

GOOD OF THE LEGION

Items to share with your post members at your next post meeting or to display on the bulletin board.



Youth and Community Programs: Is Your Post Participating In Them?

I have dedicated this issue of the Good of the Legion to all of our Youth and Community programs. It is packed full of information. Please read it, go to our website, and research each program to see which one fits best within your Post. Feel free to contact me, your Zone Commander, your District Commander, or your Committee Chairman if you have any questions or concerns throughout the year. We are here to back you up and assist you.

The American Legion was founded on four pillars of service: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children and Youth. These pillars help guide and shape the work that the Legion does for America. Posts should strive to work together with their American Legion Family members and within their community to carry out these four pillars.

Most of our Legion programs fall under the Americanism pillar except Law Officer and Firefighter of the Year, which are under the National Security pillar. Most of our programs cost nothing but your time and effort to participate. Posts should challenge themselves each year to undertake one new project, program, or event they have not done in previous years. Do not rest on your laurels but strive to achieve more than you have in the past.

Take advantage of what you have to work with. Get the word out in the community and make this year a great year for The Department of Michigan, your Zone, your District, and your Post. The more the community knows about what we do, the more the community and the Post can help the community members.

The American Legion's youth programs have influenced millions of people over the years. Programs include competitive activities, college scholarships, educational contests, citizenship programs, support for needy children, and many local activities and programs.

For the Department, the Americanism includes the following programs:

- American Legion Baseball
- Youth scholarships– Brewer, Wilson, Samsung, Turner, Diamond, and Legacy scholarships
- American Legion Junior Shooting Sports
- Oratorical Contests and scholarships
- Boys State and Boys Nation
- Scouting– Eagle Scout of the Year, Square Knot Award
- Junior Law Cadet Enforcement program (Student Trooper)
- Teacher of the Year (community award)
- Law Officer of the Year (community award)
- Firefighter of the Year (community award)

Important: For Posts/Legionnaires that choose to volunteer or take on a youth program where you will be interacting with persons under the age of 18 years old, it is strongly suggested to complete a background check and abuse awareness training yearly. You can obtain more information regarding this by emailing legion@michiganlegion.org.

Please note that printed materials for all our programs will not be available until after our Fall Conference which is being held September 21-24, 2023.

SEPTEMBER 2023

Newsletter Highlights

Department Youth Programs

How to Raise Money for Youth Programs

Wilwin Scouting Flyer

Program Materials Order Form

Program Spotlight: National's Operation Comfort Warrior Program

Program Tentative Dates

Information brought to you by The American Legion Department of Michigan
Ashley Zimmer
Programs Coordinator
legion@michiganlegion.org

High School Oratorical Contest: \$1,000– \$25,000 Scholarships Available

The American Legion has sponsored the High School Oratorical Contest for 86 years. The purpose of the National High School Contest is to develop knowledge and appreciation of the Constitution of the United States. Participants in the American Legion Oratorical Contest develop leadership qualities, the ability to think and speak clearly and intelligently, and are better prepared to accept the duties and responsibilities, rights, and privileges of American citizenship.

The American Legion strongly encourages any High School student, grades 9th-12th, who is a United States citizen to participate because it is designated to create interest, foster appreciation, and gain a better understanding of the United States.

Required Speeches:

1. Prepared Speech related to the United States Constitution is required with a length of 8 to 10 minutes
2. "Assigned Topic" speech that must consume 3 to 5 minutes of the presenter's delivery. The Assigned Topic is drawn randomly from the list of assigned topics below at each stage of the Department Contest (District, Zone, and State). Full descriptions of each topic can be found on our website, www.legion.org/oratorical.

Assigned Topics for the 2023-24 Oratorical Contest:

- Amendment II
- Amendment XXIII
- Amendment XXV, Section 3
- Amendment V

A contestant must register with the American Legion, Department of Michigan by December 1, 2023.

Registration is done completely online at www.michiganlegion.org/oratorical.

Contest Timeline: Specific dates/locations for each District and Zone Contest will be provided at a later date.

- District Contest to be completed by January 21, 2024
- Zone Contest to be completed by February 4, 2024
- The State Contest will be held on March 2, 2024, and the location to be determined
- National Oratorical Contest May 17-19, 2024 in Hillsdale, MI at Hillsdale College.

Department Zone Contests Prizes: Zone Winner (5) receives \$500 and Zone runners-up (5) receive \$200.

Department Finals Scholarship Amounts:

- 1st place - \$2,000
- 2nd place - \$1,500
- 3rd place - \$1,000
- 4th place- \$1,000
- 5th place- \$1,000

National Contest Scholarships Amounts:

- 1st place - \$25,000
- 2nd place - \$22,500
- 3rd place - \$20,000

The Department winner will represent The Department of Michigan at the National level, which includes an all-expense paid trip with a chaperone to Hillsdale. The student will receive an additional cash scholarship award of \$1,500 for attending the National Contest.

For more information or to request printed materials contact the Programs Coordinator at legion@michiganlegion.org or call 517-220-2754.

EAGLE SCOUT OF THE YEAR: UP TO \$10,000 SCHOLARSHIP!

American Legion, Department of Michigan Scouting program sponsors over 65 troops, packs, and crews in our American Legion posts. The Legion's support for Boy Scouts of America began at the Legion's first national convention in 1919. This is natural for Legionnaires, who bring their service-learned skills and experiences as veterans to help build character and positive traits in our country's youth. Few other post activities generate more goodwill from the community.

Eagle Scout of the Year: Applications Due March 1, 2024

The American Legion, Department of Michigan honors the Eagle Scout of the Year at the department convention. The winner of the competition receives a \$1,000 scholarship and is advanced to the national competition.

The American Legion annually honors the Eagle Scout of the Year at the national convention. The winner of the competition receives a \$10,000 scholarship, and the three runners-up are each awarded \$2,500 scholarships.

Eagle Scout of the Year application and eligibility requirements can be found at www.michiganlegion.org/scouting.

American Legion Square Knot Award: Award for Legion Family Members

The American Legion Square Knot award is given to American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, and Sons of the American Legion members who volunteer for their post-scouting program. More information and application can be found at www.legion.org/scouting/award

This award is designed to recognize American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, or Sons of The American Legion members who are actively involved in the Scouting program. This award is not meant to be a selective or limited award, but one that is available to any American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, or Sons of The American Legion member who completes the requirements for the award. The award is meant to recognize the dedication and work required by an American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, or Sons of The American Legion member to assist in furthering the Scouting program in The American Legion.

Requirements are as follows: You must submit appropriate documentation (membership card, photocopies of course completion certificates, a narrative of accomplishments, etc.) in order to fully document the attainment of the requirements as outlined in sections A, B, C, and D of the checklist found on our website. Any application that is missing a requirement will be returned to the sender for correction and re-submission.

Documentation may be sent at any time, awards are given upon approval of the documentation submitted.

To learn more about our scouting program, please email: legion@michiganlegion.org or visit www.michiganlegion.org/scouting

\$500 TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD: NOMINATE A LOCAL TEACHER BY APRIL 1, 2024

K-12 Teachers are a national treasure; the job they have to educate our youth is at times challenging but very rewarding. Teachers help shape the future of our country by the lessons and principles they teach to the youth who sit day after day in their classroom. The American Legion knows some teachers teach about patriotism, Americanism, and the founding principles of the United States of America. We recognize that teachers spend their own money in the classroom and on their kids to make learning more enjoyable or easier to comprehend. Every year in The American Legion, the Department of Michigan recognizes five teachers working hard to impart those lessons to the children entrusted to them. We realize this is only a small gesture in the grand scheme of things, but we want to recognize them for their work.

Posts are asked to work with their local schools to help locate a teacher who fits the criteria to be nominated for this award. Nomination forms are available on our website and are due by April 1, 2024. Contact the Programs Coordinator, legion@michiganlegion.org, if you have any questions or need a hard copy of the nomination form mailed to you.

THE FREEDOM TORCH FALL OUTING

FREE EVENT FOR ALL SCOUTS

Activities:

- *Flag Etiquette
- *Flag Retirement
- *Honor Guard Training
- *Team Building Challenges
- *Rope Challenges
- *Obstacle Course
- *Games
- *Stories with Veterans

Free Camping Sites
Water Available
Generators OK

NO PETS ALLOWED



October 13-15, 2023

Register at www.wilwinlodge.com/scouting

Registration ends 10/6 & space is limited to 120 scouts

Wilwin Lodge at Cygnet Cove

3383 W. Hawley Rd, Custer MI

231-757-0140 231-742-6614

Wilwinscoutmaster1193@gmail.com



\$500 Department William D. & Jewell Brewer **And the \$1,000 Guy M. Wilson High School Scholarships**

The American Legion, Department of Michigan is offering twenty (20) scholarships to be awarded in the spring of 2024. There will be five (5) William D. and Jewell Brewer Scholarships in the amount of \$500 each and fifteen (15) Guy M. Wilson Scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each. Criteria for the two scholarships differ and will be available only to students who meet the eligibility requirements for that scholarship. Selections are based on academic performance, leadership quality, and basis of need.

- The William D. & Jewell Brewer \$500 Scholarship is available to high school seniors or college students (with no bachelor's degree) planning to or currently attending any nationally accredited college, university, or trade school in the Fall of 2024.
- The Guy M. Wilson \$1,000 Scholarship is available only to high school seniors who plan to attend any Michigan-accredited college, university, or trade school in the Fall of 2024.

The following qualifications apply to both scholarships:

- Applicant must be a Michigan resident.
- Must be a direct descendant (child, step-child, grandchild, or great-grandchild) of an honorably discharged veteran or active duty service member. Applicant must provide a copy of parent's, grandparent's, or great-grandparent's discharge papers (DD-214 or equivalent) showing entry and discharge dates from honorable active military service. Eligible service dates are December 7, 1941, to present date. Please black out any social security number on the discharge papers. For descendants of active duty military servicemembers, a copy of the servicemember's current military identification card is required.
- Applicant is required to have a G.P.A. of 2.5 or higher and must provide a copy of their most recent transcript of grades signed by a school official. (A school official can be a teacher, counselor, or principal).
- Applicant must have a financial need for the scholarship. The applicant is required to provide a copy of the parent's most recently filed Federal Tax Form 1040 (both sides of the form are needed showing adjusted gross income and signature). If the applicant filed a Federal Tax Form 1040 and is 100% independent from the parent's income, the applicant needs to provide a copy of their own Federal Tax Form 1040. Please black out any social security number on the required tax forms.

Both scholarships are a one-time award and are not renewable.

Students may apply for either one or both of the scholarships, however, only one scholarship will be awarded per applicant.

The completed application and accompanying documents must be received at Department Headquarters by 5:00 p.m. on January 22, 2024 (not postmarked by).

Applications are available online at www.michiganlegion.org/scholarships

Law and Order Program: Nominate A Local Law Officer and Firefighter

What is Law and Order?

In the Preamble to the American Legion Constitution, we pledge ourselves to ten purposes. Among them are:

- Uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America.
- Maintain Law and Order
- Foster and perpetuate 100% Americanism.
- Inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state, and nation.
- Promote peace and goodwill on earth.
- To this end, we strive to maintain law and order in our homes, Posts, and communities.

We honor the “unsung heroes” of our lives - the paid and unpaid Law Officers, Firefighters, EMT, and Paramedics - who give unselfishly of themselves every day so that we might have freedom and protection from harm. The hours that they give are often “above and beyond the call of duty.”

National Firefighter and Law Officer of The Year Awards

All nominations that are submitted to the Department must be a Michigan-certified Firefighter, EMT, Paramedic, or Law Enforcement Officer. The winner of Law Enforcement Officer and Firefighter of the Year at the Department level will be submitted to the National level.

Judging Criteria for Competition

Judges will be looking for someone who:

- Is well rounded.
- Exceeds, above and beyond, the duty requirements of his/her position.
- Exemplifies the virtues of professionalism and dedication.
- Demonstrates a distinct pattern of community service, on-duty or off-duty.
- Proves his/her personal dedication to societal security and protection.

The maximum points allowed are as follows:

- Community Service - 5 points
- Professional Career - 40 points
- Heroism - 20 points
- Letters of recognition, documentation, news clippings, etc. - 5 points

What Paperwork is Required for Competition?

To be eligible for competition, all Posts submitting a nomination for the Department level competition must have the following information sent to the Department Headquarters by January 8, 2024.

- Completed Cover Sheet.
- 5 x 7 photograph.
- Narrative:
 - No more than 6 pages (including letters of recommendation).
 - One-sided.
 - Describes his/her outstanding service.
- Backup documentation:
 - One-sided.
 - No more than 12 pages.
 - Must include his/her state or federal certification.
- Examples: Letters of support from city, county, and state officials, newspaper articles; other letters of commendation; citations, certificates of training, etc.

What can your Post do to support the Law and Order Program?

Each Post should hold an Awards Ceremony (and Dinner, if possible) to honor the Law Enforcement, Firefighter, EMT, and Paramedic personnel, and their families, who live and work in your community. These professionals may be paid or volunteer employees. If there are several Posts in the area, consider having a joint ceremony. You can give a certificate to each honoree or ask the Chief or co-workers of each agency to select their outstanding professional to receive your certificate, plaque, or other awards.

If your Post already holds a ceremony for a local Law or Firefighter of the Year please pass their nomination on to Department!

Nomination forms are available now for both Law Officer and Firefighter of the Year. Visit www.legion.org/lawofficer or www.legion.org/firefighter to obtain a copy.

Junior Shooting Sports: \$1,000 to \$5,000 Scholarships Available

The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program is a gun safety education and marksmanship program that encompasses safety, education, enjoyment, and competition. Shooters use the .177 caliber air rifle. Both males and females can participate through Legion sponsorship; disabled youth are encouraged to join, as competitive shooting is a sport that creates an equal playing field for all competitors. Contact your local Legion post, Sons of The American Legion squadron, or Auxiliary unit for information about affiliating as a club or individual.

Air Rifle Competition

The annual 3-Position Junior Air Rifle National Championship is a tournament that begins with postal matches. State and regional champions are determined and advance to a qualification round (also a postal match) to determine the athletes who will earn expense-paid trips to compete in the national championship. The national championship is a shoulder-to-shoulder match held each July at the USA Shooting Range facilities at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs(subject to change).

This year the JSSP National Championship will be held at a location and time to be determined at a later date, with the top 15 qualifying marksmanship winners in both the Precision and the Sporter Events. The event and the results will be on the National website for review and follow-up.

Categories

Competitors may participate in only one of two categories in the tournament based on the type of rifle they wish to use. The categories are Precision Air Rifle and Sporter Air Rifle.

Sponsorship

Entry in the tournament is limited to individual shooters or teams who are active members of a Junior Shooting Club sponsored by a Michigan American Legion Post.

Scholarships Available (in each category):

- First Place Scholarship Winner of \$5,000
- Runner Up Scholarship of \$1,000.

Age Limits

All contestants must be at least 14 and under 18 as of January 1 of the competition year.

Contestants must be enrolled in a junior or senior high school or be a high school graduate of that competition year.

Other Limitations:

Each competitor may fire on only one set of “official match targets” during the state championship phase of the tournament. A shooter is ineligible to compete in the National Championship in successive years UNLESS they are moving from Sporter to Precision Category.

Registration: Opens September 1, 2023

Registration is done completely online at www.legion.org/jssp-club-registration.

Key dates for this program are established by National and won't be available until late September.

For more information on how to start a team visit www.michiganlegion.org/juniorshooting or

www.legion.org/shooting/resources. You can also email legion@michiganlegion.org to obtain printed materials including the official match program for 2023-2024.

Student Trooper Program: \$500– \$1,000 Scholarships Available to Participants

Every year, high school students in the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades are selected to participate in the Youth Law Cadet Law Enforcement Program. The program's purpose is to allow male and female students to explore and experience the various aspects of law enforcement training. Students participate in daily calisthenics and receive training in firearms, self-defense, fingerprinting, K-9 handling, accident and criminal investigation, and state patrol car driving. Students stay at the Michigan State Police Training Academy in Lansing.

Program Dates: June 23-28, 2024

Application Deadline: May 10, 2024

Cost: \$475 per student, usually sponsored by an American Legion Post/Squadron/Unit or other civic organization.

Eligibility: Any boy or girl meeting the following standards who is going into 10th, 11th, or 12th grade in the Fall of 2023, and is a Michigan resident, is eligible to be considered for selection into the Student Trooper Program:

- in good health and able to participate in physical activities;
- possess a positive attitude and display respect for law enforcement;
- average or above average academic record; 2.5 GPA and above; and
- possess a level 2 driver's license (preferred, not required)

Scholarships: Four Scholarship Available

- \$500 Academic Scholarship
- \$500 Marksmanship Scholarship
- \$500 Orator Scholarship
- \$1,000 Student Trooper of the Year Scholarship

**Additional information on Student Trooper can be found at www.michiganlegion.org/trooper*

Boys State: A Civic Leadership Program

The American Legion Boys State program is a non-partisan, non-political mock government exercise. At Boys State, participants learn citizens' rights, privileges, and responsibilities. Its purpose is to awaken within the youth of our nation a sincere conviction that a well-informed, intelligent, and involved citizenry is vitally needed to protect and preserve our American traditions. The training is objective and modeled on the city, county, and state government structures.

Boys State grows out of the American Legion's faith in our young people and its firm belief that the future leaders of our country should have the tools necessary to keep it: a deep appreciation of active citizenship, an understanding of democracy, familiarity with our American form of government, and the discernment to select – and to be – productive leaders.

When: June TBD, 2024

Where: Grand Valley State University- Allendale, MI (Tentative)

Eligibility: Male high school juniors going into their senior year in the fall of 2024

Application Deadline: May 1, 2024

Cost (tentative): \$25 Delegate Application Fee plus \$400 Sponsor Fee; total \$425

Sponsor: A sponsor can be an American Legion Post, Son of the American Legion Squadron, an American Legion Auxiliary Unit, but it can also be the boy's parents, a business owner, a school, or another organization like the Elks, Knights of Columbus, or a Moose club.

Scholarships: Samsung Scholarship: limited to students between their junior and senior years of high school who attend the current session of either an American Legion Boys State or American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program and are a direct descendant of a wartime U.S. military veteran who served on active duty during at least one of the periods of war officially designated as eligibility dates for American Legion membership. Up to \$10,000 scholarship awarded.

Additional Information:

Visit www.michiganboysstate.org for additional information on our Boys State Program or to download the application in early October. Questions can be directed to Ashley Zimmer, 517-220-2754 or legion@michiganlegion.org.

How to Raise Funds to Sponsor a Student for Boys State and Student Trooper

We realize that the cost of Boys State and Student Trooper can be problematic for some Posts to come up with, especially when they are \$400 and \$475 for each student. A little pre-planning can solve the financial problems for the future. You may find that this year the Post is willing, but the bank account is low. How do you get the necessary funds for THIS year? Here is a list of successful ideas used by other Posts to raise funds:

Post funds - Boys State and Student Trooper should be budget items. Make it a practice to include it in Program Expenditures.

SAL & 40/8 Funds - Contact them to obtain sponsorship for a delegate or partial delegate. If you don't ask, they don't volunteer.

Special fund-raising events - Dinners, a fish fry, dances, golf or fishing tournaments, bowl-a-ton, bingo games earmarked for Boys State/Student Trooper, card parties, white elephant auctions, bake sales, garage sales, etc.

Booster Club - Donations by individuals in return for names posted in your Post Home or Post Newsletter.

Outside donors - Moose, Elks, Rotary, Kiwanis, Optimist, Lions, Knights of Columbus, etc. Many of our Posts enlist the help of community service organizations. Posts collect money from other businesses, deposit it into the Post account, and then write a check to the Michigan American Legion Foundation for either Boys State or Student Trooper.

Appeal for donations in the post - Set up a donation jar in the lounge or game room. Circulate the donation jar at all Post functions.

The possibilities are limited only by imagination and the willingness to work!

American Legion Baseball: \$500 Scholarship and How to Start a Team

The American Legion Baseball Program is the largest, oldest, and most respected youth baseball program in the United States. Regularly scouted by colleges and professional teams, over half of today's Major League players are graduates of the Legion Baseball Program, with 82 being members of the MLB Hall of Fame. Legion Baseball is also well-grounded in essential values instead of athletic ability alone. The emphasis is on teamwork, loyalty, respect, personal growth/maturity, Americanism, and community strength through service/volunteerism. Although not all-inclusive, the following is a general guide for those wishing to form a new American Legion Baseball team within Michigan.

Tips For Starting a Team:

- All teams should have the objective of winning the World Series. The competition and teamwork to achieve this goal are what build character.
- Decide Upon a Team Name and a Division of Competition (Senior or Junior, Class A or Class AA)
- Recruit players committed to playing on your Legion team who share the objective of winning the World Series.
- Seven-inning games are played in the 8 team double elimination championship tournaments at the national level. Therefore, the team must have a deep pitching staff to win the Regional and World Series games.
- Make Arrangements for a Home Field; Plan Player Registration and tryouts; Schedule Games and enter Tournaments. Try to have a maximum of 18 players on your team to increase the number of youths we support through this great program. If a team has less than 12 players available to play during the playoffs, the team will be disqualified from further play.
- Try to maximize the number of games played by your team. There is no reason why a Legion baseball team can't play in another league; however, once the Legion playoffs begin, the Legion team must be committed to playing in the Legion playoffs.
- It doesn't have to cost the Post anything to sponsor a Legion baseball team. However, it is traditional that the sponsoring Post pays for the team registration fee and insurance.
- Line Up Your Coaching staff. Work with your coach to establish a budget and develop a plan to raise money to fund the team's expenses. It is permissible for the players to contribute financially to the program.
- Baseball has many rules. Integrity in the program is maintained by strictly and fairly enforcing the rules. Therefore, read and know the rules. The National Rule Book and Department (State) Rule Book will be available online after January
- Start early. Start now. Please pay attention to the timeline/deadline information outlined on our website in January. If you have any questions, ask your local Baseball Chairman.
- Register Your Team via the National Registration System at www.legion.baseball.org

Scholarships for Baseball:

\$500 Turner Scholarship (Due July 1, 2024): Application available on michiganlegion.org/baseball

In memory of Robert (Bob) Turner, born in 1922 in Woodsfield, OH, but moved with his family in 1935 to Crystal, MI. Bob served in the United States Army Air Corps during World War II from October 1942 until his honorable discharge in March 1946. In the mid-1970s, his oldest son Bryce played Michigan American Legion Baseball. Bob supported the team by attending many games and was a lifelong fan.

The Turner scholarship is available only to Michigan residents who have graduated from high school, are on a 2024 American Legion Baseball Team roster filed with the National Headquarters, and are planning to attend any nationally accredited college or university. The scholarship award amount is \$500. The winner will be presented with a plaque from the Turner family at the State Baseball Tournament.

National's Diamond Baseball \$2,500 Scholarship (Due July 15, 2024): Application available at legion.org/scholarships/baseball.

Department Baseball Scholarship Winners receive \$500. Each certified Department Baseball scholarship winner shall be considered for The American Legion All-Academic Team sponsored by Diamond Sports annually. Eight players selected by a scholarship selection committee at The American Legion World Series will receive an additional \$2,500. A ninth player, selected as the most outstanding member of the All-Academic Team, will be awarded an additional \$5,000 scholarship. You can find additional information/resources on our website, www.michiganlegion.org/baseball.

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN
2023-2024 PROGRAMS AND SCHOLARSHIPS MATERIALS

BROCHURES/FLYERS: (200 Maximum each*)

- ☐ Boys State Brochure _____ Quantity
☐ Boys State Flyers (2 versions) _____ Quantity
☐ Student Trooper Flyer _____ Quantity
☐ Student Trooper Brochure _____ Quantity
☐ Baseball Booklet* _____ Quantity
☐ Oratorical Brochure _____ Quantity
☐ Jr. Shooting Sports _____ Quantity
☐ Scouting _____ Quantity
☐ Programs Brochure _____ Quantity

**Baseball booklet is limited to 1-10 copies, no exceptions*

APPLICATIONS: (No Limit-but be realistic)

- ☐ Boys State _____ Quantity
☐ Student Trooper _____ Quantity
☐ Brewer and Wilson Scholarship _____ Quantity
☐ Firefighter of the Year _____ Quantity
☐ Law Officer of the Year _____ Quantity
☐ Teacher of the Year _____ Quantity
☐ Eagle Scout of the Year _____ Quantity
☐ Turner Baseball Scholarship (Dept) _____ Quantity
☐ Diamond Baseball Scholarship (National) _____ Quantity

Please select one of the following options. (If you select the Email option you only need to fill out the name, Post/SAL #, and Email address section):

☐ Mail Supplies

☐ Email PDF Copies

Name (Required): _____ Post/SAL # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ - _____ - _____ Email Address: _____

RETURN THIS FORM TO:

Michigan American Legion
Attn: Programs Coordinator
212 N. Verlinden Ave. Ste. A
Lansing, MI 48915

*Please note that the Oratorical Applications are available to submit online at www.michiganlegion.org/oratorical.
Contact Ashley if you require assistance, 517-220-2754.*

NATIONAL'S OPERATION COMFORT WARRIOR PROGRAM

As the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have drawn to a close, many servicemembers left the battlefield only to be faced with a new fight: a struggle to overcome the mental and physical wounds suffered during deployment. Those with traumatic brain injury (TBI) or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) returned home in unprecedented numbers. In fact, the Army has estimated that up to 20 percent of the men and women who served in Afghanistan or Iraq have suffered a TBI.

Even when not at war, those in the military still face inherent dangers during training exercises and while performing other hazardous duties.

While the care at military hospitals and warrior transition units is extraordinary, The American Legion's Operation Comfort Warriors (OCW) program was created to provide "nonessentials" – items that help wounded warriors in their recovery but don't usually show up as a budget line on government spreadsheets. OCW is not a program designed to help with bills (mortgage, rent, utilities, or credit cards), car repairs, or home repairs.

How it Works

The American Legion is contacted by individuals, VA hospitals, warrior transition centers, and communities with needs for wounded, injured, disabled, or ill servicemembers. Once a need is identified, the items are ordered by the Legion and delivered in an expeditious manner. It's as simple as that. No red tape. All of OCW's administrative and marketing costs are paid from Legion membership dues, meaning that 100 percent of donated funds go directly to purchasing comfort items for the servicemembers.

How Recipients Benefit

Today, wounded warriors need various items to help in their recovery. Some patients might need loose-fitting sweatsuits to cover their healing wounds without adding pressure to burns sustained during a rocket attack. Others might need an iPod to help drown out the tinnitus that has plagued their ears since their vehicle struck an IED. Still, others might need fitness equipment to rebuild strength in their muscles.

From gift cards to patients at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center to electronics for Marines at Camp Pendleton, OCW represents the Legion's expression of gratitude. These gifts will not make our wounded warriors whole again, but they express the Legion's gratitude.

The program relies on funds, which are used to purchase items for the servicemembers.

How You Can Help

Most military medical centers are not equipped to store large quantities of care packages. The Legion strongly prefers monetary donations so that it can expedite the purchase and delivery of items to servicemembers.

Make a Donation: Visit legion.org/ocw to donate electronically, using your credit card. Checks may be mailed to The American Legion, Operation Comfort Warriors, PO Box 361626, Indianapolis, IN 46236.

Raise Money: A fundraiser such as a motorcycle run or a fish fry can be a great way to gather donations. A Legion post, Auxiliary unit, Sons of The American Legion squadron, Legion Riders chapter, church group, or other charitable organization could assist in sponsoring a fundraiser. Proceeds from a fundraising event can be donated to OCW via the website or mailing address listed above.

Get Additional Information: Check out legion.org/ocw for the latest news and information about the program.

Tentative Program Dates for the 2023-2024 Year:

December 2023

December 1st- Oratorical Registrations deadline
December TBD- JSSP First round postal match competition target set sales and registration closes.

January 2024

January 1st- Baseball registration opens on baseball.legion.org
January 8th- Law Officer of the Year submission deadline
January 8th- Firefighter of the Year submission deadline
January 21st- District Oratorical Contests deadline
January 22nd- Brewer/Wilson Scholarship submission deadline.

February 2024

February TBD- JSSP Targets due to the Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP) - must be postmarked on or before this date to be eligible for scoring.
February 4th- Zone Oratorical Contests deadline.
February TBD- JSSP Second round postal match competition targets mailed out by CMP.

March 2024

March 1st- Eagle Scout of the Year Award submission deadline
March 2nd- Oratorical State Contest at location the Michigan Historical Center in Lansing.

April 2024

April TBD- End of 2nd round postal match competition. Targets due to CMP - must be postmarked on or before this date to be eligible for scoring.
April 1st- Teacher of the Year submission deadline

May 2024

May 1st- Boys State Application submission deadline
May 10th- Student Trooper Application submission deadline
May 15th- Baseball insurance purchase deadline
May 17th-19th- National Oratorical Contest at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, MI

June 2024

June 1st- Final day for Baseball teams to register
June 23rd – 28th- Student Trooper Program
June TBD- Boys State program at TBD

July 2024

July 1st- Robert Turner Baseball Scholarship submission deadline
July 15th- Diamond Baseball Scholarship deadline
July TBD- JSSP American Legion National Championship (Individual Tournament)
*July TBD**-* Senior Baseball State Tournament
*July TBD**-* Junior Baseball State Tournament
(**baseball dates will be established in December 2023)

Department Program Mailings Via USPS and Email

All dates are approximate and may shift depending on my schedule of items that take priority.

September-

Mailing to all Posts, Squadrons, and schools with Program information with dates and deadlines.

October-December-

Monthly email reminders of program dates/deadlines to all Posts, Squadrons, and schools.

January-

Mailing to Posts/Squadrons with Boys State and Student Trooper information.
Email to schools regarding Boys State and Student Trooper.

February –

Email to school administrators with Boys State and Student Trooper deadline reminder.

March–

Email to school administrators with Boys State, Student Trooper, and Teacher of the Year deadline reminder.

April-

Final email reminder to School Admins, Post/SAL Commander, and Adjutants regarding Boys State and Student Trooper deadline.

Each Good of the Legion will have Program information included in it; this is just a list of planned mailings/emails that will go out during the year.