

2016-2017 American Legion Auxiliary Programs Action Plan

Junior Activities

Junior Activities and the 2014-2019 Centennial Strategic Plan – Inspiring active participation by ALA members under the age of 18, the Junior Activities program builds a strong future for the ALA by engaging productive members to carry on its mission for life. (Goals 1 and 3)

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What is this program, and why do we have it?

The Junior Activities Program inspires active participation in members age 17 and under so that they will become engaging, productive members who will want to continue their American Legion Auxiliary membership into adulthood.

What can you do?

1. Increase Junior membership.

Ideas:

Member

- Ask to speak at your post's monthly meeting. Bring Junior members and membership applications with you. Personally invite Legion members to sign up their daughter, granddaughters and great-granddaughters. Older Junior members could speak about the value of their membership to the post.
- Sign up your own eligible daughters, granddaughters and great-granddaughters.
- "Like" the national Junior Activities Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/alajuniors/>). Share the posts to your friends and encourage them to sign up their eligible Juniors.
- Teach your Juniors about The American Legion Family's eligibility requirements.
- Encourage your Juniors to invite their friends to attend ALA functions and volunteering opportunities, even if they are not eligible to join.
- If you don't have Junior members of your own, be sure to support them anyway. Offer to help the Junior Activities chairman and participate in their fundraisers.
- If you are a unit officer or chairman, offer to mentor one of your unit's Juniors. Teach her about your role with the ALA.

Unit or Department

- Organize an active Juniors group. Give the Junior Activities chairman a budget to work with and space to hold meetings and fundraisers.
- Continually ask members to sign up their eligible daughters, granddaughters and great-granddaughters.
- Include information on Junior membership and activities in monthly newsletters.
- Include information on Junior membership in renewal notices.

2. Engage Juniors in programs of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Ideas:

Member

- Bring your Junior(s) to a meeting with you. Ask your unit president if the Junior(s) can lead the Pledge.
- Mentor a Junior in your unit. Teach them about your role as an officer and chairman. Help them understand what we do and why it matters.
- Present any patches your Junior(s) earn at a unit meeting. They will be proud of their achievement and your fellow members will see what great work their Juniors are doing.
- Bring your Junior(s) to all appropriate ALA activities in which you participate. They can help distribute poppies, clean tables after dinners, etc.

- Older Junior members can mentor younger members by encouraging them to participate in Junior meetings, teaching them what they have learned about the ALA and our mission, and helping them earn their patches.

Unit or Department

- Support and assist your Junior Activities chairman. Give her a budget to work with, space for meetings and fundraisers and be flexible with your activities so that Juniors can be involved. Provide her with an updated copy of the Junior Activities Handbook, which can be purchased from Emblem Sales or downloaded from the Junior Member Activities page in the Members Only section at www.ALAforVeterans.org.
- Post Junior activities on your unit department Facebook page with approval from parents and Junior member.
- Encourage older Juniors to become mentors to younger Juniors.

3. Make Junior meetings fun and informative.

Ideas:

Member

- Junior members can help plan and lead the meeting to make it more fun and informative to their age group.
- Be flexible during your meetings. *Robert's Rules* can be intimidating and boring for Juniors; there will be plenty of time for them to learn. Keep an orderly meeting, but don't put too much emphasis on protocol.
- Plan activities that are fun, yet teach about the mission of the ALA. Remember, they are kids with short attention spans. Activities that involve light exercise are helpful to burn off their youthful energy. Have a service project relay race where the Juniors prepare buddy baskets or socks of love, do the cheers they learned at one of the national meetings, etc. If you need ideas, ask a teacher; it might end up being a great win/win as you share ideas.
- Crafts are another good activity for Juniors. They can make poppy crafts for a fundraiser, patriotic decorations for your post or local veterans home, handmade cards to send to veterans at your local VA, etc.
- Have snacks and drinks on hand. Juniors could even make poppy cookies to snack on.

Unit or Department

- Give your Juniors a place to display their crafts or artwork.
- Help your Junior Activities Chairman find places to distribute the cards and crafts made by Juniors.
- Offer to help during Junior meetings.

4. Promote and encourage Junior participation in the Patch Program.

Ideas:

Member

- Mentor Juniors and help them to acquire patches. The Patch Program activities can be found on the Junior Member Activities page in the Members Only section at www.ALAforVeterans.org.
- Hold a special meeting to help Juniors earn patches.
- Older Juniors can help the younger Juniors earn patches.

Unit

- Encourage Juniors to participate in the Patch Program.
- Encourage use of electronic patches on Juniors' social media sites.
- Give Junior members the opportunity to work on requirements for patches at unit functions.

Department

- Include information on the patch program in each department chairman's pack.
- Provide opportunities for Juniors to work on requirements for patches at department functions.
- Host a Juniors meeting to encourage and increase interest in the Patch Program.
- Host a special meeting to present earned patches to Juniors with senior members in attendance.
- Mentor Juniors and help them acquire patches.
- Set up and attend a special meeting to help Juniors earn patches.

Junior Activities Reporting

Mid-Year Reports

Mid-Year reports reflect the program work of units in the department. Each department Junior Activities chairman is required to submit a narrative report by **January 5, 2017**, to the division Junior Activities chairman, plus copy to the national Junior Activities chairman.

Annual Reports

Annual reports reflect the program work of units in the department. Each department Junior Activities chairman is required to submit a narrative report by **May 15, 2017**, to the division Junior Activities chairman, plus copy to the national Junior Activities chairman. Members and units should follow your department's protocol and deadlines.

As part of your narrative report, please include answers to the following questions:

- How has participation in the Patch Program increased enthusiasm among the Juniors?
- What are the various service projects in which Juniors were involved? Has participation in the service projects increased as the year has progressed?
- What type of volunteer hours did Junior members perform?
- What ways did your senior members mentor the Junior members?
- How does your unit plan to increase Junior member participation in meetings and activities?
- Please include pictures and news articles showing Juniors involved in their activities.

Programs and Activities

1. Requirements, instructions and patch forms for the Junior Patch Program are available at www.ALAforVeterans.org.
2. A national Junior meeting will be held at the same time as Mission Training. Dates and meeting sites for the one-day training will be announced at a later date.
3. Spirit of Youth Scholarship for Junior members: Five scholarships in the amount of \$5,000 each will be awarded for the 2016-2017 Auxiliary year; one scholarship will be awarded in each division of the American Legion Auxiliary. Requirements and applications are available at www.ALAforVeterans.org and in the Education Program Action Plan.
4. Junior Projects:

- Veterans History Project: www.loc.gov/vets
- VA Student Volunteer Program: www.volunteer.va.gov/StudentProgram.asp
www.volunteer.va.gov/ParkeScholarship.asp
- Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship:
www.ALAforVeterans.org
- Mean Stinks: www.meanstinks.com

Junior Activities Awards

Unit Award: Best Overall Unit Junior Activities Award

Type of award: Citation Plaque

Presented to: One unit in each division (5 overall awards)

Materials and Guidelines:

- Entries must include the award cover sheet located in the program Plan.
- Awarded to the unit with the most outstanding Junior Activities program.
- Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words. Include specific examples of how your Juniors worked the ALA mission.
- May include pictures, news articles, news releases, etc.
- Send entries to department chairman by date department sets.
- All entries must be sent by the department chairman to her national division chairman postmarked by June 1, 2017, or emailed by 5:00 p.m. EDT June 1, 2017. (See addresses located at the front of this program Plan for specific division contact information).

Department Award: Best Overall Department Junior Activities Award

Type of award: Citation Plaque

Presented to: One department in each division (5 overall awards)

Materials and Guidelines:

- Entries must include the award cover sheet located in the program Plan.
- Awarded to the department with the most outstanding Junior Activities program.
- Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words. Include specific examples of how your Juniors worked the ALA mission.
- May include pictures, news articles, news releases, etc.
- All entries must be sent by the department chairman to her national division chairman postmarked by June 1, 2017, or emailed by 5:00 p.m. EDT June 1, 2017. (See addresses located at the front of this program Plan for specific division contact information).

Junior Member Award: Junior Member of the Year

Type of award: Engraved Plaque

Presented to: One Junior member, selected from the department Junior Members of the Year, in recognition of her dedicated service, efforts and talents.

Materials and Guidelines:

- Entries must include the award cover sheet located in this program Plan.
- Entries must be typewritten and include the following information:
 - Consideration of only Junior members in good standing for 2016-2017.
 - Outstanding contribution the Junior has made through an ALA program or project.
 - Nominee should not be serving as an honorary department Junior president.
 - Length of membership is not a criterion.

- Name, email address and complete mailing address of nominee must accompany nomination.
- A narrative, typed essay not to exceed 500 words summarizing the nominee's accomplishments during the current administrative year.
- Please include pictures, clippings, scrapbooks, folders, etc., either electronically or via postal mail.
- Nomination must be signed by the candidate's unit Junior Activities advisor.
- Attach an award cover sheet, including the name of the award, as well as the name and contact information for the department Junior Activities chairman
- All entries must be sent by the unit chairman to national headquarters, to the attention of the Junior Activities Program Coordinator. Entries must be postmarked by June 1, 2017, or emailed by 5:00 p.m. EDT June 1, 2017. (See addresses located at the front of this program Plan for specific division contact information).
- Entries will be judged by the national Junior Activities committee.

Junior Public Relations Award: Best Media Coverage of Activity or Project

Award type: Engraved Plaque

Presented to: One Junior group (department, district or unit)

Materials and guidelines:

- Entries must include the award cover sheet located in the program Plan.
- Awarded to the Junior group with the best media coverage of their activities or a project.
- Narrative not to exceed 500 words. Include specific examples of media coverage, including news articles, news releases, newsletters, pictures of displays, ALA events, speeches, website address, social media activity, etc.
- All entries must be sent to the National Chairman postmarked by June 1, 2017, or emailed by 5:00 p.m. EDT June 1, 2017. (See addresses located at the front of this program Plan for specific division contact information).

Additional Resources You Can Use

1. www.ALAforVeterans.org:
 - a. Junior Activities Handbook - free on the ALA website; printed copies for purchase through Emblem Sales at emblem.legion.org
 - b. Junior Leadership Course
 - c. Junior Patch Program - information by level
 - d. ALA Unit Handbook (free on the ALA website; printed copies for purchase through Emblem Sales at <http://emblem.legion.org>)
 - e. ALA Annual Impact Report Form (part of the Programs Action Plan)
 - f. Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation: A Guide for Volunteers
2. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs information on student volunteers: www.volunteer.va.gov/StudentProgram.asp
3. American Legion Auxiliary Junior Activities Facebook page: www.facebook.com/alajuniors
4. Your national Junior Activities Committee members (see list on front page of this program Plan).



American Legion Auxiliary 2016-2017 National Award Cover Sheet

This cover sheet should be attached to each narrative submitted for a national award. Please fill out the information as completely and accurately as possible.

Award certificates will be completed using the information given on this sheet, so please write carefully. All awards will be mailed to the department office after national convention. Department presidents may wish to recognize award recipients by presenting them at a department function.

National committee sponsoring award: _____

Type of Award: Department Unit Member

Name of the award you are applying for: _____

Complete the following if you are applying for a department award:

Name of department: _____

Name of department chairman: _____

Chairman's phone number: (____) _____ ALA member ID#: _____

Chairman's email address: _____

Please complete the following if you are applying for a unit award. Be sure to give the complete name of your unit. The award certificate will be prepared using the information you include below.

Unit #: _____ Full official unit name: _____

Unit president/chairman (circle one) name: _____

Phone number: (____) _____ ALA member ID#: _____

Email address: _____

Please complete the following if you are applying for a member award. Be sure to give the complete name of the member. The award certificate will be prepared using the information you include below.

Unit #: _____ Full official unit name: _____

Member Name: _____ ALA member ID#: _____

Nominating Member (if different from above): _____

Nominator's Phone number: (____) _____

Nominator's Email address: _____

Please see your committee Plan of Action to determine where to send this form.