

DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA AMERICANISM PROGRAM ENGAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2025

What goes boom, crackle, and pop? Fireworks. Fireworks build excitement, create memories, and explode with color. This year, I want you to be the firecracker and Promote Overwhelming Patriotism within your Unit, your District, and throughout Department.

National President Trish Ward's Theme is "Leading the Way." Her special project is the ALA Foundation Veterans Project, to provide grants to help mission outreach grow for any Auxiliary unit, district/county, or department that identifies a new, one-time need for your local veterans or active military. What better way to support this mission than to Promote Overwhelming Patriotism as we "Secure the Foundation to Build a Stronger Future" by Building the House.

National has outlined the Americanism Program Engagement Plan into three main objectives: be knowledgeable, increase participation, and participate in the American Legion Americanism program. In addition to these objectives, National has also provided some Committee-Specific Guidelines to assist you in achieving these objectives. These are recommendations to help you in your Unit program engagement plan.

Promote Overwhelming Patriotism within your Americanism Program by involving all members (JUNIORS are a great resource) and help secure the foundation to build a stronger future.

The Program Engagement plan will provide examples, resources, and links that are full of valuable information that I am sure will help you throughout the year. #popamericanism #buildingthehouse

This year as we are "Building the House" with President Charlotte, let us all make her proud by taking the Americanism Program to the forefront as we educate our youth, adults, and our community and be a firecracker--POP AMERICANISM!

For God and Country,

Dawn Davis



**Department of Florida
Americanism
Program Engagement Plan 2024-2025**



AMERICANISM GOALS

Purpose: The purpose of the Americanism program is to promote patriotism and responsible citizenship. We do this by striving towards the following goals set forth by the National ALA Americanism program:

1. Be knowledgeable on flag history, etiquette, and proper disposal methods, and promote the observation of patriotic holidays so your community will look to the ALA for information.
2. Increase participation in the American Essay Contest. The theme for the current year is: “What America the Beautiful Means to Me?”
3. Participate in the promotion of the American Legion’s Americanism programs.

Ways to Build the House: Below and on the following page are some ideas that members or Unit can do during the year that align with the National goals. Please read through these and let them help you “build the house” and P.O.P. Americanism.

- Consistently track your activities on the ***Americanism Activity Tracker*** and submit to your Unit Chairman. Your Unit Chairman will use this information for the Americanism Unit Report.
- Join the monthly Americanism/National Security Zoom meetings for further education and collaboration.
- Use hashtags on social media postings: #buildingthehouse #alaflamericanism #popamericanism
- Work with your Unit Treasurer to develop a budget for the Americanism program to support awards for essay winners, flag purchases, purchase of informational and patriotic items for distribution in schools or other community venues and during presentations.
- Publish flag etiquette tips in your newspaper, monthly newsletter and on social media.
- Model respect for our flag at public events, such as sporting events.
- Visit schools at the beginning of the school year to give some basic facts about our flag, our national anthem, and when we stand and put our hands over our hearts at parades and ball games.
- Volunteer for a local patriotic event.

- Sign up at www.legion.org to receive notifications on when to display your flag at half-staff.
- Contact and ask state and federal representatives to support the flag amendment.
- Vote! Take your children/grandchildren with you when you vote – many places have kid-related voting. Encourage others to vote.
- Recruit others to support the flag amendment by explaining what it is and why it is important.
- Sign up for The American Legion’s Legislative action alerts and follow flag issues.
- Work with local schools to further education of the Constitution, either whole or in part such as the Bill of Rights or the Preamble.
- Increase participation in the Americanism Essay Contest
 - o Contact schools and other organizations such as the Young Marines, Girl and Boy Scouts, and 4-H about the essay contest.
 - o Encourage Junior members to participate in the essay contest.
 - o Create information packets explaining essay contest rules, deadline dates, theme, and award opportunities.
 - o Contact the essay winner and their parents. Invite the parents to bring their child to your next Auxiliary meeting to read his/her winning essay. Provide refreshments.
 - o Work with school administration to identify guidance counselors, history teachers, etc. whose students would be interested in participating.
 - o Arrange for a day with the schools (preferably during a student assembly) to present the essay winners with their prizes. Provide cash award and/or savings bond.
- Work with your Legion Post to increase respect for the flag in your community; invite the public to participate in a flag disposal ceremony.
- Teach proper handling, displaying, and respect for the American flag, as well as our National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Organize a patriotic holiday event or participate in local patriotic holiday events (i.e. march in a parade, wave flags along the street on 9-11, etc.).
- Volunteer to keep up the area around the flag pole at your community’s civic government area by planting seasonal flowers and collecting trash.
- Encourage local businesses to fly the American flag, especially on patriotic holidays.
- Encourage Legion Family members to fly an American flag at their home.
- Provide American flags to your local schools for classrooms.
- Order pocket flag kits and distribute to active-duty members.
- Identify and distribute assembled pocket flags to active-duty military overseas.

- Encourage members to participate in the Get Out the Vote campaign. For more information, refer to www.legion.org/vote.
- Work with local schools to further education of the U.S. Constitution, either whole or in part such as the Bill of Rights or the Preamble.
- Support American Legion Baseball.
 - o Help with statistics.
 - o Work the concession booth.
 - o Donate to a team.
 - o Contact local sports shops and ask if they would be willing to make donations toward a fundraiser or offer a discounted price to purchase needed items.
- Support the Oratorical Contest.
 - o Help prepare post home to sponsor local or district contest.
 - o Offer to be a judge or timekeeper.
 - o Offer to help out with refreshments.
 - o Provide transportation for candidates.
 - o Help recruit candidates at local schools and other organizations.
- Contact history teachers or debate coaches.
- Support Junior Shooting Sports, which promotes gun safety/marksmanship training for youth.
 - o Volunteer to help out with scoring, supervision, or transportation.
 - o Help recruit candidates at local schools and other organizations.
- Contact JROTC at local schools.

How Can I Help:

This year we will be teaming up with our National Security program to cover two pillar programs with one meeting. Please be sure to follow both Facebook pages and/or provide your email address so that you will get reminders ahead of each meeting date.

Meeting Schedule:

Third Monday of every month @ 6pm

Sep. 16, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Jan. 20, Feb. 17, Mar. 17, Apr. 21

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84825911769>

Meeting ID: 848 2591 1769

AWARDS

National Awards



Americanism Essay Contest

This year's Essay Contest will be **“What America the Beautiful Means to Me?”** One award in each of the five classes will be presented in each Division, with Florida competing in the Southern Division. Department winners in each of the five classes will receive a certificate and medal at the Department Convention in June 2025. Winners at the National level will receive \$50 and a \$50 honorarium in the student's name to the National President's Scholarship at the National Convention in August 2025. It is up to the Unit as to what type of award or recognition they would like to bestow upon their local winners. The Americanism essay cover sheet is also available at alaf1.org. All generated essays will be disqualified from the contest. The Units are to select and submit one winner in each class level electronically to the Department Chairman by **April 1st, 2025**. Please attach the Unit Cover Sheet with the essays.

Essay Classes:

Class	Grade Level	Word Requirement
I	3 and 4	150-250
II	5 and 6	250-300
III	7 and 8	350-400
IV	9 and 10	450-500
V	11 and 12	450-500
VI	Students with special needs	Word count should correspond with student's grade level.

Dorothy Pearl Plaque

A plaque will be presented to the Unit that reports Most Outstanding Americanism Program targeted to children and youth. The entry must be typewritten in narrative form, not to exceed 1,000 words. Please send a digital report. A maximum of five pictures and news articles, provided as separate jpg files, may be included. All entries must be submitted to the Department Chairman by **May 1st, 2025**. Check the National website for additional information.

It is encouraged to use the ***Committee-Specific Reporting Guidelines*** when writing your reports.

Department Awards



Doris E. Hahn Trophy: “Best All-Around Award for Americanism Activities”

Entry to be typed on 8 ½” x 11” paper, double spaced, narrative for, not to exceed 1,000 words, and submitted electronically to americanism@al afl.org 30 days prior to Convention which will be **May 13, 2025**. Unit must have sponsored at least one girl to Girl’s State. Report to include only Americanism activities. Check Unit guide for additional information.

It is encouraged to use the *Committee-Specific Reporting Guidelines*** when writing your reports.

Chairman’s Award: “America the Beautiful Award”

This award will be presented to the Unit that submits the BEST picture of the American Flag being displayed. Pictures may be submitted throughout the year with the Unit name, location of the picture, and one sentence caption. Pictures must be submitted digitally for eligibility. Please include pictures as separate jpg files. Pictures must be taken during this 2024-2025 year, and **final** deadline for pictures is **April 15th, 2025**.



Unit End of Year Reporting

Due by April 1st, 2025

1. Please use the Tracker sheets to prepare your Unit report.
2. Unit Reports are due to District Chairman no later than **April 1st, 2025** and should consist of the Unit Report form with narrative short responses. These responses should answer the following questions:
 - How did your unit promote Star Spangled Kids, educating children and youth about the U.S. Constitution from the aspect of patriotism and Americanism? Incorporate how your unit utilized the Star Spangled Kids kits provided by National, including the success stories highlights.
 - What training on flag history, etiquette, and proper disposal methods did your unit provide in communities?
 - How did your unit identify as the resource for training and assistance in promoting patriotism and Americanism in communities?
 - What avenues were used to increase participation in the ALA Americanism Essay Contest?
 - How did your members and unit contribute to the advancement of The American Legion's Americanism programs?

Forms and instructions can be found on the Department Website at ALAFL.org. All forms have been set up as fillable PDFs and members are encouraged to keep in the electronic format for ease of filling out and submitting. **Any report submitted in a hardcopy format MUST be converted to electronic prior to submission to Department to be considered for any awards.**



District End of Year Reporting

Due by April 15th, 2025

1. Please use the Tracker sheets to prepare your Unit report.
2. District Reports are due to the Department Chairman no later than **April 15th, 2025** and should consist of the District Report form with narrative short responses. These responses should answer the following questions:
 - How did your units promote Star Spangled Kids, educating children and youth about the U.S. Constitution from the aspect of patriotism and Americanism? Incorporate how your unit utilized the Star Spangled Kids kits provided by National, including the success stories highlights.
 - What training on flag history, etiquette, and proper disposal methods did your units provide in communities?
 - How did your units identify as the resource for training and assistance in promoting patriotism and Americanism in communities?
 - What avenues were used to increase participation in the ALA Americanism Essay Contest?
 - How did your units contribute to the advancement of The American Legion's Americanism programs?

Forms and instructions can be found on the Department Website at ALAFL.org. All forms have been set up as fillable PDFs and members are encouraged to keep in the electronic format for ease of filling out and submitting. **Any report submitted to District in a hardcopy format MUST be converted to electronic prior to submission to Department to be considered for any awards.**