

NATIONAL SECURITY



PROGRAM ACTION PLAN 2021 – 2022

This year, President Wanda has challenged us to “**Dare to Commit**”.

In the National Security Program, we maintain and promote a strong national defense by strengthening and supporting active-duty service members, their families, along with first responders.

Your Program Action Plan will cover several main objectives, which will include examples, and resources that are full of valuable information I’m sure that will help you throughout the year.

For God and County,
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National Security Objectives

1. **United Service Organizations aka USO:** The mission of the USO is to lift the spirits of America's troops and their families. It is a private, nonprofit and non-partisan organization. The USO relies on donations from individuals, organizations, and corporations to support its programs and services. The USO supports those who need us most, including wounded, ill and injured troops, their families and caregivers, families of the fallen, deployed troops and military families.
 - a. Serving all branches of the Military and families
 - b. Local USO's special events
 - c. Donation made directly to the USO in your area and report in your yearend report. It is no longer listed on the Department's Donation Remittance Form.

2. **Operation Homefront:** Encourage members to "**Dare to Commit**" by considering to become a volunteer with this organization, as they do many events for our Military families go to www.operationhomefront.org, and go to "Get Involved", it's as easy as that.
 - o Two of their annual events are the "Back to School Brigade" and the "Holiday Toy Drive". These two programs are done through the partnership with Dollar Tree stores throughout the nation.
 - o Once a person is approved, they will have the opportunity to select stores in their area that are participating with Operation Homefront.
 - o Plus, the volunteer will also be the contact pick-up person for their store.
 - o Keeping in mind the items are generally for military children, but the delivery is up to the volunteer as to where they should go.

3. **Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP)**
 1. **Support your National Guard & Reserve.** This program is to promote the wellbeing of the National Guard and Reserve members, their families, and communities, by connecting them with resources throughout the deployment cycle.
 - o For the National Guard, you can locate a Family Program Group (FRG) Representative by going to:
 - Facebook, and look up "**Official Home of Florida National Guard Family Programs**" and send a message to find out who is the Family Program Representative in your area.
 - o Work with the FRG leaders or Program Reps for morale events, holiday fooddrives, family day events, etc.
 - o If your Unit has an upcoming event, be sure to invite them to your events as well

4. Supporting and honoring our strong women who "**Dare to Commit**", here are a couple of programs for just that!
 - a. There are no stronger women than an **American Gold Star Mothers (AGSM)**, their Chapter was founded in 1928 these women whose child has made the ultimate sacrifices to our nation, have been supporting each other and serving the needs of our veterans and active-duty military.

How can we support and honor them?

- i. Find a Gold Star Chapter in your area and include them in your activities.
 1. See Facebook “[American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. Florida-PR](#)”
 - ii. Have a fundraiser for them, or give a donation to your local chapter
 - iii. Have a Gold Star Mother as a guest speaker at your unit/district meeting
 - iv. Honor them with a special event, such as a brunch, afternoon tea, etc.
 - v. Remember Gold Star Mothers and Family’s Day which is the last Sunday in September, the 26th this year.
- b. There’s also our **Blue Star Mothers (BSM)**, their Chapter was founded 1942. They have been supporting each other while their child(ren) is/are actively serving or has been honorable discharged. These women, including the Silver Star Mothers (who’s child was wounded, ill or injured), also supporting each other, and serve the needs of our veterans and active-duty military in many capacities.

How can we support and honor them?

- i. Present a Blue Star Banner to a member whose child is actively serving.
- ii. Find a Blue Star Chapter in your area and include them in your activities.
 1. Go to www.bluestarmothers.org
- iii. Like the AGSM, they also need support with fundraisers and donations.
- iv. ALA Members can join a BSM chapter as an “associate member” without a fee, it’s a great way to bond with the ladies, and bring awareness back to your units.

5. ROTC/JROTC. The American Legion and Auxiliary are strong supporters of Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) and Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs across the country. Posts and Units are urged to present medals available through [American Legion Emblem Sales](#) to the top JROTC and ROTC students in their area. The Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) program prepares high school students for leadership roles while making them aware of their rights, responsibilities and privileges as American citizens. Here are some additional ways to support JROTC.

- i. Getting them involved with Unit activities to earn volunteer hours;
- ii. Involving your Junior members who may be in the JROTC program at their school;
- iii. Supporting their competitions; and
- iv. Attending award ceremonies/present medals.

6. Homeland Security

- a. As we all learned in 2019 during the Government Shutdown, that the United States Coast Guard falls under this title, and all our First Responders (Police/Sheriff, Fire, EMT). There are many ways to show our appreciation to the ones who protect our local communities, here are a few ideas:
 - i. Cook a meal. Bringing home cooked food to the local police or fire station can show the local first responders that you care.
 - ii. Bring cards and/or letters of appreciation for them.

- iii. Make a Gift Basket for no special reason, other than just a Thank You.
- iv. Most importantly let them know that the American Legion Auxiliary appreciates everything they do, and we are here to support them.

7. Retreats for Veterans, Military, First Responders, and their families. (I know that some other programs also enter twine with this program, and it is also one of President Wanda's projects. There is an opportunity to win a Department Chairman award for supporting this program. Details are included on the Award information page.)

- a. **My Warrior's Place in Ruskin, FL:** My Warrior's Place was founded by Kelly Kowall whose son Corey, like so many others, gave his life for our continued freedom. My Warrior's Place, and all those involved with My Warrior's Place, understand that there are no words that can express how grateful we are to those who make the sacrifice by serving in the Armed Forces so that we have the opportunity to live in the land of the free. Additionally, how thankful we are to those who serve in Fire Fighting or in Law Enforcement so that we are safe and secure on our home front. There are absolutely no words that can be said to comfort those families whose loved ones gave the ultimate sacrifice while protecting us and our country. We will never be able to thank you enough.
- b. My Warrior's Place is a Retreat Center for our Veterans, Military Service Members, Law Enforcement Officers, Fire Fighters, Gold Star, Blue Star, and Silver Star Families. Additionally, My Warrior's Place offers several amazing programs for those who have put their life on the line for our safety and well-being, endured the death of a Fallen Warrior, and/or experienced the horrors of war. Each program offered by My Warrior's Place plays an important role in the healing and coping process, and the support that is obtained through these programs is priceless!

For more information on the National Security Program, please feel free to contact me or one of our committee members. You can also visit our Department and National Websites www.alafll.org or www.alaforveterans.org.