



2019-2020 Program Action Plan

JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

Chairman

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The Junior Activities program inspires active participation in members age 17 and under so that they will become engaging, productive members who will want to continue their American Legion Auxiliary membership into adulthood.

What Can You Do As A Unit Member?

There are a number of things members in your Unit can do.

- 1. Build your Junior Activities program one member at a time by giving Junior members a voice and an opportunity to participate.**
 - To build your Unit's Junior Activities program, ask to speak at your post's monthly meeting. Bring Junior members and membership applications with you. Personally invite Legion members to sign up their daughter, granddaughters and great-granddaughters. Older Junior members could speak about the value of their membership to the post.
 - Even if you only have one junior member, encourage her to organize a service project that your unit will participate in; it may attract other juniors to join.
 - Continually ask members to sign up their eligible daughters, granddaughters and great-granddaughters.
 - "Like" the national Junior Activities Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/alajuniors/>). Share the posts to your friends and encourage them to sign up their eligible Juniors.
 - Teach your Juniors about The American Legion Family's eligibility requirements.
 - Encourage your Juniors to invite their friends to attend ALA functions and volunteering opportunities, even if they are not eligible to join. • If you don't have Junior members of your own, be sure to support them anyway.
 - Offer to help the Junior Activities chairman and participate in their fundraisers.
 - If you are a unit officer or chairman, offer to mentor one of your unit's Juniors. Teach her about your role with the ALA. Help them understand what we do and why it matters.
 - Include information on Junior membership in renewal notices.



2. Engage Juniors in programs of the American Legion Auxiliary.

- Bring your Junior(s) to a meeting with you. Ask your unit president if the Junior(s) can lead the Pledge.
- Present any patches your Junior(s) earn at a unit meeting. They will be proud of their achievement and your fellow members will see what great work their Juniors are doing.
- Bring your Junior(s) to all appropriate ALA activities in which you participate. They can help distribute poppies, clean tables after dinners, etc.
- Older Junior members can mentor younger members by encouraging them to participate in Junior meetings, teaching them what they have learned about the ALA and our mission, and helping them earn their patches.

3. Make Junior meetings fun and informative.

- Junior members can help plan and lead the meeting to make it more fun and informative to their age group.
- Be flexible during your meetings. Robert's Rules can be intimidating and boring for Juniors; there will be plenty of time for them to learn. Keep an orderly meeting, but don't put too much emphasis on protocol.
- Plan activities that are fun, yet teach about the mission of the ALA. Remember, they are kids with short attention spans. Activities that involve light exercise are helpful to burn off their youthful energy. If you need ideas, ask a teacher; it might end up being a great win/win as you share ideas.
- Crafts are another good activity for Juniors. They can make poppy crafts for a fundraiser, patriotic decorations for your post or local veterans home, handmade cards to send to veterans at your local VA, etc.
- Have snacks and drinks on hand. Juniors could even make poppy cookies to snack on.
- Give your Juniors a place to display their crafts or artwork.
- Help your Junior Activities Chairman find places to distribute the cards and crafts made by Juniors.
- Offer to help during Junior meetings.

4. Promote and encourage Junior participation in the Patch Program.

- Encourage Juniors to participate in the Patch Program. Mentor Juniors and help them to acquire patches. The Patch Program activities are described later in this Program Action Plan.
- Hold a special meeting to help Juniors earn patches. Older Juniors can help the younger Juniors earn patches.
- Encourage use of electronic patches on Juniors' social media sites. Give Junior members the opportunity to work on requirements for patches at unit functions.



Junior Activities Reporting

It is extremely important that your Unit send a mid-year report and a year-end report. Due dates for reports will be in the full Program Action Plan. There are many reasons to report. (1) its like operating a business. Unless you have records, you can't be sure whether the business is going backward or forward. And Junior Activities in the American Legion Auxiliary as a whole has entered the realm of big business with annual expenditures in the millions. (2) Our membership has a right to know what is being done. Members can't support a program if they don't know what it is and what it accomplishes. (3) The general public also needs to know more about the real work of the American Legion Auxiliary. (4) The American Legion is chartered by congress, and the National Commander at the close of his term of office must report to Congress. The accuracy of his report depends on the individual reports filed by Posts, Units and Squadrons throughout the country.

Mid-Year Reports

Mid-Year Reports should reflect the program work of your unit and is intended as an opportunity for mid-year changes. Your department Junior Activities chairman is required to submit a narrative report to the division Junior Activities chairman, plus copy the national Junior Activities chairman by **December 21, 2019**. Please help her do her job by reporting your Unit's activities to her!

Year-End Annual Reports

Year-End Reports reflect the program work of your unit for the year. Be sure to include those activities reported in the Mid-Year Report. Your report may result in a national award for your unit if award requirements are met. Each department Junior Activities chairman is required to submit a narrative report to the division Junior Activities chairman, plus copy the national Junior Activities chairman by **May 1, 2020**.

Reporting does not have to be difficult or time-consuming. You can eMail your report or send it through the U.S. Post Office. There are some tips on some of the things you should include in your report on the following page.



What to Report

But what can a Unit write in their report? Don't make it complicated. Just write a sentence or two about any of the above activities or any other project that your Junior members were involved in. Use specific numbers of volunteers, hours, dollars spent and number of veterans/military servicemen/families served, if possible.

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

- How has participation in the Patch Program increased enthusiasm among the Juniors? Include the number of Junior members participating in the Patch Program.
- Did they participated in the Veterans History Project or veterans/military/families served? Or the Pocket Flag Project? Or in Operation Military Kids? Was anyone a VA volunteer?
- What are the various service projects in which Juniors were involved? Include the number and type of service projects. Has participation in service projects increased as the year has progressed?
- What type of volunteer hours did Junior members perform? Did they serve veterans families or military servicemen served? How many volunteers, how many served – and how many hours?
- Did Junior members assist others with technology? How many Juniors and how many hours?
- What ways did your senior members mentor the Junior members?
- How does your unit plan to increase Junior member participation in meetings and activities?
- Please include pictures and news articles showing Juniors involved in their activities.

Taking the time to share a favorite story about the positive impact you or someone you know has had on our mission is worth doing!

Reporting helps us tell the world **who we are, what we do, and why we matter**. Just three simple steps to add your part to our national success story!



Awards

- 1) Please follow instructions as you fill out the National Report and Awards Cover Sheet.
- 2) Provide details/examples about the activity as outlined in the award's materials and guidelines section.
- 3) Submit *as indicated in the Annual Supplement to the Programs Action Plan*.

Junior Member of the Year Award:

Engraved Plaque and an invitation to National Convention will be presented to: One Junior member, in recognition of her dedicated service, efforts, and talents.

Materials and guidelines: Entries must be typed and include the following information:

- Consideration of only Junior members in good standing for the current year.
- Outstanding contribution the Junior has made through an ALA program or project.
- Length of membership is not a criterion.
- Name, email address, and complete mailing address of nominee must accompany nomination.
- A narrative, typed essay not to exceed 500 words summarizing the nominee's accomplishments during the current administrative year.
- Please include pictures, clippings, scrapbooks, folders, etc., either electronically or via postal mail.
- Nomination must be signed by the candidate's unit Junior Activities advisor.
- On the National Report and Award Cover Sheet, include the name and contact information of the department Junior Activities chairman.

Most Outstanding Unit Junior Activities Program Award

Citation Plaque presented to one unit in each division (5).

Materials and guidelines:

- Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words.
- Include specific examples of how your Juniors worked the ALA mission.
- May include pictures, news articles, news releases, etc.

Programs and Activities for Junior Members

Junior Patch Program

Requirements, instructions, and patch forms for the Junior Patch Program are available on the Department website (www.okamlegionaux.org). Forms will also be available at your Fall and Spring District Conventions.

Junior members of the American Legion Auxiliary, as well as school-aged Sons of the American Legion members who often work alongside Juniors, may earn patches for activities in ALA programs, such as Poppy, Leadership, Americanism, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, and more. Participating in the Patch Program is a terrific way to be involved in learning about the Auxiliary and our Legion Family, volunteering in the community, and serving our country's veterans. See last page of this Program Action Plan for more details.



National Junior Meetings

The National Junior Meetings will be held at the same time as Mission Training. Dates and meeting sites can be found at www.ALAforVeterans.org/meetings. Juniors who attend one of the national Junior meetings will be eligible to vote and run for Honorary National Junior Division Vice President (HNJDVP). Each of the elected HNJDVPs will help conduct the national Junior meetings and will receive a \$2,000 scholarship.

Across the country, Junior members of the American Legion Auxiliary are building their leadership skills as they carry out our mission of helping veterans, military, and their families. When these talented teens and tweens come together at ALA national Junior meetings, there is sure to be lots of laughing, singing, dancing, and idea-sharing among these new friends who feel like family. Since the meetings are held on a Saturday, Juniors won't miss any school because the meeting is likely to be within driving distance. Any Junior attending a national Junior meeting is eligible to register to vote and run for Honorary National Junior Division Vice President. Ask for information from your Department Junior Activities Chairman.

VolunTeens

Teenage volunteers, called VolunTeens, follow in the footsteps of senior Auxiliary members by donating thousands of hours in service to our veterans. This special gift of time given by young people is one that ill or homebound veterans would normally have no opportunity to receive. From reading books to playing board games to writing letters to just spending time talking, VolunTeens provide veterans with a meaningful connection to today's young America. Junior members who volunteer at a VA facility and have completed 100 hours of regularly scheduled VAVS volunteer service during the calendar year, prior to September 1, are eligible for the \$20,000 James H. Parke Memorial Scholarship.

Honorary Unit Junior Officers

The Honorary Unit Junior Officers traditionally include president, vice president, chaplain, historian, secretary, and sergeant-at-arms, and are likely to follow the structure of the unit. Any honorary Junior officer elected is solely an honorary, courtesy position without any formal recognition and with no official or formal duties. An honorary Junior officer must be paying dues as a Junior member for the membership year in which she is installed. Honorary Junior officers are a great way for our Junior members to learn about the ALA and our mission. Juniors could be paired with the senior officers to learn the duties and responsibilities of that

Junior Projects

- Veterans History Project: www.loc.gov/vets
- VA Student Volunteer Program: www.volunteer.va.gov/StudentProgram.asp ; & www.volunteer.va.gov/ParkeScholarship.asp



Additional Resources You Can Use

- ALA Junior Activities Handbook available for free at www.ALAforVeterans.org, printed copies can be purchased through Emblem Sales at www.emblem.legion.org
- The national American Legion Auxiliary Junior Activities Facebook page, www.Facebook.com/ALAJuniors
- Junior Patch Program - information by level at www.ALAforVeterans.org
- ALA Unit Handbook – available for free at www.ALAforVeterans.org, printed copies can be purchased through Emblem Sales at www.emblem.legion.org
- Junior Leadership Course on www.ALAforVeterans.org
- Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation: A Guide for Volunteers on www.ALAforVeterans.org

Scholarships

Junior Member Loyalty Scholarship

The American Legion Auxiliary annually provides one Junior member in each of the five American Legion Auxiliary divisions with a \$3,000 Scholarship. For information, contact the Department Education Chairman or at www.alaforveterans.org/Scholarships/Junior-Member-Loyalty-Scholarship/

Spirit of Youth Scholarship for Junior Members

Five Spirit of Youth Scholarship for Junior Members in the amount of \$5,000 each are awarded; one scholarship in each division. For requirements and applications, contact the Department Education Chairman or at www.alaforveterans.org/Scholarships/Spirit-of-Youth-Scholarship-Fund/

Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship

Three \$5,000 scholarships are awarded annually per geographic division, for a total of 15 scholarships. These scholarships are for undergraduate study only at a four-year accredited college or university, and may be used for tuition, books, fees, room, and board. For information, contact the Department Education Chairman or at www.alaforveterans.org/Scholarships/Children-of-Warriors-National-Presidents--Scholarship/

Special 100th Anniversary History Program Fact

In the 1936-1937 year, under National President Scar W. Hahn, the Junior Program was launched. Junior membership grew from 29,000 to 40,000 during that following year due to the great work the Juniors were doing.



Junior Activities Patch Program

American Legion Auxiliary Junior members and Sons of The American Legion youth members can be active participants of the organization with the Patch Program. Regardless of where one lives, and whether she/he belongs to an active Junior group or Squadron, the Patch Program is a terrific way for Junior Auxiliary members and SAL youth members to learn about the Auxiliary and the Legion Family, to learn about patriotism, health, fitness and leadership and to serve their communities and veterans.

Each sheet explains the criteria and what must be accomplished in order to earn a specific patch. When the activities are completed, an adult or Senior member must sign the form to verify that the Junior or SAL youth has met the patch criteria. Mail the completed form to the address indicated below.

There are three levels of patch criteria:

- Red – Level 1: Kindergarten through 3rd grade**
- Gold – Level 2: 4th grade through 8th grade**
- Blue – Level 3: 9th grade through 12th grade (or 18 years old)**

In each level, the following patches can be earned:

Red – Level 1: Grades K-3

Americanism
Community & Family Safety
Community Service
Education
Leadership
Membership
Physical Fitness
Poppy
Technology
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

Gold – Level 2: Grades 4-8

Americanism
Community & Family Safety
Community Service
Education
Leadership
Membership
Physical Fitness
Poppy
Star-Spangled Kids
Technology
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

Blue – Level 3: Grades 9-12

Americanism
Community Service
Education
History
Leadership
Membership
National Security
Physical Fitness
Poppy
Technology
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

If you would like copies of forms for one or more levels, please let me know.

You will also find the forms on the Department website (www.okamlegionaux.org).

Please send completed forms throughout the year to the following address:

If you have any questions, please call: Sue Heil, (405) 414-6416 or eMail: m.heil@juno.com