

## Youth Activities SOI Report 2025

The purpose of the Youth Activities Program is to help youth, individuals and groups, to honor our veterans or to assist our service members and their families. Our Youth Activities Program helps us with ways to do this by having various activities and contests for young Americans to participate in.

First of all, let all your auxiliaries know that **Get Excited for the Red, White, and Blue** has been discontinued.

**Illustrating America** is a drawing contest for youth grades K-8 with three Divisions, K-2, 3-5, and 6-8, not to exceed 15 years of age. The local entries are due to the local Auxiliaries by March 31, 2025. Entries will be judged on patriotic themes and technique. Entry forms and rules are under Programs, Youth Activities and contains eligibility requirements, rules, and deadlines. Please read and follow the rules, or I cannot accept the art piece.

**Patriotism through Literacy:** This program supports and promotes reading among youth. You can use this to introduce youth to historical figures and our nation's history while fostering a love of reading. If you go to [vfwauxks.org](http://vfwauxks.org) and click on programs, then Youth Activities, you can scroll down to Patriotism Through Literacy Suggested Reading List and find a list of age-appropriate books that are good to donate. Enclosed in your packet is a list of books that can be ordered from Amazon. I am challenging each auxiliary to donate at least 1 book this year to a school or library in honor of our veterans. There are labels for your book in your packet that say the book is donated in honor of Brenda Bryant, National President.

**Creating, Supporting and Working with Youth Groups:** This part of the program speaks to the need to help develop our young people to become leaders, acknowledge and identify needs in their community and encourages them to care for those in need. Work with youth to hold an event to benefit other youth in your community. This can be as easy as holding a food drive, a school supply drive, or a holiday youth gift drive. Auxiliaries can help sponsor a group such as Scouts or FBLA to accomplish these activities. Work with a youth group to visit nursing homes or help a veteran with yard work or putting their trash on the curb each week.

**R.A.P. Cards:** Our youth love awards for a job well done. Explain to those receiving them that R.A.P. stands for Random Acts of Patriotism. These can be given to any youth showing patriotism. Such as, a child thanking a veteran, or showing respect to our American Flag, or placing their hand over their heart correctly. Go to Malta under Youth Activities to find the template to print out the cards. A sheet is included in your packet.

## **NEW THIS YEAR:**

**Youth reading to our Veterans & Veterans reading to our Youth:** Sometimes just talking to youth about patriotism can be dull. But taking a student on a journey in a book might capture their attention more and open their minds up. Choose a book from our reading list, or another of your choice and get a veteran to read it to students or get a student to read to veterans. This program is as simple as that. Donate the book after and you have fulfilled the Patriotism through Literacy challenge. I am also offering a citation and award for taking photographs, creating a collage, and bringing it to the Department Convention in June.

### **Citations and Awards:**

The Youth Group Supporting Our Veterans Citation is a way for auxiliaries to recognize a youth group for their efforts and service projects honoring and assisting our veterans. The Patriotic Youth Award is designed to recognize individual youths for their Patriotism and support of our veterans and their families. These are available under Youth Activities.

## **PROGRAM AWARDS**

### **National Awards for Auxiliaries:**

Most outstanding activity or event of youth reading to veterans and/or veterans reading to youth. Entry form is in your packet and on Malta. It is due to your Department Youth Chairman by March 31, 2025.

**Department Awards for Auxiliaries:** A collage of youth reading to veterans and/or veterans reading to youth.

### **Citation and award given to each Auxiliary that:**

- 1. Promotes Youth reading to Veterans or Veterans reading to Youth.**
- 2. Takes photographs of the event.**
- 3. Creates a collage ½ of a poster sheet, approximately 14" X 22" o the event.**
- 4. Sends a photo of your entry to Youth Activities Department Chairman by March 31, 2025. Including Auxiliary name, number, and District.**
- 5. Takes the collage to the Department meeting in June.**

Please include as much information as possible in the description so I will know what you have done and spent money on.

