

Mike McCandless  
Department President  
“Teamwork Makes the  
Dream Work”



Carla Martinez  
National President  
“Banding Together for  
our Veterans”

The Mentoring for Leadership program is the only program that is solely for the benefit of our members. A mentor to me is someone who is positive, kind, compassionate, knowledgeable and takes an interest in helping individuals become better leaders. Your mentors could be co-workers, teachers or Auxiliary members, just to name a few. I have several Auxiliary brothers and sisters that I look up to and that have mentored me over the past several years. Look to your Line Officers and Chairmen in not only your own Auxiliary, but your District and Department as well. This program works hand-in-hand with the Chief of Staff program as well as the Membership program. By becoming better leaders and mentors, it increases our chances of obtaining and maintaining members. The Program Goals this year are: **Ensuring a Positive Member Experience, Engaging in Learning & Training Opportunities and Developing & Empowering Members for Leadership Roles.**

I encourage you to look at the *Mentoring Guide: Relationship Building for the Future* which can be found behind your MALTA login under Member Resources. This program promotes the **C.A.R.E.** concept which will help in building the relationship between you and your current, new and rejoin members.

**C** is for catch the member when they first join. Make it your mission to let them know how much they are valued within our organization. When attending meetings, have a new member sit with a seasoned member who can help explain things as they happen during the meeting.

**A** is for ask them to participate. Contact your new members and offer to pick them up and bring them to a meeting or event that your Auxiliary is doing. Find out what types of projects they would be interested in helping with. Getting them involved in our programs is going to go a long way in keeping them actively involved. Distribute the *Programs Overview* (Mentoring for Leadership resource page) to new members so that they are able to get a feeling for what Programs our Auxiliaries support.

**R** is for remember what it felt like to be new. Do you remember how you felt when you first joined the Auxiliary? I bet things seemed a bit overwhelming. The Auxiliary has so many traditions that are observed and acronyms that we utilize during our meetings. Be sure to have a copy of the *Understanding Auxiliary Traditions* (Americanism resources page) and *VFW Auxiliary Acronyms and Commonly Used Terminology* (Mentoring for Leadership resources page) available for reference. Go over it during the meeting, it's great to have a refresher even for our long-time members!

**E** is for engage them in a program that fits them. By interacting and learning about your new, transfer and long-time members, you'll find out where their passion lies within our organization. Every one of our programs will allow for our members to contribute to projects that speak to their strengths and passion.

We know that we all are here for a common purpose, our veterans, active-duty service members, their families and our communities. Use that as that base for each relationship within your Auxiliary and build on it over time. We'll be doing some trainings each month through the Sunflower Express to help get members used to utilizing the other tools available such as the *Bylaws & Ritual* and *Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundations Guidebook* (Member Resource page). These resources will help in developing confidence in leadership roles. The guidebook provides suggestions and examples for Officers, Chairmen and members. The goal of the guidebook is to develop and maintain consistent practices across the organization. I encourage each Auxiliary to have a laptop or phone available at

their meetings to help those members who haven't activated their MALTA account to do so. This is the first step in helping each member achieve the best resources available to them as an Auxiliary member.

This year, there will be a National Award available for Auxiliaries that have the most unique activity and/or event that educates their Auxiliary members about how to find and train mentees while using and promoting VFW Auxiliary resources and learning materials, (Mentoring for Leadership resources page) the deadline for this award form to me is March 31, 2024. Each Auxiliary that submits an award form will receive a citation from National Headquarters and the top entry received will be forwarded on to the National Ambassador, Francine Cornish for judging.

There will be two Department awards that will be given out this year based on membership group. Membership groups will be as follows:

10-100  
101-200  
201-300  
301-400  
400 plus

The first award given will be based on how you promote the Mentoring for Leadership program within your meetings (did you take time to do trainings through MALTA, Bylaws & Ritual review, Building on the VFW Auxiliary Foundation Guidebook, etc.) this means that you can't answer just a simple yes or no to qualify – you **MUST** explain in detail what your Auxiliary did.

The second award is something new this year that I will be working on with our Department President, Mike McCandless. The National Organization is going to recognize an "VFW Auxiliary Member of the Year" at our National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. **All entries for this award must be sent to our Department President, Mike McCandless.** What we are asking is that you type or neatly handwrite on a separate sheet of paper your **detailed explanation** on why you think your nominee should be considered for this award. The essay **should not reflect the name** of the **individual making the nomination**. Only the entry form will have that information listed. Be watching the Sunflower Express for the official nomination sheet and further instruction. The deadline for this award will be March 31, 2024.

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