

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Chairman: Eleanor Amato
Email Address: publicrelations@alaf1.org
Committee: Patricia Delgado Patricia Whitehall

PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

The Auxiliary's positive public image and excellent reputation in the community is no accident. Public Relations works to establish and maintain goodwill within the organization and with the general public. It promotes the Auxiliary's many worthwhile programs, events, activities and accomplishments through every available medium. Public Relations perform a dual function. Doing things well and making sure that the public is aware of the efforts and the results ensures continued community support and awareness of Auxiliary programs and encourages women who qualify to join.

What can you do?

Promote a positive image of the American Legion Auxiliary by supporting and promoting the efforts of Goal 5 of the ALA Centennial Strategic Plan (With The American Legion, Build Brand Loyalty) and the use of the variety of public relations materials and resources available online.

Ideas: Member

- Give an Auxiliary magazine gift subscription to your local library and doctors' offices.
- Distribute ALA brochures and posters in the community at libraries, job fairs, medical facilities, and post homes.
- Print brochures online from the PR/Marketing Resources section at www.ALAforVeterans.org, or order them from your department secretary.
- Wear your officially branded ALA apparel and "Honor Their Service" button when out and about. Button order forms are available at www.ALAforVeterans.org.
- Be prepared to answer when asked who the Auxiliary is, what we do in your community, and why we matter.

Unit:

Develop a list of local media contacts for your unit to use. Step by step instructions are included in the ALA Public Relations Guide and Tips for Volunteer Recruitment tool kit, available in PR/Marketing Resources in the Members Only section at www.ALAforveterans.org.

- Build relations with your local media and political figures to educate them on who we are, what we do, and why we matter.
- Write a letter to the editor and/or news release for patriotic holidays and events. Templates can be found in **PR/Marketing Resources in the Members Only** section at www.ALAforveterans.org. What a terrific resource. You have everything at your fingertips.
- Familiarize yourself with and utilize the ALA Public Relations Guide and Tips for Volunteer Recruitment toolkit, ALA Branding Guide, and other tools available in the Members Only section at www.ALAforveterans.org.

2. Build brand loyalty of the American Legion Auxiliary through the utilization and promotion of websites, social media, and other electronic communications.

Ideas:

Member

- Promote Auxiliary events on your personal social media accounts.
- Subscribe to *ALA eNews* and *In the Know eBulletin* via www.ALAforVeterans.org.
- Link to www.ALAforVeterans.org in your personal email signature.

Unit

- Create or improve and actively maintain a unit website that adheres to brand standards (for tips, see *ALA Branding Guide*, available in the Members Only section at www.ALAforVeterans.org).
- Create and maintain an active social media presence for your unit on one or more platforms that you are comfortable with (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram).

DISTRICT PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIRMAN

1. Send District PR chairman's name, phone no., email and physical mailing address to publicrelations@ALAFL.org
2. Develop and discuss at District School of Instruction a "How to start a successful Public Relations campaign" for unit chairman.
3. Educate Units on materials available and how to obtain them.
4. Compile a list of Unit Public Relations Chairman names, phone numbers, and email addresses. Make contact monthly to offer assistance and discover/share success stories.
5. Create and maintain an active social media presence for the District and encourage Units to do the same. (Share events on FLALA Public Relations)

6. Gather Unit Mid-year and Year-end reports with copies of articles, newsletters, pictures of displays, ALA events, speeches, website address, social media activity, etc.

UNIT PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIRMAN

1. Create/update local media contact list.
2. Create and maintain an active social media presence. (Share events FLALA Public Relations Facebook page.
3. Build relationships with local media.
4. Attend Mission related committee planning meeting to “Gather 5 W’s”
5. Prepare Media release and email to each media contact.
6. Report to District Chairman with a narrative on how you worked the public relations program with copies of articles, newsletters, pictures of displays, ALA events, speeches, website address, social media activity, etc.

Public Relations Reporting*

Mid-Year Reports

- Mid-Year reports reflect the program work of units in the department, and are intended as an opportunity for mid-year correction. Due to the Public Relations Chairman by December 1, 2020.

Year-End Reports

- Annual reports reflect the program work of units in the department, and may result in a national award for participants if award requirements are met. Reports are due to the Public Relations Chairman by April 15, 2021.

What is Public Relations Activity?

1. Newspaper articles, meeting notices and community calendar events.
2. Social Media postings of Mission related events which fulfill the auxiliary goals.
3. Mission related events Flyers posted on community boards which fulfill the ALA image and goals.
4. Distribute ALA brochures and posters in the community at libraries, job fairs, medical facilities, and post homes.
5. Websites: Television networks, Community calendars, other veteran organization, and magazines.
6. Newsletters: Unit/Legion Family, Community newsletters, District newsletters.
7. Radio: Public service announcements (templet on National Website. Event announcements or coverage of event. (Report date and air time.)
8. YouTube: video of event or interview of committee chairman
9. Magazines: Dept. of Florida American Legion Auxiliary Magazine *MAIL CALL*, Veteran organizations magazine: such as **BIVOUAC** email: bivouac33@gmail.com
10. Television coverage: See the following for useful tips.

With so many PROMOTIONAL opportunities available, every Unit should be reporting Public Relations activity.

TV NEWS TIPS

Getting to know TV producers and assignment editors. TV producers and news assignment editors work on a much different deadline schedule than print and online media contacts. The focus of their coverage can change at a moment's notice. For example, they might have a reporter scheduled to cover a ribbon cutting at a local business, but when a nearby factory fire claims the lives of workers, that reporter could be reassigned in an instant. When conducting media outreach to TV producers and reporters, keep these things in mind.

Know the meeting schedule. Every local TV station has morning and evening news planning meetings that are held at the same time every day. During these meetings, the producers decide the news they will be covering throughout the day and evening. It's important to know when these take place so you can provide assignment editors with information about your event ahead of the meetings so it can be considered for coverage.

Send your information after you call. Always send your news release or media alert to the news assignment desk after you've called to pitch your event. News assignment editors receive hundreds of news releases and media alerts daily; by sending your information after you speak with assignment editors; it creates a "mental flag" for the assignment as they check their email inbox.

Always include your cell phone number. News assignment editors and producers often make last minute decisions to cover local news stories, so it's imperative to include your cell phone number on your news release or media alert. You could be out to lunch when a news assignment editor calls to let you know he will be sending a reporter and camera crew out to your event, or he may even have follow up questions before solidifying whether he can dispatch a camera crew.

Offer visuals and interviews. News assignment editors and producers are always looking for captivating audio and visuals they can share with their local audience. It's up to you to share ideas for ways they can film your event, what types of dynamic visuals they can capture and who you have available on site for interviews. If you do offer individuals for interviews, ensure that you have identified a spokesperson that is well prepared ahead of time and feels comfortable in front of the camera while articulately conveying key messages about your local unit and the event.

Say "thank you". Like anyone else, reporters, bloggers, producers and news assignment editors like to feel appreciated. Express your gratitude for their time, especially if you inevitable work together or the reporter attends an event. It will make them more likely to remember you and work with you again in the future.

Resources:

- American Legion Auxiliary Branding Guide, available under PR/Marketing in the Members Only area at www.ALAforVeterans.org.
- "Photography Guidelines," see ALA Branding Guide pgs. 20 and 21, available at www.ALAforVeterans.Org.
- Write a letter to the editor and/or news release for patriotic holidays and events. *Templates can be found in **PR/Marketing Resources in the Members Only** section at www.ALAforveterans.org. What a terrific resource. You have everything at your fingertips.

*This site has templates for speeches, letters to the editors, and news releases on special events. **Do yourself a favor and check this out.** PR/Marketing Resources in the Members Only section at National Website.

DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA AWARDS

Department of Florida Public Relations Chairman Award: Presented to one Unit chairman in each membership grouping (6)

Unit Award: Outstanding PR Program

- **Guidelines:** Use different media placements highlighting different ALA programs and featured in three different months (May 1, 2020 to May 1, 2021). Media publications must support the Auxiliary's mission and goals.
- **Attachments:** National cover sheet and fly page, including the name of the award as well as the name and address of Unit and Public Relations Unit Chairman. Copy of Mid-year and year end reports.

Deadline: May 1, 2021

Send to Department Relations Chairman:

Eleanor Amato
892 Catfish Avenue
New Smyrna Beach, FL
32169

Criteria for Press Book Entries:

1. Material must be prepared in a Press Book no larger than 12" X 15" on 8-1/2" X 11" pages.
2. The first page of the entry must include the name, address, and phone number of the Unit Chairman, name of the Unit and the total number of inches and pictures in the Press Book.
3. The entry must also include a completed copy of the Unit's Annual Report Form.
4. Photostat copies of articles may be used.
5. The name of the newspaper, date, and page number must be at the top of each article.
6. Newspaper articles, bulletins and photographs concerning an Auxiliary and/or Legion Family function/program should be included in chronological order.
7. Paid articles are not to be included.

DO NOT SEND PRESS BOOKS TO NATIONAL OR SOUTHERN DIVISION CHAIRMAN

WORKING WITH MINORS

An important part of the American Legion Auxiliary celebrates our work with children and youth and the work of our ALA Junior members. However, when working with this very important subgroup, there are many things to consider, especially in regards to public relations.

We need to avoid things when working with minors:

- **Don't include photos with minors without first getting parental consent.** Just because their mom or dad is in the Legion Family, does not grant you permission to use their photos, names, or videos when sharing about what you do and why the ALA is important.
- **Get signed parental consent and when possible get permission from the parents or guardians each time you use the images.** Get blanket permission from Legion parents. In today's world we don't know the minor's history, family history or how their name or picture might negatively impact their life.
- **Don't take photographs that focus on one child or are close up of their face.** There is a suggestion that such images may be used inappropriately or in order to gain access to the children in the picture.
- **DO use photographs that include many minors in the photograph.** Try to incorporate a group picture where many children are included. This will allow the focus to be on the event and not just a single child.

Social media has changed the way in which we publicize our events and as a rule of thumb it is important to post where you have been and not where you are going.

In 1998 the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act was put in place to protect personal information of children on websites and online services that are directed to children under 13. COPPA requires sites and services to notify parents directly and get their approval before they collect use or disclose a child's personal information such as name, address, phone #, email address, physical whereabouts, photos, videos and audio recordings of the child.

Paying attention to these suggestions will help maximize your work within public Relations, while maintaining a level of safety for the minors we work with.

Public Relations End of Year Report

Send this along with a narrative of your favorite story

Due April 30, 2021

Chairman _____ Unit # 1/City _____

Phone # _____

1. # of interviews with reporters _____

2. # of articles published _____

(Attach copies to this report)

3. # of letters to the Editor _____

(Attach copies to this report)

4. # of TV aired programs/interviews/event coverage _____

(email copy to Department PR Chairman)

5. # of television community calendar announcements _____

List times and Dates: _____

6. # of public service announcements (PSA's) _____

7. # of printed advertisements _____

(attach copies to this report)

8. # of Social Media postings _____

Facebook page: Name _____

9. # of ALA Unit/TAL Family Newsletters _____

(Attach one copy)

10. # of Event Flyers _____

(Attach copies to this report)

11. # of Email Blasts _____
12. Did Unit create a media contact list? _____
13. Did Unit create a website or social media page? _____ If, yes, give information
Date Created _____ Name of website/social media page _____
-
14. Did Unit develop a Public Relations program for 2020-2021? _____
15. Did Unit contribute any articles to the Department Newsletter "Mail Call" _____
16. What and how did your Unit promote fundraising activities for
Dept. President Ann King Smith's special project Honor Flight (please send funds to Dept)
-

Attach copies

17. Did Unit submit to the ALA National magazine? _____
(Attach copies)
18. Did Unit share pictures or media on the Department Public Relations face book page? _____
(Attach copies)
19. Have your units joined FLALA Public Relations? _____ Please do.
20. Did you receive any proclamations this year? If so, how many _____
21. Attach a Narrative of your favorite story.

A narrative is nothing more than a story of connected events. You can make your narrative chronological, as in order of events by month, or simply highlight the public relations activities and events taking place in your Unit.

UNIT CHAIRMAN: PLEASE SUBMIT TWO COPIES REPORTs and Narratives of Unit's Public Relations activities to the District chairman no later than Mid-Year November 1st, 2020 Year-End Reports and Narratives no later than April 30, 2021.

FLORIDA STRONG

YOUR UNIT HAS A SECOND CHANCE ON CELEBRATING OUR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

It doesn't have to be a ball, dance or party. Be creative! It could be giving 100 donuts to the police department LOL. Or 100 backpacks to a school. How about \$100 to honor flight! Remember to mention our celebration.

Make sure to take a picture and place in the newspaper and mail call. Don't forget President's Ann special project!

NATIONAL AWARDS

Take the time to share a favorite story about the positive impact you or someone you know has had on our mission is worth doing! It helps us tell the world who we are, what we do, and why we matter. Just three simple steps to add your part to the national success story:

1. Please follow instructions on the National Report and Awards Cover Sheet found in the awards section of the National Program Action Plan.
2. Provide details/examples about the activity as outlined in the 2017-2022 Programs Action Plan.

MEMBER AWARD: ALA Brand Ambassador

- Deadline: June 1, 2021
- Send to national committee member Brenda Holland postmarked or emailed by 5 p.m. EST on the deadline listed above.
- Materials and guidelines:
 - Document with action photographs, screen shots and other evidence of brand promotion activities
 - Activity must occur between May 1 prior to the start of the current admin year and May 1 before the end of the current admin year

UNIT AWARD: New Website or Social Media Account Launch

- Deadline: June 1, 2021
- Send to national committee member Ree Ann Ross postmarked or emailed by 5 p.m. EST on the deadline listed above.
- Presented to: All units developing a properly branded website or social media account during the current ALA administrative year
- Materials and guidelines:
 - Web address/URL, webmaster/administer name and contact info, or name and contact info for ALA coordinator if webmaster/administrator is a third party vendor
 - Site/Account must have been created after September 1 of the current ALA admin year
 - Website/Facebook page must conform to “Website and Social Media Guidelines’ in the ALA Branding Guide

C. Unit Award: Most Outstanding Unit Public Relations Program (per division)

- Deadline June 1, 2021
- Presented to: One unit in each division (5)

- Send to your **national division chairman** postmarked or emailed by 5 p.m. EST on the deadline listed above.
- Materials and guidelines:
 - Include three different media placements/coverage highlighting different ALA programs, featured in three different months (September 1 – May 1 of the current ALA administrative year)
 - Acceptable media publications must support the Auxiliary's mission and goals

D. Unit Award: Active PR TEAM Centennial Celebration (per division)

- Deadline: June 1, 2021
- Send to your **national division chairman** postmarked or emailed by 5 P.m. EST on the deadline listed above.

E. Unit Award: Active PR TEAM Centennial Celebration (per division)

- Deadline: June 1, 2021
- Send to National PR Vice Chairman Martha Setlock postmarked or emailed by 5 p.m. EST on the deadline listed above.
- **Best narrative** (with photos and media results) to convey the work a unit public relations team (of no less than 3 members) conveying the Centennial Celebration as unit activities are publicized.

DO NOT SEND NATIONAL AWARDS TO DEPARTMENT PR

Have fun with Public Relations. It will be an award itself. You can do it. Thank you for taking this chairmanship

Chairman Eleanor Amato

Public Relations

892 Catfish Ave

New Smyrna Beach, Florida 32169

386 427 1168

