



American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Florida
Program Engagement Plan
Education
2025-2026



Department Chairperson: Jenny Arguinzoni

Committee Members: Linda McHugh and Tricia Winegar



The Education Program upholds the American Legion Auxiliary's proud commitment to fostering quality education for children and adults. Through classroom involvement, literacy efforts, scholarship promotion, and support for

continued learning, we honor our nation's heroes by placing special focus on the educational needs of veterans' and active-duty service members' children.

The education of America's youth is vital to securing our nation's future. The American Legion Auxiliary proudly stands alongside The American Legion in championing every child's fundamental right to a quality education.



What passions fuel your heart to support the Education Program and make a lasting difference?

- 🍎 Celebrate and uplift educators during Teacher Appreciation Week (first full week of May)
- 📖 Honor the value of education during American Education Week (week prior to Thanksgiving)
- 🏠 Collect Box Tops for Education and dedicate them to a school in your community
- 👨‍🎓 Share your time and heart through local tutoring programs
- 🎓 Award a scholarship through your Unit to support a local student's educational journey
- ✏️ Show your love for learning by participating in ALA's Give 10 to Education, recognize members who donate 10 or more items to local schools with a Give 10 to Education Certificate
- ❤️ 🤍 💙 Support military families by joining *Operation Homefront's Back to School Brigade*

IMPORTANT DATES



- September 11, 2025: Patriot Day (9/11 Remembrance Day)
- September 17, 2025: Constitution Day
- November 17-21, 2025: American Education Week
- December 7, 2025: National Letter Writing Day – Encourage students to write letters to veterans, or have veterans write letters to students.
- February 1, 2026: Student applications for the Department Memorial Scholarship are due to local Units
- March 1, 2026: Applications for Department Scholarship, Memorial Scholarship, Norma Kerkow Female Veterans Scholarship, and National Scholarship due to Department
- March 2, 2026: Read Across America Day (ask your local school if veterans can come into classrooms and read)
- April 1, 2026: Unit Year End Reports due to District Chairpersons
- April 15, 2026: Purple Up! Day for Military Children
- April 15, 2026: Chairperson Award *Hearts in the Halls* submission due
- April 15, 2026: District Year End Reports due to Department Chairpersons
- May 1, 2026: Elizabeth A. Nelson Department Award submission due
- May 4-8, 2026: National Teacher Appreciation Week
- May 5, 2026: National Teacher Appreciation Day
- May 12, 2026: Kathy Derouin Department Award submission due (30 days prior to Department Convention)
- June 1, 2026*: National Award Most Outstanding Unit Education Program submission due * (date to be determined after National Convention)



CHAIRPERSON HEARTS IN THE HALLS AWARD

Presented to one Unit in each membership grouping for extraordinary efforts to bring the heart of a veteran into every classroom. Sample activities include reading with students, chaperoning fieldtrips, presenting at Career Day, or volunteering in classrooms. Submissions should be in narrative form and include photos that showcase how the Unit shared the stories, values, and presence of our nation's heroes with students. Send to Department Chairperson at education@alaf1.org.

Submission Deadline: April 15, 2026

NATIONAL AWARD

Unit Award: Most Outstanding Unit Education Program (per division). All unit entries must be submitted via electronic form by 5 p.m. EST on June 1. Note: You will receive confirmation when your award is submitted. You may also upload other supporting documentation that will give the committee a full picture of the important work your unit has accomplished this year. These files can be photos (JPG, JPEG or TIFs - no larger than 14MB) or PDF documents. If you have more than three supporting files, please email the committee email address listed on the form.

National Awards Form Link: <https://www.legion-aux.org/National-Awards-Form>

DEPARTMENT AWARDS

ELIZABETH A. NELSON AWARD is awarded to the Unit having the best year-round program through participation in all phases of the education and scholarship program and in conformity with the current National Program. This award is sponsored by St. Cloud, Unit 80. Entries must be received by the Department Education Chairman no later than May 1, 2026.

KATHY DEROUIN AWARD is awarded to the Unit which hosts the best educational tutoring program. Grades can include Pre-K through high school or any adult literacy course. Tutoring may take place in schools, libraries, community centers, or afterschool programs and should conform with the National guidelines. This award is sponsored by Orlando, Unit 19. The report must be received by May 12, 2026, which is 30 days prior to the Department Convention. The report should be sent to the Department Education Chairperson.

SEE UNIT GUIDE FOR FULL DETAILS ON ALL DEPARTMENT AWARDS



When submitting Year-End Reports, Units are asked to include a narrative that highlights and describes the key activities and accomplishments from throughout the year. A strong, detailed narrative helps bring events to life and provides a clearer understanding of the Unit's impact.

The narrative serves as a way to tell the Unit's story. Consider including:

- The inspiration or purpose behind the activities
- Individuals or groups involved
- Community response or participation
- Measurable outcomes or notable successes

All photos must be submitted in their original format—not saved from Facebook or other social media platforms. Images downloaded from these sources are often compressed and resized, resulting in lower quality. These versions may appear blurry or pixelated when printed or included in reports and publications.

Deadlines:

- **Unit** Year-End Reports must be submitted to District Chairpersons **no later than April 1, 2026**. Units are encouraged to CC the Department Chairperson when sending reports. Duplicate submissions are welcome if it ensures receipt.
- **District** Year-End Reports must be submitted to the Department Chairperson **no later than April 15, 2026**. District Presidents are asked to include **all** Unit reports along with the District summary.

These reports are essential for compiling the Department's final submission to National Headquarters.

Preferred delivery is via email to education@alaf1.org

You may also snail mail to:

Jenny Arguinzoni, Education Chairperson

5220 SW 90th Way #4

Cooper City, FL 33328



SOCIAL MEDIA GROUPS FOCUSED ON EDUCATION

National Facebook Group: ALA Education



Department Facebook Group: ALAFL Education



RESOURCES

Department Website



Department Education Program



National Website



National Education Program



TAL National Education



National Emblem Sales



Tutoring



Student Veterans Association

