



Virginia Recruiting SOI 2021-2022

Video: Student Veterans



Our Mission



To foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts. To serve our veterans, the military, and our communities.
To advocate on behalf of all veterans.

Our Vision



Ensure that veterans are respected for their service, always receive their earned entitlements, and are recognized for the sacrifices they and their loved ones have made on behalf of this great country.

Our Core Values



- Always put the interests of our members first
- Treat donors as partners in our cause
- Promote patriotism
- Honor military service
- Ensure the care of veterans and their families
- Serve our communities
- Promote a positive image of veterans
- Respect the diversity of veteran opinions

Membership Program



- Look at the VFW National Membership program, and align Post/District/State goals to that program.
- Identify the needs of your Post/District/State (i.e. State to increase life memberships, new members, or retention)
- Ensure that each goal in your membership program is attainable and trackable.

Membership Program



- Be SPECIFIC about what your goals are
- Make those goals MEASURABLE
- Goals that you set must be ATTAINABLE
- Ensure that the goals are RELEVANT to the problem
- Open ended goals are lazy, make them TIME-BOUND

Membership Program



Decide where you want to be on June 30, 2022 and divide that across all 12 months of the year (starting July 1, 2021). Set benchmarks, remember your life members are a huge number of members that help your statistics, create your team, and write your plan on paper.

Update your plan monthly. Talk about the plan at every Post/District meeting. Don't be afraid to make needed changes to the plan if the change is needed to ensure success. Ask for help. Get training and materials. Achieve your goal.

“Take the ideas out of your head and write them on paper. That’s when they become a plan.”

Long-Term Planning



- Make a plan to “forward-think” past today to solve potential challenges early.
- Create an action plan - not just a “plan” – what are the specific actions which must be taken to achieve success?
- Delegate short-term goals when appropriate.

Long-Term Planning



- Communicate the plan effectively & often. **Pro-Tip: Check for understanding.**
- Execute the Plan and move forward, analyze the results and adjust plan if needed.
- Lessons Learned: take time at the end of the project to note what went well and what did not so the next project runs better.



Where Virginia Stands in Membership Now

Where Virginia Stands



Virginia is:

- One of 52 departments
 - We have 13 districts
 - We have 130 posts
- We serve in every community in the state

Where Virginia Stands



Virginia has about 720,000 veterans

If 10% are VFW eligible, we could have 72,000 members.

We only have 32,624 members as of this year.

Fundamentals of membership



- The 3 R's of membership
 - Retain current members
 - Reinstate former members
 - Recruit new members

Fundamentals of membership (Cont.)



- Retaining current annual members
 - Email
 - Phone Calls
 - Note in the newsletter
 - Knock on their door
 - Mail them a letter
 - Engage on social media
 - Scan your followers for lapsed members

Fundamentals of membership (Cont.)



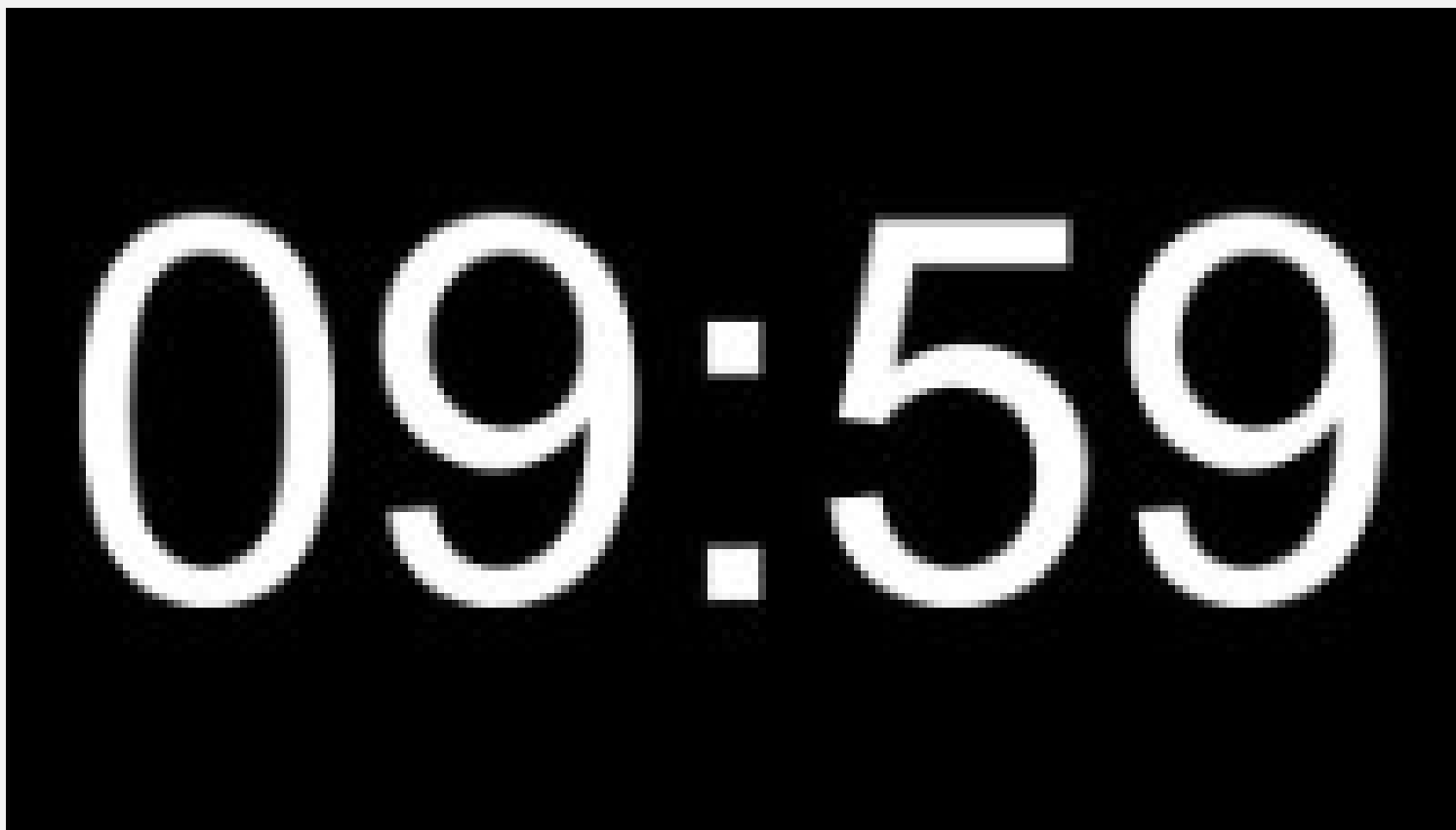
- Reinstatement of former members (lapsed at least 2 years)
 - Similar to Renewing members, but a much larger pool to work with.
 - This could include unpaid At-Large members, members who moved here from other states, etc.

Fundamentals of membership (Cont.)



- The 3 R's put into perspective
 - **Retain** over 7,200 annual members
 - We will likely keep about 70% of this amount (plus 24,600 life members)
 - **Reinstate** as many as 9,200 unpaid members
 - We have the phone number/address for many of this number
 - **Recruit** new members to fill the gap
- **NEVER say there is no one to recruit****

Break for 10 minutes





The Art of Recruiting

The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



Step 1: Planning the Event

The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- The Factors to Consider for Recruiting:
 - When (Weekend vs. Weekday)
 - Where (The actual store/location)
 - Weather (Are we inside or outside?)

The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Who should work the event?
 - At least one person is the “recruiter”
 - People training to be recruiters
 - Other members show the face of the post and attract people similar to them
 - But...not too many (2-3 people per table)
 - Auxiliary can help also!

The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- **What should you put on the recruiting table?**
 - VFW Talking Points, Action Corps Weekly, Magazine
 - Post information (newsletter, etc.)
 - Generic brochures
 - Unpaid membership roster
 - APPLICATIONS!!!
 - Roster of Posts
 - Eligibility requirements



Example 1 of how this actually works

You are planning your event. Knowing what we recommend to put on your table and who to bring, how do you relate to all of this information?

The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



Step 2: Recruiting the veteran

The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Tips of the trade
 - Read the person and identify the Veteran
 - Ballcaps, bumper stickers, shirts, boots
 - The 8 words to greet a veteran
 - “Are you a veteran? Where did you serve?”
 - Formal vs. Informal recruiting
 - We are always recruiters

The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Tips of the trade (Cont.)
 - Tell your story: In the military and VFW
 - There is the purpose of the VFW but also what makes it personal for you
 - The things people say: questions, comments and concerns
 - Don't get sidetracked
 - Bring it back to closing the deal

Step 3: Close the Deal and Complete the Application

The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Personal information
 - Needs to be fully completed
 - Get a good email and phone number (helps with the Action Corps sign-ups)
 - Try to get a physical address, not just a P.O. Box
 - We **DO NOT** need the social security number

The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Military information
 - Military information needs to be aligned with VFW eligibility requirements
 - Get the dates of service (month and year)
 - Medal, ribbon, badge, pay, etc. that makes them eligible
 - Geographic location (major ocean for SSBN Sailors)

The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Type of membership, payment, Post to join
 - Life membership payment
 - In full (Debit, Credit, Cash, Check)
 - Payment plan
 - 12 months, no invoices mailed, no cash
 - THEY MUST HAVE DEBIT/CREDIT CARD AND EMAIL ADDRESS WHEN YOU RECRUIT THEM
 - Annual membership
 - The Post they want to join
 - The one closest to them, your Post, or the At-Large Post (Post 15048)

The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Recruiter credit, former member number, signatures, and the stub
 - List your name and member number for recruiter credit
 - If a former member with their card, get the number
 - Possibly two signatures
 - All sign on the back
 - Those with a credit/debit card sign the end
 - Complete the stub and give it as their receipt and temporary membership card

The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Transferring and reinstated members
 - Complete the application mostly the same
 - No payments for Life Member transfers
 - If an annual member or expired pitch life membership
 - If they stay annual, get a payment if they expire before June 30th 2022 so you do not have to chase them down again.
 - If reinstated, get your member number on it for credit
 - No recruiter credit for transferring members
 - Complete the portion on the back about transferring
 - Have them sign

The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Current member who just wants to renew in a Post in **Virginia** but **NOT** transfer.
 - Complete the application just the same as a new member
 - Get their member number if they have their card
 - Pitch life membership
 - Get a payment (check your roster to ensure amount)
 - No recruiter credit for transferring members
 - Have them sign
 - Send it to the Post they belong to or State HQs for us to verify the membership and process

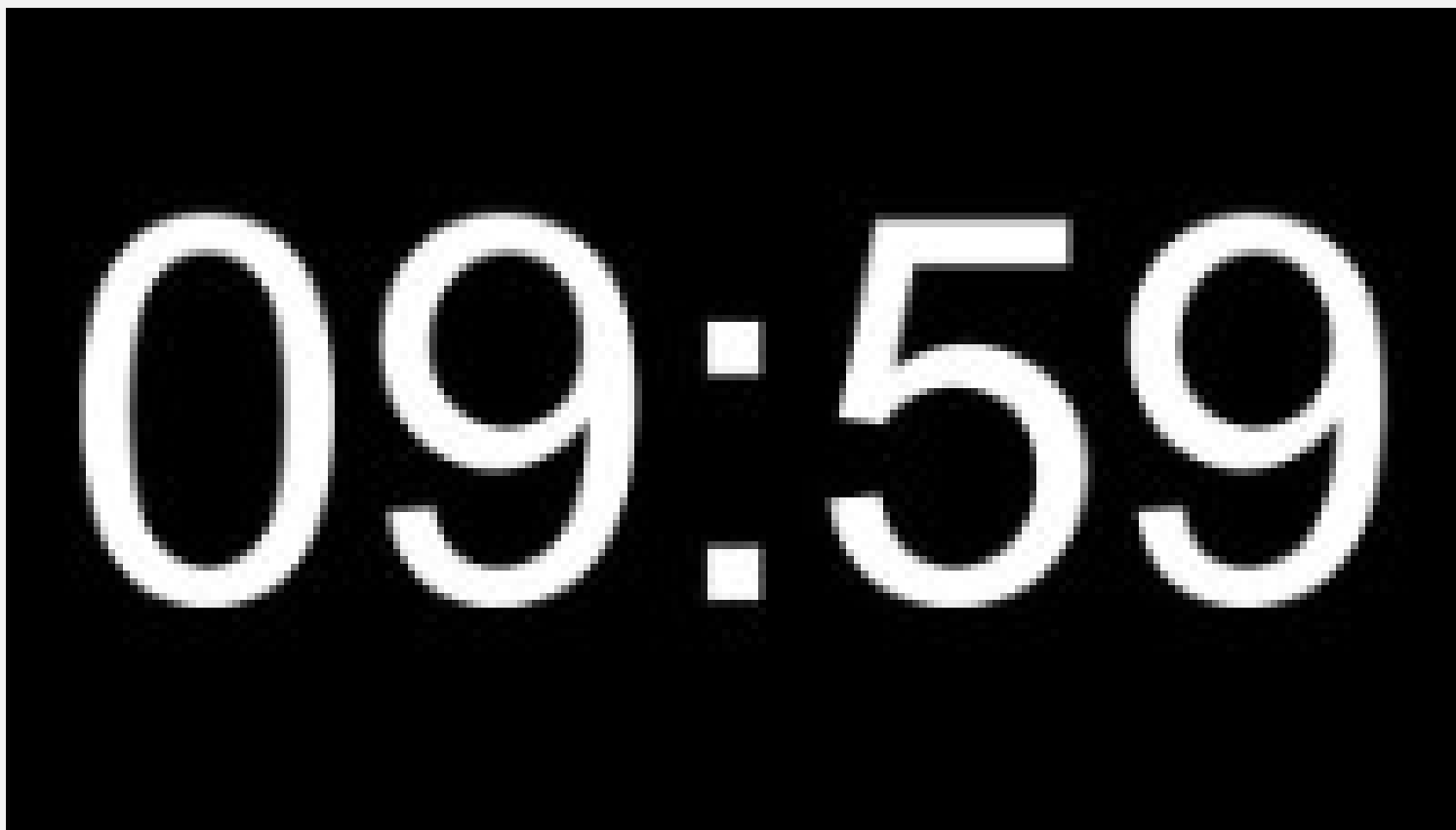
Step 4: Follow-up with the new member

The Art of Recruiting (Cont.)



- Make them feel welcomed and wanted
 - Call/email/send a letter to the person welcoming them and invite them to the meeting
 - Arrange a carpool if needed
 - The National “Welcome Aboard” package
 - The National “Welcome Aboard” email
 - Introduce their spouses to the Auxiliary

Break for 10 minutes

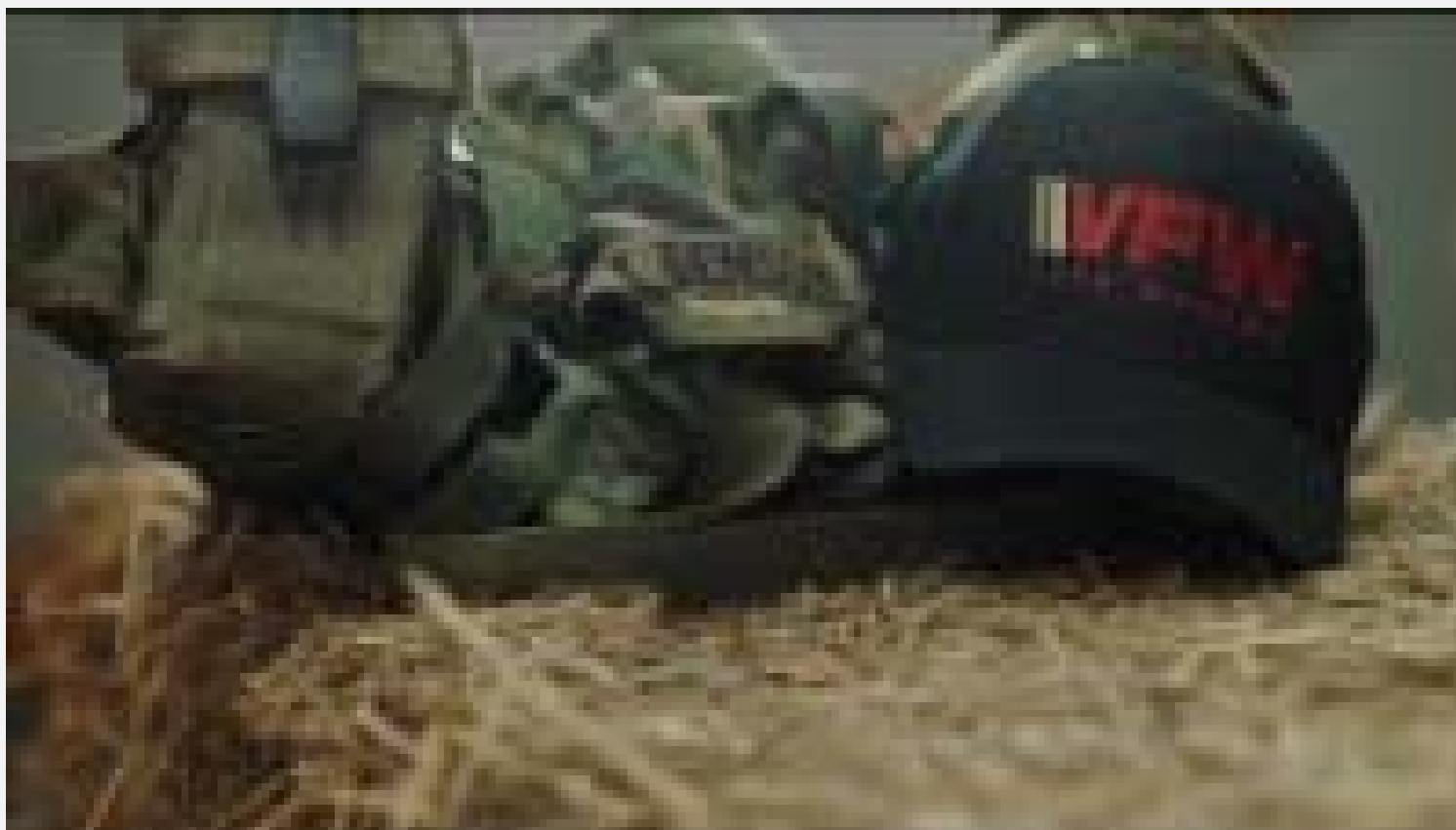




Example 2 of how this actually works

You have heard a lot today. What is something new you learned? What is something you do when recruiting that helps get new members?

Video: Lifetime Membership



Additional tools and information

Additional Tools and Information (Cont.)



- The QM Tools (OMS) Information
 - Your Post QM can pull unpaid and those soon to expire for your own Post
 - Host a small group at the Post and call members
 - It works!!!

Additional Tools and Information (Cont.)



- Other ways State HQ can use IT to help you:
 - EXCEL spreadsheets by zip code, post, etc.
 - State-wide email blasts
 - At-Large members: former (expired) members

Additional Tools and Information (Cont.)



- Advertising/PR items free to you
 - Print ads
 - Radio commercials
 - Videos
 - “Ad Slicks” for print
 - www.vfw.org (Department resources ---> promotional tools)
 - Local news and radio may run ads or interviews for free, some charge

Additional Tools and Information (Cont.)



- Membership Monday Webinars
 - Hosted by National HQs Membership Department
 - Held each month live via Zoom Meeting
 - Get Zoom link from OMS Notification (your Post QM can help with this)
 - Webinars are recorded and placed on vfw.org under, Membership Recruiting & Retention as well as the VFW Membership Facebook page

Additional Tools and Information (Cont.)



- Ordering supplies online
 - Use the online order form to order membership materials found on vfw.org
 - Most items free from National, but shipping is a cost
 - A kit, with a carrying bag, is an option to buy

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EASY ONLINE ORDERING!

Instead of waiting for your order to be mailed or faxed in, make sure your Post gets the materials you need quickly and efficiently by ordering your materials online!

Just follow these steps!



1) Go to www.vfw.org and click the "LOGIN" link in the upper right corner. Sign in when prompted.

If you have not yet created an account on the website, follow the "Sign Up With TroopID" link to do so!

2) Under "Membership Quick Links", select the Online Membership System (OMS) option.

3) On the left side of the page, you will see an option for Membership Order Form - click that link.

You'll see that it automatically enters your mailing information! If you need your materials shipped elsewhere, go ahead and enter the new address. (This won't affect your address on file in our records)

4) Use the dropdown list to indicate which items you need. It will automatically calculate the cost of items and shipping. When you're finished, click SUBMIT and it will take you to a billing page if there are any charges.

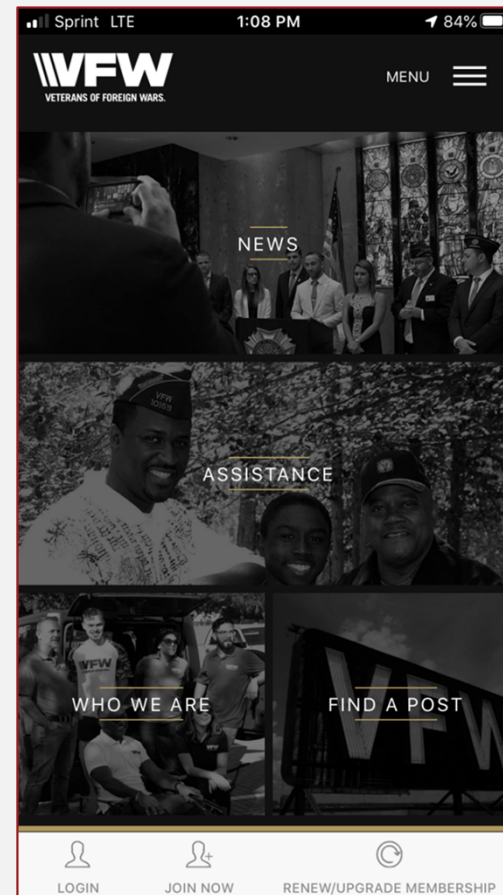
Once done, you'll receive an email confirmation and your order will be processed and sent out!

IT'S THAT EASY!

Additional Tools and Information (Cont.)



- Mobile App
 - The VFW app has is available in the Apple App Store and Google Play



Additional Tools and Information (Cont.)



In 2020, we launched a new mobile recruiting form that will allow VFW members to recruit a new member for the Department based on their address.

In this form, we included new features to modernize the experience and enable a faster experience to collect data. **These features include the use of Credit Card and Driver's License scanning (making info easy to gather), clickable graphics of medals and campaigns, and a multi-step process to organize data collection in a wizard format. The Post QM gets a notification before the member is in the Post officially.**

A screenshot of a mobile application interface for VFW. The top of the screen shows the time 2:58, signal strength, Wi-Fi, and battery icons. Below the status bar is the VFW logo and the text "VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS." followed by "BACK" and "MENU" options. The main content area features a header image of a group of people. Below the image is a section titled "Personal Info." with a "Scan Driver's License" button that has a blue arrow pointing to it. Below this are input fields for "First Name", "MI", "Last Name", "Suffix", and "Address". At the bottom of the screen is a navigation bar with four icons and labels: "MY VFW", "RECRUIT", "DIGITAL CARD", and "RENEW/UPGRADE".

Additional Tools and Information (Cont.)



New Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/VFWmembershipHQ>



Setting goals and achieving success

Setting Goals and Achieving Success (Cont.)



- All-American and All-State plans as a guide
 - Can help a Post achieve great success
 - We have checklists on www.vfwva.org to make it easier

Setting Goals and Achieving Success (Cont.)



- All-American
 - There are several parts to the plan with some of them being ones you can accomplish while recruiting.
 - Doing things through the year make it easier to accomplish it all.
 - Make 100% plus 1 member
 - Partner with other groups at least twice
 - Post pictures on your Post's Facebook account

Setting Goals and Achieving Success (Cont.)



Major changes are seen this year. This course does not cover it all as you will get informed in your regular SOI. You should read the plan in depth to learn more about it. The plan is on the State HQs website, www.vfwva.org, and is available now.

Setting Goals and Achieving Success (Cont.)



- All-State program requirements for Virginia point in one direction

Our overall goal is to STRENGTHEN membership and program participation

- For membership that means...
 - More Lifetime Members
 - More Annual Members converting to be Lifetime Members
 - Stronger rates of Annual Members renewing
 - More Legacy Lifetime Memberships

Setting Goals and Achieving Success (Cont.)



The benchmarks for statewide membership though the year are:

September 15, 2021: 75%

December 30, 2021: 90%

March 30, 2022: 95%

May 9, 2022: 100%

June 30, 2022: 105%

Incentives and Special Awards

Incentives and Special Awards



- There are several trips from National HQs for recruiting
- The include:
 - The D.C. Legislative Conference
 - Kansas City (National HQs)
 - National Convention
- See the All-American plan for more details

Incentives and Special Awards



- There are several other awards from National HQs for recruiting
- They include:
 - Lapel pins for recruiting 5,10, and 15 members
 - CIC coin and citation for recruiting 25 members
 - VFW CIC Backpack at 50 members
 - Medallion set for 75 members
 - Century Recruiter Cap or VFW Store credit for 100 members
 - \$250 VFW Store credit or 150 members

Incentives and Special Awards



- Legacy Life Membership Award
 - When Posts have 25, 50, and 75 Legacy Life Members, they receive a special proclamation.
 - Post with 100 Legacy Life Members by July 1, 2022 receive a special proclamation and the Post receives a \$1,000 stipend to attend the National Convention for either the Post Commander or a Post representative.

Incentives and Special Awards



COMMANDER'S CHALLENGE

Commander-in-Chief Fritz Mihelcic has issued a challenge to all VFW Posts for the month of September 2021!

We're a few months into the new membership year, and it's time to really put our focus on membership growth. We want this year to be a benchmark year when it comes to membership, and passing 100% in membership should be the goal that each and every Post, District, and Department strives for.

To encourage this, for the month of September 2021, \$500 will be awarded to the top Post in each membership division based on recruiting, renewing, and reinstating the most Annual members. This will count New members, Annual members who renew their dues, and lapsed members who pay their Annual dues to the Post. We want our Posts out there recruiting, retaining, and recovering members!

We know that a strong membership base is how we will move forward as an organization, because

THE TIME IS NOW!

Membership totals will be based on close-of-business totals on August 31st to September 30th.



State awards for Posts



- **Several awards are based on your Virginia membership categories (different from All-American membership divisions)**
 - Category A: 10-75 members
 - Category B: 76-150 members
 - Category C: 151-250 members
 - Category D: 251-500 members
 - Category E: 501 or more members



State awards for Posts (Cont.)

Posts, in each category, may win the following...

- 1) Plaque for the Post with the largest numeric increase as of May 13, 2022
- 2) \$200 to the Post with the largest increase in Lifetime Membership (minimum of 3 members) as of May 13, 2022
- 3) Plaque for Posts who renew all annual members (showing 100% retention on the National MEMSTATS report) by May 13, 2022



State awards for Posts (Cont.)

Posts, in each category, may win the following...

- 4) Lifetime Membership Drawings: 4 drawings for an annual member in the Post to become a Lifetime Member based on the membership as follows:
 - a) September 24, 2021 for Posts who achieve at least 75% by that date
 - b) October 29, 2021 for Posts who achieve at least 85% by that date
 - c) January 28, 2022 for Posts who achieve at least 95% by that date
 - d) March 25, 2022 for Posts who achieve at least 100% by that date



State awards for Posts (Cont.)

Posts, in each category, may win the following...

- 5) Post Commander and Quartermaster receive pins and coffee mugs if the Post
make 100% by May 13, 2022
- 6) \$200 to the Post with the largest increase in Legacy Life Membership as of
May 13, 2022

State awards for individuals



- Individuals may win the following awards:
 - Annual members who recruit at least 5 members get a portion of your dues reimbursed and your name in a drawing for a lifetime membership
 - Lifetime members who recruit at least 5 members are entered into a Legacy Lifetime Membership raffle for a one-step promotion (or \$200 if already a Gold Legacy Lifetime Member)
 - All members who recruit at least 5 members are entered into a drawing for a trip to attend the National Convention (airfare/mileage & stipend).

State awards for individuals (Cont.)



- Individuals may win the following awards:
 - “Recruiter of the Year” gets \$300 to attend the state convention, a special VFW cap, a nametag, and a citation
 - Additional awards at the following levels:
 - 20 Members: Pen and keychain set
 - 25 Members: State Commander’s Challenger Coin
 - 50 Members: Special VFW cap and citation
 - 75 Members: State Commander’s jacket



Membership Is
Here To Help



Membership/Life Membership Committee:

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Questions?



**EVERYTHING WE DO,
WE DO FOR VETERANS.**

The VFW logo, consisting of the letters "VFW" in red with three vertical bars to the left, and the text "VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS." below it.