

March 24, 2023

Greetings,

We hope you enjoy this week's National Council Weekly Update on the pertinent happenings of your VFW departments.

### **Development**

This week's Development campaigns are listed below:

- March 16 Appeal:
  - March legislative email #1 to all Friends of Freedom.
- March 21 Appeal:
  - February lapsed reminder to nonmember donors.
- March 23 Appeal:
  - March legislative email #2 to all Friends of Freedom.
- March 24 Appeal:
  - March acquisition reminder package with pennies, coasters, and check.

Contact: VFW Development Director Kelly Jones, [KellyJones@vfw.org](mailto:KellyJones@vfw.org).

### **Human Resources**

- Positions actively recruiting for:
  - Major Gifts Officer – D.C.
  - Special Assistant for Veterans Health Policy – D.C.
  - Member Services Advisor – K.C.
  - Internet Marketing Campaign & Special Projects Coordinator – K.C.
  - Direct Mail Project Coordinator – K.C.

Contact: VFW Human Resources Director Sari Maple, [SMaple@vfw.org](mailto:SMaple@vfw.org).

### **Administrative Operations**

- There are currently 39 Posts under suspension; nine of which are new with two suspensions lifted since last week. We are working to institute three new Posts; we are working two Post consolidations; we are working one and have completed one charter revocation pursuant to Sections 201, 209 and 212 of the National Bylaws. The organization has 5,748 chartered Posts.
- Administrative Operations is engaged in 16 Article IX Disciplinary Actions, 16 administrative actions and four membership eligibility challenges.
- April is election report season. This is a reminder that the quickest and easiest way to submit election reports is by utilizing the Quartermaster's tools within the Online Membership System (OMS). Additionally, any Post that has not submitted an election report by June 1 is in arrears; will be prevented from voting at their respective Department convention; and will be subject to suspension.

Contact: VFW Administrative Operations Director Johnathan Duncan, [JDuncan@vfw.org](mailto:JDuncan@vfw.org).

### **Membership**

- Thanks to a \$5,000 grant from Comcast/NBCUniversal, we're able to offer an additional year of annual membership to female veterans joining as members-at-large through the [vfw.org/Join](http://vfw.org/Join) online application. When an application is filled out for a new member and they select an annual membership (\$45) and indicate female, they will get a pop-up asking them if they would like to receive a second year of membership at no charge, sponsored by Comcast/NBCUniversal. The \$5,000 grant will cover the cost for 111 new members, and the program runs until the grant money is exhausted. In the past, this usually occurred over a three-month period.
- Our spring lapsed member reactivation campaign is now active and we've reactivated 564 annual members and 177 Life members to date. Our year-end membership push will begin the first week of May.

Contact: VFW Membership Director Rick Butler, [RButler@vfw.org](mailto:RButler@vfw.org).

### **VFW Foundation**

- Plenty of funding remains available to VFW Posts, Districts, and their Auxiliaries through the VFW Foundation's grant programs. There are currently two opportunities available to Posts: (1) Community Support Grant; (2) Uniting to Combat Hunger (UTCH) Grant. One opportunity is available to Districts: District Corporate Partnership Grant.

Through these grants Posts and Districts can receive \$1,500 in reimbursement for various qualifying projects. The applications for these grants, which include guidelines, can be

accessed by visiting [vfw.org/Grants](http://vfw.org/Grants) and [vfw.org/UTCHGrant](http://vfw.org/UTCHGrant). Questions may be directed to VFW Foundation Grants Manager Jason Couch at [JCouch@vfw.org](mailto:JCouch@vfw.org).

- The VFW Foundation has secured a \$5,000 sponsorship from [GolfStatus.org](http://GolfStatus.org) which will fund a Sr. Vice training luncheon. [GolfStatus.org](http://GolfStatus.org) assists VFW Departments and Posts in event management for fundraising golf tournaments.
- The VFW Foundation has also received \$20,000 from Debera Barnes, VFW Auxiliary National District Council Member for Nevada, and Utah, in support of NVS.
- Due to scheduling conflicts with the Burger King Foundation, the Burger King/VFW Unmet Needs fundraising campaign will be conducted in May of this year. We continue to recruit BK franchisees across the U.S. to help raise much needed funding for the Unmet Needs program which provides financial aid grants to veterans, service members, and their families that are experiencing unexpected financial difficulties. A list of participating Burger King restaurants will be available beginning the week of April 17.

If you have any questions, please contact VFW Foundation Assistant Director Ben Vargas, [BVargas@vfw.org](mailto:BVargas@vfw.org).

Contact: VFW Foundation Director of Donor Relations Richard Freiburghouse, [RFreiburghouse@vfw.org](mailto:RFreiburghouse@vfw.org).

### **National Legislative Service**

- Sens. John Boozman (R-AR), Jon Tester (D-MT), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) have introduced the VFW-supported *Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding VA Benefits Act*, known as the *GUARD VA Benefits Act*. Reintroduced in this Congress, the bipartisan legislation would reinstate criminal penalties for unaccredited claim representatives who charge unauthorized fees for helping veterans file claims for VA disability compensation benefits. These companies are incentivized to operate outside of the law due to the lack of penalties. Cracking down on “claim sharks” is one of the VFW's top legislative priorities for the 118th Congress. [Read the release.](#)
- The president’s budget request for fiscal year 2024 has been released and includes many increases for VA. Some notable inclusions are additional resources for health care, benefits, and national cemeteries. “The VFW is encouraged by the Administration’s recently released budget as it seeks to provide the necessary resources for VA to provide earned essential care and benefits to millions of veterans across the country,” said VFW Washington Office Executive Director Ryan Gallucci. “This includes commitments our nation has made to toxic-exposed veterans through the historic PACT Act. The VFW still has concerns about the under prioritization of certain elements within the budget such as infrastructure and the funding mechanism for toxic exposure care. But we look forward to working with our partners in Congress and the administration to make sure these outliers are rectified to ensure the best possible outcomes for veterans.” [Read the release.](#)
- The Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs held an oversight hearing on the future path of VA’s Electronic Health Record Modernization (EHRM) system. Chairman Jon Tester stated, “All options are on the table except one. I’m not going to abandon the effort to

modernize VA's records." The EHRM has had various challenges since it was first rolled out in 2020 at the Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center in Spokane, Washington. The VFW is aware and is working with the administration and Congress to implement this much-needed health record upgrade. [Watch the hearing](#), which begins at the 25:00-minute mark.

Contact: VFW National Legislative Service Director Patrick Murray, [PMurray@vfw.org](mailto:PMurray@vfw.org).

### **National Veterans Service**

- NVS health team participating in the monthly VHA VSO program update meeting.
- NVS health team participating in the VA Office of Rural Health VSO meeting.
- VFW's NVS Pre-Discharge representatives briefed transitioning service members on VA benefits at Fort Hood, Fort Bliss, Fort Riley, Joint Base Andrews, and Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling.
- NVS and NLS directors attended a SVAC roundtable to discuss the VFW-supported GUARD Act and "claims sharks."
- NVS staff assisted NLS with review and comments on veteran related bills to be introduced in Congress.
- NVS participated in a PACT Act-related interview for publication in Kaiser Review.

Contact: VFW National Veterans Service Director Michael Figlioli, [MFiglioli@vfw.org](mailto:MFiglioli@vfw.org).

