



Since its inception in 2022 the “Be The One” initiative has been a “game changer” for the American Legion Family working together to reduce the occurrence of suicide in veterans. The goal is to have individuals in every American Legion Post that are trained in Suicide Prevention.

On the average, over 17.6 deaths by suicide occurred per day in the U.S. during 2022. The “Be the One” initiative was inspired by a Navy Seal Dave Berkenfield and was officially adopted by the American Legion that year. The premise focused on a belief that is very simple: peer intervention at crucial times can save the life of just one veteran, thus “Be The One To Save One.” Since that year, the Legion Family has made this their mission.

The initiative proposals include:

- Remove the shame involved in getting mental health counseling for Veterans and changing the mindset that seeking help is an act of courage rather than one of weakness.
- Promote “Buddy Checks.”
- Create awareness the first day of each month as “Be the One” Day by hosting events and wearing promotional clothing.
- Promoting suicide prevention and providing training to members of the Legion Family.

In partnership with Columbia University, “Be The One” training sessions have adopted the use of the “Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale” to identify and assist Veterans in crisis. The program hopes to “Build Connections by Simply Asking.” “Just asking the questions can be a positive Action. When we ask someone how they’re doing, it signals that someone cares about them. This simple action promotes connectedness—a critical protective factor against suicide and other problems.”¹ There are questions on the severity rating scale that can be asked to put you on the path to see if someone needs help.

I have taken the “Be the One” training and highly recommend that you take it and make it available to your members. It could save a life.

<https://www.legion.org/advocacy/be-the-one>
<https://www.legion.org/information-center/news/be-the-one/2024/march/be-the-one-training-tackles-how-to-help-those-in-suicidal-crisis>

¹ “The Columbia Light House Project.” cssrs.columbia

Respectfully submitted by Deb Albers, Northwestern Division Chairman

National Security Resources

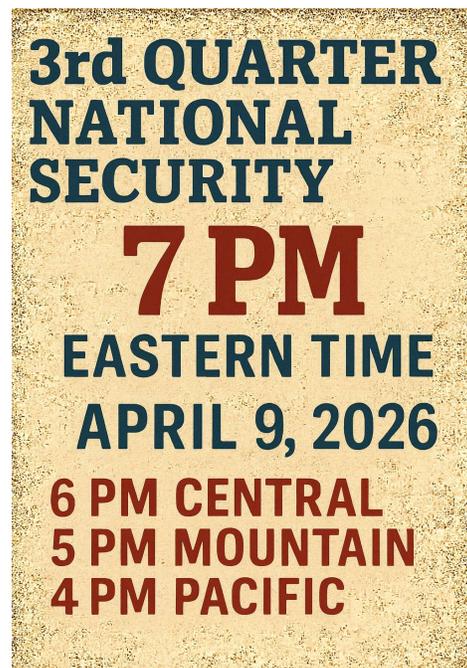
National Website & Program Engagement Plan – Log into your member portal and visit the National Security Page under Committees. Select the “Get Involved” button to access the Program Engagement Plan.

Facebook – Follow us on Facebook! Don’t forget to answer the questions...
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/915563745139663/>

National Security email address
nationalsecurity@ALAforVeterans.org

Save the Dates!

1st of Every Month – Be The One Day
May 15th – Department Year-End Reports Due
June 1st – Salute to Servicemember nominations Due



**3rd QUARTER
NATIONAL
SECURITY**
7 PM
EASTERN TIME
APRIL 9, 2026
6 PM CENTRAL
5 PM MOUNTAIN
4 PM PACIFIC

YEAR-END REPORTS

Due on May 15, 2026

By National Chairman, Norma Tramm

It is only March, but reports will be coming to department chairs very soon. We have some changes this year that should make things easier for you to apply for awards and complete your Year-end report.

The award form will have a box to check if you wish to use the report for both your department award submission as well as your year-end report. Just make sure that the entry is completed by 11:59 PM ET on May 15, 2026, if you wish to have it used for the year-end report. Once entered it will be sent to the division chair and the national chair. You will have your report completed and entered for a department award.

If you are only using the form for the department award, you will have until June 1, 2026, to complete the form.

If you are only sending a year-end report, you can submit a narrative using the following guidelines. The report should then be sent to both your division chair and the national chair by May 15, 2026. Please note - report submissions become the property of the American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters. Through submission of reports and award entries, the submitter grants nonexclusive reproduction and publication rights to the materials submitted and agrees to have their names and submission published for ALA use or commercial use without additional compensation or permission.

Spotlight on Service: Salute to Servicemembers Award

The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) annually honors enlisted servicemembers with the Salute to Servicemembers Award, recognizing their military excellence and community commitment. This award covers all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, Space Force, and National Guard/Reserve, with aims for full representation, including the first nomination from the Space Force.

Any ALA member, Unit, or Department can nominate a servicemember without Department approval. The nomination package must include:

- The online nomination form
- A narrative (up to 1,000 words) on the nominee's achievements and community impact
- A photo in uniform (preferably an official DoD photo)
- An endorsement from someone in their command group

Submissions are made through the ALA Membership Portal by selecting Committees → Awards and Reporting → Salute to Servicemembers. The deadline for nominations is **June 1, 2026**. Award recipients will be recognized at the ALA National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

Now is the time to reach out, reflect on the servicemembers in your community, and begin drafting your nominations. Together, we can ensure these heroes receive the recognition they truly deserve!

Submitted by National Vice-Chairman Jammie Phillips

YEAR-END REPORTING Continued

Report guidelines:

Department chairs' reports share the positive impact of our mission! They help us tell the world who we are, what we do, and why we matter. Just three simple steps are needed to add your part to our national success story:

1. Department reports are limited to 1,000 words.
2. Provide details/examples about the activity. Be sure to include specific information such as unit name and number.
3. Submit your department chair report to your division and national chair with photos by email by May 15.
4. Photos should be in a high-resolution format (at least 300 DPI) or sent using the high-resolution option on your smartphone. When emailing the photo, select "actual size" for attaching to the email.
 - When possible, include photos of actual events
 - The request for photos is important for our national chairs to highlight members serving our mission.

As part of your narrative report, please include answers to the following questions:

- How have you supported military servicemembers and/or their families?
- How have you collaborated with other like-minded organizations (ASYMCA, Blue Star Families, Quilts of Valor, USO, etc.) that also support servicemembers and their families?
- How have you raised awareness of POW/MIAs and the work being performed by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) in the search for missing personnel?
- How have you supported those families whose servicemembers made the ultimate sacrifice?
- What CERT training has your department accomplished this year?
- What did you do to promote the American Legion Auxiliary's Salute to Servicemember Award?

We are excited to hear about all the wonderful work that has been happening this year in your department to further the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary.