the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of September)

Gold Star Mother & Family's Day – September 27 (always the last Sunday of September)

Columbus Day is October 14. Read out to teachers and see if you can come read a story or put together a fun packet with information of Christopher Columbus.

### **VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AUDIO-ESSAY CONTEST**

Grades 9-12 2020-2021

Theme: Is This the Country the Founders Envisioned?

### **PATRIOT'S PEN ESSAY CONTEST**

Grades 6-8 2020-2021

Theme: What is Patriotism to Me?

# YOUNG AMERICAN CREATIVE PATRIOTIC ART CONTEST

Grades 9-12 2020-2021

Theme: What is Patriotism to Me?

## NEW, NEW, NEW!!!!

I want to urge every Auxiliary to find youth in your local church, community or school choir or local band to participate in this new program Get Excited for the **Red**, **White** and **Blue**! This is an individual effort so it is something they can do during Covid-19; but it will take some time for them to develop their own style and recording so please start working on this immediately.

Get Excited for the **Red**, **White** and **Blue**!

LET THEIR VOICES BE HEARD!!!! NEW, NEW, NEW!!!!

An individual National Anthem singing contest for youth between the ages of 6-16 years at the time of local entry. Youth learn the words to “The Star-Spangled Banner” while expressing their creativity. This contest provides a fantastic opportunity for youth to demonstrate their patriotism. Entry will be judged on vocal ability, mastery of lyrics, originality or interpretation and entertainment value. Contestant must live or attend school in the state of the sponsoring VFW Auxiliary. The Department first-place winner will be forwarded to VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters. Please see entry form at [vfwauxiliary.org/what-we-do/youth-activities](http://vfwauxiliary.org/what-we-do/youth-activities) for eligibility requirements and contest rules.

### **Deadlines:**

Entries received by: **Local Auxiliary** – March 31

**Department** – April 15

**National Headquarters** – May 5

Contest Rules: • Video of contestant’s solo vocal performance of “The Star-Spangled Banner” must be recorded between July 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021. • Contestant may sing a cappella, with backing tracks or instruments. • Contestant may sing in the arrangement and genre of their choice. • Contestant may NOT change the words.

There is only one National area of Youth Activities Program Awards for Auxiliaries 1. Most outstanding promotion of the **Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue!** National anthem singing contest.

- Citation to every Auxiliary that promotes the Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue! National anthem singing contest.

Criteria and entry form (required) available at [www.vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org/resources). Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Youth Activities Chairman by March 31, 2021. The Department Youth Activities Chairman must send a copy of all submitted entry forms to National Headquarters by April 30, 2021. Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters. • Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences with the most outstanding promotion of the Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue! National anthem singing contest. The Department Youth Activities Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form to National Headquarters by May 5, 2021.

Contact a local radio station and see if they would air the contestants at noon every day. Just a little extra fun to add to the contest!!

## ILLUSTRATING AMERICA

Have fun seeing how our youth visualize our world through their creative drawings and paintings!! Inspires student's artistic talent while rewarding Make You them for their hard work and dedication. Open to all students, including home schooled students, in grades 1-8 at time of local entry. It will be judged on patriotic theme and technique.

**Deadline:** March 31, 2021 to your Auxiliary.

Youth Activities: Involve Youth In All Auxiliary Programs! What does it mean to sponsor and work with youth groups? Under the Auxiliary Youth Activities Program, an Auxiliary can sponsor a youth group and engage youth in any one of our programs, including activities to honor our veterans or assist our active-duty military and their families.

New (School) Year, New Resources The new school year is underway and now is the time to contact and partner with your local libraries, homeschool associations, parent/teacher committees, Scout troops, etc. Consider hosting a meet and greet for your local school district superintendent, principals, teachers, and youth leaders in your community. This will give you an opportunity to share information about our Youth Activities Program and excite your community's leaders about the amazing opportunities we offer our youth.

**Have fun! Be creative! Dream!**

I look forward to working with each and every one of you! I can't wait to see what you can do with our youth!!

For the Auxiliary that gets the most submissions for the new **GET EXCITED FOR THE RED, WHITE and BLUE** contest, I will give \$25 to the winner.

Have Fun!!

Michelle Hughes

Dept. of GA Youth Activities Chairman

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