



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE U.S.
THE GREATER MAHOPAC POST NO. 5491
P.O. Box 132
Mahopac, New York 10541

Dear Principal:

The Veterans Of Foreign Wars Post 5491 Mahopac, New York and it's Ladies Auxiliary would like to inform you of the scholarships available for our children . Enclosed please find all the information needed to offer them the opportunity to participate in these programs.

Please share this information with your teachers and students. We would all be proud to have a winning student from our community.

Sincerely,
Ray Callinan, V.O.D. Chairman
V.F.W. Post 5491

Kristina Boccia, Youth Activities
Ladies Auxiliary, V.F.W. Post 5491

Patriot's Pen Essay Contest

The Ladies Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars is sponsoring a Patriot's Pen Essay Contest

Who can participate:

Students in Grades 6 - 8 attending Public, Private, Parochial and Home Study

Essay Theme: What Patriotism Means to Me

Requirements: Essay should be no less than 300 words and no more than 400 words based on the patriotic theme above

Deadline: November 1, 2013

Contact for Application

Contact Name

Contact Telephone Number

Patriot's Pen

2013-14 Theme:
What Patriotism Means to me.



What is Patriot's Pen?

Conducted nationwide, this VFW sponsored youth essay competition gives students an opportunity to write essays expressing their views on democracy. We invite you to join the more than 125,000 students who participated last year in this contest. The top 46 national winners all receive at least \$500. The first-place award is currently \$5,000, plus an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. for the winner and a parent or guardian.

Big National Prizes

Prizes include the various amounts of awards listed below:

1st:	\$5,000	7th:	\$1,750
2nd:	\$4,000	8-9th:	\$1,500
3rd:	\$3,500	10-11th:	\$1,250
4th:	\$2,750	12-13th:	\$1,000
5th:	\$2,500	14-15th:	\$750
6th:	\$2,000	16-46th:	\$500

When is the deadline?

To qualify, all entries must be submitted to a sponsoring VFW Post by Nov. 1, 2013.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) has again approved this contest for its National Advisory List of Contests and Activities.

How does the contest work?

Where do I submit my entry?

All entries begin at the Post level. The only exception is where schools/classes/youth groups have large numbers of students and wish to conduct their own competition, submitting one winner for each 15 students to the local VFW Post competition. Individual students may submit their entry directly to the Post providing they have not competed at a school/class competition.

The contest consists of four levels. The first level (entry) is sponsored by local VFW Posts. Post winners advance, one for every 15, to the VFW District (regional) level where the one first-place winner is advanced to the VFW Department (state) level. The one first-place winner at the Department level is then advanced into the VFW National competition. The winner from each Department (state) then competes for the national prizes.

Who can enter?

Patriot's Pen is open to 6th-, 7th- and 8th-grade students enrolled in public, private or parochial schools in the U.S., its territories or its possessions. Home-schooled students also are eligible.

Dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools can participate too. (Foreign exchange students and former winners that placed in the National finals are excluded from the contest.)

2013-14 OFFICIAL STUDENT PATRIOT'S PEN COMPETITION ENTRY FORM MUST BE COMPLETED BY ALL CONTESTANTS

Name: First, M.I., Last

Address

City, State, Zip

()

Home Phone

E-mail

Date of Birth

Grade in School

Essay Word Count

School Name, City, State

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE CONTEST RULES

Signature of Student Participant

Date

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE VFW/AUXILIARY POST
I certify that this student is an authorized entry in our
VFW Post Level Patriot's Pen Competition.

Post Commander's/Chairman's Signature

Post #

Ladies Auxiliary President's/Chairman's Signature

Post Address

City, State, Zip

No. of students participating ____ No. of winners advanced to District ____

Amt. of Post/Aux. awards \$

Amt. of Post/Aux. additional expenses (banquet, pins, etc.) \$

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE VFW/AUXILIARY DISTRICT
I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly
selected winner of the Patriot's Pen Essay Contest District Competition
and is our sole entry into the Department finals.

District Chairman's Signature

Dist. #

Address

City, State, Zip

()

Phone

E-mail

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE VFW DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN
I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly
selected first-place winner of the Patriot's Pen Essay Department
Competition, and is our sole entry into the National Judging.

Department Chairman's Signature

()

Daytime Phone

()

Fax

E-mail

The winner ☐ has been ☐ will be (check one) notified that they are the
first place Department winner on _____. Note: National Headquarters
will contact your winner after this date to notify them of their national
placement.

Patriot's Pen

2013-14 Theme:
What Patriotism Means to me.

What are the rules?

- Essay length: 300-400 typewritten words.
- You must write your own essay.
- All essays should be typewritten in English with no color or graphics and cannot be less than 300 words or greater than 400 words in length. (Essays under or over these word amounts will be eliminated.) Every word is counted regardless of length. The essay title (theme) or added footnotes do not contribute to the word count.

Deadline—

The completed essay and entry form must be in the hands of the VFW Post Chairman by midnight on Nov. 1, 2013.

In no way may contestants identify themselves within their essay. Do not put your name on your essay. The entry form is your essay's cover sheet. Secure the Official Student Entry Form with a staple or other fastener on top of your essay. Contestants are allowed to enter only once (one Post competition). Contestants found in violation of this rule will face elimination from the competition and will be required to return any and all prize money awarded or received.

The essay must be a contestant's original work and a product of the contestant's own thinking. The approach to the Patriot's Pen theme should be positive and clearly focused. Poetry is not acceptable. Quotations may be used sparingly if plainly identified wherever used. A contestant's teacher, counselor or parent may check the essay for punctuation, grammar and/or spelling, but the content must remain the contestant's. Contestants will be judged on the basis of their essay alone and are not required to present the essay orally. All essays become the property of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The VFW retains non-exclusive rights to use your essay and likeness in the promotion and execution of the organization's programs and activities.

Note: All entries must be submitted to a VFW Post competition. If you have difficulty identifying a sponsoring Post in your area, call the Patriot's Pen national office at: (816) 756-3390, ext. 220 or e-mail: swilson@vfw.org.

How do I get started?

- Ask a teacher or youth group/club adult leader to supervise the Patriot's Pen writing competition.
- Contact a local VFW Post and indicate your interest in participating.
- Establish a contact person who is a member of that VFW Post or its Ladies Auxiliary.
- Make sure that your essay is submitted to the VFW Post before the contest deadline of Nov. 1, 2013.

How am I judged?

You will be judged on how well you understand, develop and present the theme. A positive approach is recommended to express your viewpoint.

Knowledge of the theme is worth 30 points:

You must show a thorough knowledge of the theme in your work. Demonstrate you have researched the issue extensively.

Theme development is worth 35 points:

Answer all relevant facts about the theme such as the who, what, where, when and why. Relate the theme to your own experiences.

Clarity of ideas is worth 35 points:

Write your essay in an easy-to-understand format. Leave your reader with a clear understanding of your explanation of the theme.

What is the theme?

VFW's Commander-in-Chief annually chooses the year's theme. The 2013-14 theme is **What Patriotism Means to Me.**

LOCAL VFW POST INFORMATION:

CONTACT: Post 5491

PHONE: 845 628-9798 **BEST TIME TO CALL:** After 12:00 P.M.

ALTERNATE CONTACT: Kristina Boccia

PHONE: 845 519-6304 **BEST TIME TO CALL:** After-noon



Patriot's Pen Competition
Veterans of Foreign Wars
& Ladies Auxiliary

Kansas City, Missouri
(816) 756-3390, ext. 220
E-Mail: swilson@vfw.org
www.vfw.org

EMBLEM AND SUPPLY ORDER NO. 4440

VFW Teacher Nomination Form

Please photocopy or cut out and attach to nomination essay.

Nominated Teacher

Name: _____
Subject and grade taught: _____
Current school: _____
School address: _____

School phone #: _____

On a separate piece of paper, please describe (type or print) in 350 words or less why you feel your nominee should be selected for the VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award, then sign the nomination statement.

Submit nomination materials to your local VFW Post. Check your phone book for locations. DO NOT send to VFW National Headquarters.

_____ Number of words in essay
(not to exceed 350). Please provide
this information.

Person Submitting Entry

Name: _____
Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____
Phone #: _____
Date submitted: _____
Signature: _____

**Deadline: Submit to local VFW Post
by November 1.**

Identify and recognize
America's best educators.
Wouldn't you like to see them
get the honor they deserve?

Now you can.



For more information,
contact your local VFW Post
or its Ladies Auxiliary or visit
our Web site.
www.vfwscholarships.org

**Veterans of Foreign Wars
of the United States**
406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
(816) 756-3390
E-Mail: kharmer@vfw.org
www.vfw.org

Local VFW Post Information

VFW Honors America's Teachers



NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION
Teacher Award
GRADES K-12



VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS



Promoting Citizenship Education

VFW annually recognizes the nation's top classroom elementary, junior high and high school teachers who teach citizenship education topics regularly teaching (at least half of the school day in a classroom environment) and promote America's history, traditions and institutions effectively.

Teachers who promote civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism are prime candidates for this award. For example, do you know a teacher who plans field trips to city hall or organizes community volunteer projects? Maybe you know an instructor who invites veterans into the classroom to discuss their military experiences. Perhaps you are familiar with a teacher who fosters the development of democratic values and beliefs through special projects. If you know of such a teacher, honor him or her today with the VFW's National Citizenship Education Teacher Award.

recognize teachers who care about America

VFW Cares About Education

Founded in 1899, the Veterans of Foreign Wars is concerned with the education of America's youth. VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary have developed a slate of programs dedicated to this endeavor.

VFW's Citizenship Education program stimulates interest in America's history, traditions, institutions, civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism.

VFW wants to identify and recognize America's best educators who instill a sense of national pride in students. VFW offers cash awards, commemorative plaques and all-expenses-paid trips to a national VFW conference for these worthy teachers. The trip will provide an opportunity for winners to exchange ideas.

Teachers care deeply about America and its children. They're concerned about the perpetuation of America's noblest traditions and highest ideals. Wouldn't you like to see them get the honor they deserve? Now you can.

How are teachers nominated?

Fill out the nomination form contained in this brochure. In 350 words or less, describe why you feel your nominee should be selected. Describe the teacher's innovative teaching and resource development methods, as well as his or her dedication to education. Please submit your completed nomination form and signed essay to your local VFW Post. Check the phone book for Post locations or call VFW's Citizenship Education Department at (816) 756-3390 to find the Post nearest to you.

All Post-level nominees, if they win, should provide a one-page resume, up to five pages of documentation of their teaching experience (references, news articles) and a head-and-shoulder photo of themselves.

When is the deadline?

Nominations must be received by November 1 by your local VFW Posts, which conduct judging from November 2-15.

What are the National awards?

VFW's National Citizenship Education Teacher Awards include the items below:

- A national \$1,000 Past Commander-in-Chief John Smart award for each of the top K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 teachers for professional development expenses.
- \$1,000 award for each winning teacher's school.
- Plaques for both the winning teacher and school.
- An all-expenses-paid trip to attend a VFW and Ladies Auxiliary National Conference.

Nominate Someone Deserving

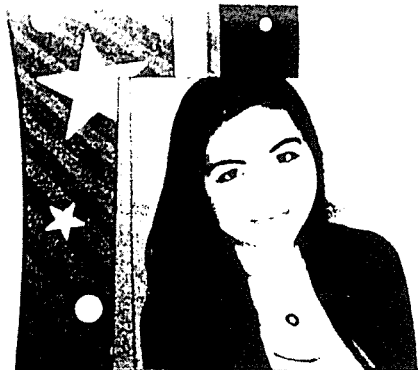
Have a teacher in mind? Fill out the nomination form and submit it to your local VFW Post. The investment that a teacher makes in today's youth will be the dividends we will all reap from future leaders.

How Does the Contest Work?

Based on the nominees submitted, VFW's local chapters, called Posts, will recognize one outstanding teacher in grades K-5, 6-8 and 9-12. Posts then submit these winners' names to their District-level judging, who will forward their winners to the Department (or state) level. After judging, each Department then forwards the names of its winners to VFW National Headquarters for consideration in the national awards contest.

Who is eligible?

All current classroom teachers (teaching at least half of the school day in a classroom environment) in grades K-12 are eligible. Previous state and national VFW winners are ineligible. Nominations can be submitted by fellow teachers, supervisors or other interested individuals (not relatives). Self-nominees are not eligible.



2012-2013
PATRIOT'S PEN
WINNER

MARIESSA MCKENNA
Sponsored by Post and
Auxiliary 8065
Bowie, Maryland

What I Would Tell America's Founding Fathers

On August 2nd, 1776¹, 56 men made their way across the room to sign their names on a highly controversial piece of paper. Much like how a father vows to love his child unconditionally, despite not knowing what that child will do in the future, America's founding fathers signed away their lives in the uncertain hope that thirteen diverse – and often contradictory – colonies will be able to survive as an independent nation.

If I were there on that historical day, I would tell those men that their hope was not false. The thirteen small colonies would grow into fifty states, and The United States of America would come to be one of the most powerful countries in the world. I would tell them the stories of Americans, most of whom will not be born until decades later, who will come to embody the American spirit that was born that day. Abraham Lincoln, who will lead our country through what is

perhaps its greatest moral crisis, the Civil War. Susan B. Anthony, who will courageously advocate for the women's rights movement. Martin Luther King, Jr., who will use the power of nonviolence to fight for civil rights and become a voice for African Americans. Neil Armstrong, who will become the first man to walk on the moon and together with Buzz Aldrin will proudly place the American flag on the moon's surface for all the world to see.

Although they may not believe me, I would tell them that while some of the delegates sitting in that room may see them as nothing but overconfident fools, that their actions that day would make them fifty-six of the bravest fools in history. I would tell them that the world will grow and change, that new things will be invented and new wars will be fought, but America will stay true to the statement on the document they signed that day, "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."²

¹ Although it is commonly believed to be July 4th, the Declaration of Independence was not actually signed until August 2nd.

² From the U.S. Declaration of Independence