2027 MEMBERSHIP
and
AWARDS MANUAL

2026 – 2027

DEPARTMENT OF TENNESSEE

MEMBERSHIP
INCENTIVE AND
AWARDS MANUAL

TONYA LAUNSBY
Department Commander

RON HESSIL
Department Senior Vice Commander

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DEPARTMENT COMMANDER'S 2026-2027 VISION

The 2026-27 Department Commander Goals and Platform. **Communication** needs to happen across the board at all levels in order to successfully succeed as a team.

- I will communicate substantively with the Department Senior Vice Commander, Division Vice Commanders, District Commanders, Adjutant, the members of the DEC and others as needed.
  1.) **Senior Vice Commander:** We will be communicating regularly via phone calls, text messages, emails and in person at various events.
  2.) **Division Vice Commanders:** We need to speak on the phone at least once a week, send occasional text messages as needed, and send weekly email updates.
  3.) **District Commanders:** We need to speak at least every other week, send occasional text messages as needed, and email updates every other week.

- I will send updates as needed via email.
  1.) District Commanders, please share these emails with your Posts. These emails will be titled: "American Legion Department of Tennessee Commander Update (Month, Day, Year)." This will allow the information to get to the Post and will allow you the opportunity to stay connected as well.

Note: Senior Vice Commander Ron Hessil and I will communicate regularly, so please be on the lookout for his correspondence as well. Also, please ensure to communicate with him at least as much as you communicate with me or more. Please do not be afraid or apprehensive about asking questions or speaking up at any point you feel as though something is not right. Other than that, let us do our best to have a fun and productive year.

Guidance-Direction-Purpose-Steering our way to success!

Tonya L. Launsby
Tonya L. Launsby
Department Commander
American Legion Department of Tennessee

2027

MEMBERSHIP "*RENEWAL*" NOTICES ARE SENT BY NATIONAL TO LEGIONNAIRES

Posts Must Have "Dues" Transmitted to the Department or Entered into MyLegion using Online Membership Processing By	OR	The Next RENEWAL will be sent to Your Legionnaire by National on:
September 9, 2026	or a second reminder	October 3-9, 2026
October 14, 2026	or a third reminder	November 7-13, 2026
December 9, 2026	or a fourth reminder	January 2-8, 2027
February 10, 2027	or a fifth reminder	March 2-9, 2027
April 14, 2027	or a sixth reminder	May 1-7, 2027

Renewal Notices are Mailed to Members By "National" Based on the *Cutoff Dates in the "left column indicated above." Membership can be renewed online at www.legion.org/renew.*

Prevent Duplicate Renewal Notices from National and reduce the cost of additional mailings.
Ensure Dues are *Transmitted* to Department weekly.
DO NOT HOLD MEMBERSHIP DUES AT THE POST.

Membership Dues Are *Payable in Advance* of The Legion Year! Dues for 2027 should be paid No-Later-Than *October 20, 2026*
If 2027 Dues Are Not *"Paid-On-Time,"* Your Membership is:

DELINQUENT	IF NOT PAID BY	JANUARY 1, 2027
SUSPENDEND		FEBRUARY 1, 2027
FORFEITED		JUNE 30, 2027

Important Point: Dues collected by an American Legion Post are for all three levels, Post, Department and National. A member's annual dues *are not considered paid* until *paid at all three levels*, thus the need to transmit dues weekly to the Department. Collecting a member's dues at Post level and failing to transmit Department and National Dues is "*illegal*."

Membership renewals can also be made online at www.legion.org/renew. Each Post must transmit $38.00 to Department: Department Dues ($14.50) and National Membership Dues ($23.50).

DEPARTMENT OF TENNESSEE MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS and DEPARTMENT OF TENNESSEE AWARDS

THIS YEAR'S MEMBERSHIP THEME IS:

"Guidance-Direction-Purpose-Steering our way to success!"

100% OF 2027 MEMBERSHIP GOAL BY OCTOBER 20, 2026

Deadline: November 15, 2026

In accordance with ARTICLE X, Section 3 of the amended Department's Constitution, Revised June 6, 2021, and Article X, Section 4 of The American Legion National Constitution, Revised August 27 – 29, 2019. "Annual dues shall be payable October 20th of each year, for the succeeding calendar year." $100.00 will be awarded to each Post that has reached their 2027 membership goal and has transmitted the respective dues to Department/National no later than October 20, 2026; a check will be presented to the deserving Post at the next Department Convention. Submit your request in writing by November 15, 2026. The respective Post Commander or Post Adjutant must sign the award request. We will not honor requests after November 15, 2026. The Department will verify the membership transmittal dates.

LEGION BIRTHDAY AWARD:

Cutoff Date: March 1, 2027

The Department will award $100 to each post in the following categories for having the highest percentage of increase in membership as of March 1, 2027, compared with the post's March 1, 2027, membership statistics. Posts are placed in Category I through V according to Membership.

Awards are presented at the Annual Department Convention.

Category	I	15	- 100	members
Category	II	101	- 500	members
Category	III	501	- Plus,	members

DISTRICT 100% MEMBERSHIP AWARD: Cutoff Date: May 1, 2027

If a District Commander's District reaches or exceeds 100% membership in their district, the Department will award the District Commander $500 to be ***used only if*** the District Commander attends the 2027 National Convention in Louisville, KY.

DEPARTMENT MEMBERSHIP RECRUITER AWARD: Cutoff Date: May 1, 2027

The Department will be awarded the Department Membership Recruiter Award based on the following description: The membership status must be achieved by May 1, 2027. Certified by the Post Adjutant and sent to the Department Headquarters before May 15, 2027. *$100 for recruiting 15 or more new members – awarded at the Department Convention*

POST RETENTION AWARD:

Cutoff **Date: May 1, 2027**

The Department will award $100 check in the same three categories as the Legion Birthday Award to the post having the highest membership retention percentage with a minimum of ***95%*** as reported by National on May 1, 2027.

Category	I	15	- 100	members
Category	II	101	- 500	members
Category	III	501	- Plus,	members

SAM D. STOOKSBERRY MEMORIAL AWARD: Deadline: May 15, 2027

A beautiful plaque presented in memory of Past Department Commander and Membership Chairman Sam D. Stooksberry, goes to the Post that achieves the greatest percentage of increase in Post Membership (on May target date of each year, when compared to the previous year's membership). The plaque will be presented at the Department Convention. ***New Posts chartered during the 2026-2027 membership year are not eligible for this award.***

2027 ALL-TIME HIGH MEMBERSHIP CITATION: Deadline: December 31, 2027

Each Post achieving an all-time high in Post Membership by December 31, 2027, will be awarded a special citation at the annual Department Convention. New Posts chartered during the 2026-2027 are not eligible for this award.

THE POST AND DEPARTMENT HISTORIES: Deadline May 15, 2027

The National Historian will conduct annual one-year narrative history and yearbook history contests for the department level. These contests add continuity to the recording of department events for future generations. Comprehensive records are of significant historical value.

Department historians are encouraged to use the same format as posts for their one-year department

Narrative history and one-year department yearbook: Where the outlines say "post," insert "department," and determine if the suggested item fits the context for your narrative history or yearbook.

Judging department entries for both the narrative and yearbook categories is based on the department's history covering one year, beginning with the installation of department officers up to and including the annual department convention and installation of the next year's officers.

To participate in the national contest, department histories must be "certified" by the department adjutant and forwarded to the National Historian to arrive in Indianapolis by Sept. 15, 2027.

Please check the Post Officer's Guide and Manual of Ceremonies for guidance. The 2027 contest will be strictly digital not to exceed 50Mb.

DEADLINE MAY 15, 2027

Mail To: American Legion Department of Tennessee
318 Donelson Pike
Nashville, TN 37214

Department Commander feels that elected DEC members should not be eligible to receive this award

NOMINATION FORM
FOR
"LEGIONNAIRE OF THE YEAR"

Please send candidate's photograph (*bust shot*; *waist to top of head wearing legion cap, if possible*) ***via email attachment to mike@TNLegion.org.*** For Most Award Credit: Please concentrate on the CANDIDATE's contribution to The American Legion's "FOUR PILLARS" and MEMBERSHIP. Please enclose this application along with your candidate's supporting information at the address above.
PLEASE, DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR CANDIDATE'S NAME OR LOCATION INFORMATION IN YOUR SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:

_____

CANDIDATE'S NAME (FIRST, MI, LAST **MEMBER #** **POST #**

Has your candidate completed:

1. The American Legion Basic Training? (If so, include when)_____
2. The Tennessee American Legion College? (If so, include when)_____
3. The National American Legion College? (If so, include when?) _____
4. American Legion Leadership and Development Courses? _____
5. If so, which courses and when?_____

_____

Describe any "Community, Post, District, Division, Department or National Honors" that were bestowed on your candidate "2026-2027 membership year" that reflects an honor to THEIR "Post" and "The American Legion." Do not send certificates, photos, or newspaper clippings. Make generic reference in 500-word essay.

ON SEPARATE SHEET, IN 500 WORDS (NO PHOTOS OR NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS)

1. Describe how your candidate supported specific American Legion "Americanism" Programs within the last 12 months, please expound on one or more of the following sub-areas as to how, who, what, when, and where:
    a. American Legion Boys State
    b. American Legion Oratorical
    c. American Legion Baseball
    d. American Legion Scouting

2. Describe how your candidate has contributed to "National Security and Foreign Affairs" that involved The American Legion; please expound on one or more of the following sub-areas as to how, who, what, when, and where:
    a. Memorial Day Flag Presentations
    b. Veterans/Memorial/Armed Forces Day Flag Ceremony/Parade and Presentations
    c. Presentations for Local Civic/Educators
    d. Promoted voting
    e. Other Legion Community activities (Flag etiquette education at a school, etc.)

3. Describe how your candidate has contributed to the well-being of the local "Veteran Affairs and Rehabilitation" population; please expound on one or more of the following sub-areas as to how, who, what, when, and where:
    a. Transportation of veterans to Veteran Affairs Medical Facilities/Clinics:
    b. Assisting veterans to enroll in Veteran Affairs entitlements (VAMC care, education, etc.)
    c. Donations to VAMCs or VA Clinics or Veteran Nursing Homes
    d. Volunteer Service at a VAMC, VA Clinics or Veterans Nursing Home
    e. Activities for hospitalized or disabled veterans
    f. Operation Comfort Warrior
    g. Military Funeral Honors

4. Strong National "Defense" …how has the nominee contributed? Please expound on one or more of the following sub-areas as to how, who, what, when, and where:
    a. American Legion JROTC Cadet of the Year
    b. American Legion Junior Shooting Sports

5. Legislative:
    a. Lobbied members of the United States Congress
    b. Lobbied State Legislature
    c. Lobbied local political leaders
    d. Promote Legion Legislative Issues

6. Describe what positive contributions your candidate has made toward "Legion Membership" within your respective American Legion Post. Please expound on one or more of the following sub-areas as to how, who, what, when, and where:
    a. Recruit New Members as part of the Post Membership Team
    b. Renew Current Members Post
    c. Revitalization
    d. Reconnect through Department of Defense's Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program
    e. Buddy Check

PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE ANY REFERENCE TO THE NAME OF NOMINEE'S COMMUNITY OR THE NOMINEE'S POST IN THE NARRATIVE.

"Two of the following Legion Post Officers must sign the nomination:

Post Commander_____Date:_____

Post Adjutant _____Date:_____

Post First Vice Commander_____Date:_____

Reminder – Please send photo via email attachment to mike@tnlegion.org. Application is available on the Department website.

Recommend Sending the Entire Package as An Email Attachment.

NATIONAL AWARDS

SPECIAL INDIVIDUAL RECOGNITION/ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

National Recruiter of The Year

Deadline: May 15, 2027

The individual certified with the highest number of NEW Members recruited from all the Departments will be declared "National Recruiter of the Year." The award consists of an all-expense paid round-trip to the National Convention for the Legionnaire and guest including hotel accommodation for 6 days/5 nights and reserved seating tickets to the National Commander's Banquet. The following awards for the National "Recruiter of the Year" will be presented to the next highest 26 individuals:

- $1,000 Award Certificate from Emblem Sales
(10) - Third Prizes - $150.00 Award Certificate
(15) - Fourth Prizes - $100.00 Award Certificate

"GOLD BRIGADE" AWARDS"

Deadline: May 15, 2027

A Legionnaire who recruits 50 or more NEW members into The American Legion by **May 15, 2027**, will qualify for enrollment in the elite "Gold Brigade" of The American Legion. Also, special recognition will be given to those Legionnaires enrolled in the Gold Brigade through special announcements in THE DISPATCH and in special articles in other publications. The National Commander will recognize members of the Gold Brigade during the National Convention. The gifts awarded to a "Gold Brigade" will depend on the number of times he/she has qualified for this award. The first time a Legionnaire qualifies for the Gold Brigade, he/she will receive a designer jacket or sweater with the Gold Brigade logo on the left breast or polo shirt; a cap pin, a Gold Brigade patch for the blue blazer, and a Gold Brigade Certificate. A second, third-, or fourth-time winner will receive a Gold Brigade patch and Certificate, a "HASH MARK" for the jacket sleeve, and the choice of either another designer jacket or sweater with the Gold Brigade logo on the left breast or a polo shirt.

FIRST time Gold Brigade members receive:

1) Gold Brigade Patch
2) Special Gold Brigade Cap Pin
3) Designer Jacket or Polo Shirt or Sweater with a Gold Brigade Logo

SECOND time (or more) Gold Brigade members will receive:

1) Gold Brigade Certificate
2) "Hash Mark" for jacket
3) Designer Jacket or Polo Shirt or Sweater with a Gold Brigade Logo

"SILVER BRIGADE"

Deadline: May 15, 2027

A Legionnaire who recruits 25 to 49 NEW members into The American Legion by **May 15, 2027**, will qualify for this award. A silver pin and certificate will be awarded.

Note: Silver Brigade and Gold Brigade awards cannot both be awarded to a recruiter during the same membership year.

"BRONZE BRIGADE"

Recently approved by the NEC Spring 2023, recognition for a Legionnaire who recruits 15 to 24 NEW members into The American Legion by **May 15, 2027**. Bronze Brigadiers receive a bronze pin and a certificate.

RECRUITER'S MEMBERSHIP LIST

BY:		POST #		
	MEMBER'S NAME	ID#	NEW	RENEW
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
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21				
22				
23				
24				
25				

RECRUITER'S MEMBERSHIP LIST

BY:		POST #		
	MEMBER'S NAME	ID#	NEW	RENEW
26				
27				
28				
29				
30				
31				
32				
33				
34				
35				
36				
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50				

REPORT OF LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARD

Deadline: Anytime

Purpose is to submit the names of Legionnaires who have been awarded a Life Membership by their post for the purpose of recognizing the receipt of this honor by publishing their name in The American Legion Magazine, as space is available. Report available at Department Headquarters.

DEPARTMENT RECRUITER OF THE YEAR. Due immediately following May 2027 Target Date

The top new member recruiter, properly nominated and certified from each department, will be awarded a framed certificate noting their accomplishment.

Download application »

PIONEER AWARD

This award recognizes those directly involved with new post formation. However, recognition and awarding of this citation are the new post's responsibility.

100% DISTRICT COMMANDER PIN

This special pin is worn only by those Legionnaires who as district commanders accomplished at least 100 percent of their assigned district membership goals. These commanders may be nominated at any time during the calendar year.

TOP DISTRICT COMMANDER'S NEW POST ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

District commanders who create new American Legion posts in their respective districts and have the new post's temporary charter application on file at National Headquarters by the May target date will receive a framed certificate.

POST EXCELLENCE AWARD

(Subject to change based on the 2026-2027 National Commander's objectives) To qualify for the American Legion's Post Excellence Award, a post is required to achieve excellence in four areas: membership, submission of the Consolidated Post Report (CPR), attaining a 90% renewal rate, and community activity.

The purpose of this award is membership growth, exposure of American Legion values to the community, and increased visibility of the American Legion Family through service projects. A post achieving this qualification will have had numerous post members involved in planning and achieving these goals. Many posts are already active in these areas and will qualify without extra effort. Others, however, will need to increase their efforts in one or more areas to qualify for the award.

The standard to be achieved in each area is as follows:

Membership: The post must attain at least 103% of their membership goal***. At least one post officer attends district meetings.***

Consolidated Post Report: CPRs must be submitted by ***July 1, 2027***. The American Legion's federal charter requires the submission of an annual report to Congress on activities for the year. MyLegion.org has made it simple for a post to submit its CPR in a timely manner.

90% Renewal Rate: The post must renew at least 90% of its members that were on the ***2026 roster***.

Community Activity: The post must conduct an event that connects the local community with The American Legion post. The objective is to open your doors, welcome the community in, and educate them on what The American Legion is all about and how the post is an asset to the community. Posts do not need to have physical building to accomplish this. This activity can be held in a park, a community center, or anywhere the post can welcome and interact with the local community.

Certification for the award: The district commander responsible for the post will certify a post as having achieved the four specified criteria. The district commander will submit a list of posts meeting the criteria to department headquarters. That list should include the post name, phone number, address, and commander's name. If possible, accompany the last two criteria with copies of press releases submitted to the local media about the projects to show that the projects were not only accomplished but that an attempt was made to enhance the image of The American Legion through local media. The submitted copy should include a date and time stamp showing receipt by the media outlet.

NEW POST DEVELOPMENT PIN

The New Post Development Pin is available to any individual who assists with the initial start-up of a new post. Volunteers can be nominated at any time throughout the year.

DISTRICT COMMANDER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD and DISTRICT HONOR RIBBON

All district commanders whose May target date membership exceed the previous year's membership by at least the number of posts in that district will be awarded the District Commander Achievement Award framed certificate. In addition, the district will receive a District Honor Ribbon for its district colors.

DISTRICT COMMANDER RACE TO THE TOP

Competition is divided into five categories based on the membership of the district without regard to geographic locations. District commanders will compete in each of the following categories based on final membership year totals and a top district commander for the national award will be selected from each of the five categories. Post ribbons will also be awarded to each top district commander for all posts in those districts. To win, a district commander must have at least 100% membership and the highest percentage of membership over the previous year.

Race to the top categories:

- Districts of 15 to 1,499 members
- Districts of 1,500 to 2,999 members
- Districts of 3,000 to 4,999 members
- Districts of 5,000 to 7,499 members
- Districts of 7,500 members or more

First place: Winner and guest will be awarded a trip to national convention as a distinguished guest of the national commander, including round-trip airfare, tickets to the National Commander's Banquet and hotel accommodations for six days and five nights. District commanders will also receive Legion caps signifying they are a race to the top winners and recognition on stage at the national convention with ribbons for each of the district's posts.

Second place: $500 check.

Third place: $375 check.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Deadline to Department Headquarters: January 4, 2027

To recognize a well-rounded Law Enforcement Officer, who has exceeded, above and beyond, the duty requirements expected of the position held and who exemplifies the virtues of professionalism and dedication and has demonstrated a distinct pattern of community service to the community, state, or Nation; and, has proven personal dedication to societal security and protection. Plaque presented during the Commander/President's Ball. We will forward the Department winner to National for further consideration at the National level.

FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Deadline to Department Headquarters: January 4, 2027

To recognize a well-rounded Firefighter, who has exceeded, above and beyond, the duty requirements expected of the position held and who exemplifies the virtues of professionalism and dedication and has demonstrated a distinct pattern of community service to the community, state, or Nation; and, has proven personal dedication to societal security and protection. Plaque presented during the Commander/President's Ball. We will forward the Department winner to National for further consideration at the National level.

DEPARTMENT EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Deadline to Department Headquarters: January 4, 2027

To recognize a well-rounded Emergency Medical Technician, who has exceeded, above and beyond, the duty requirements expected of the position held and who exemplifies the virtues of professionalism and dedication and has demonstrated a distinct pattern of community service to the community, state, or Nation; and, has proven personal dedication to societal security and protection. Plaque presented during the Commander/President's Ball. Contact Department Contact Headquarters for application.

THE EMPLOYER OF VETERANS AWARD

Deadline to Department Headquarters: January 4, 2027

The Department of Tennessee may submit a total of three nominations for this category for national consideration.

- **One nomination** for a small company with fifty or fewer employees
- **One nomination** for a medium sized company with work forces of 51 to 200
- **One nomination** for a large company with 201 or more employees

NATIONAL AWARDS: These awards, one in each of the three employers of veterans' size categories, are presented at the National Convention. To be eligible for the Employer of Veterans Awards, nominees must meet the following criteria:

- At least 10 percent of the nominee's work force must be veterans.
- The nominee must have been in business for at least five years.
- The nominee cannot restrict employment to veterans only.
- The nominee must be a private sector employer. In other words, the nominee cannot be a city, state, or federal employer.

The Department of Tennessee may submit a nomination for an employer of veterans that does not meet the above criteria will receive a plaque for presentation. However, that nominee will not be eligible for a national award.

Selections for the Employer of Veterans Awards are made by the National Economic Commission Award Subcommittee.

Purpose of Award: To confer recognition on one small, one medium and one large employer in each state for outstanding records in the hiring and retention of veterans.

Nominations from posts, or sources outside the Legion, must be sent to the Department of Tennessee Headquarters. The Department will then select **one nominee** each in the small, medium, and large employer categories.

The National Commission provides free plaques to each Department that submits nominations. The National Winner will receive a large plaque to be presented by the National Commander at the Annual National convention and will receive a stipend to help defray the cost of their representative's travel to the convention city to accept the award.

AWARD TO ENHANCE THE LIVES OF DISABLED PERSONS

Deadline: January 4, 2027

The purpose of the National Organization on Disability (NOD) Awards competition is to confer national recognition on organizations, such as The American Legion, for their involvement in enhancing the lives of disabled persons by providing opportunities for their participation in community activities. Any Legion project or program that improves the quality of life for disabled persons will be considered.

All entries must be accompanied by an official nomination form and must not be longer than two pages of narrative. Supporting documents, which may also be submitted with the nomination, must not exceed ten pages.

Nominations from posts or other sources must be sent to the Department of Tennessee Headquarters. The Department then will select **one nominee** and will send the winning nomination to National.

The commission provides free plaques to each Department that submits nominations. The National Winner will receive a large plaque to be presented by the National Commander at the annual National Convention and will receive a stipend to help defray the cost of their representative's travel to the convention city to accept the award.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICE AWARDS

Deadline to Department Headquarters: January 4, 2027

The purpose of the Employment Service awards program is to confer national recognition annually on one outstanding Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER), one Disabled Veterans Outreach Program specialist (DVOP), and one local Employment Service (ES) office. LVERs, DVOPs, and the ES office provide job counseling, testing, and placement assistance to unemployed and underemployed veterans.

Nominations from posts, Employment Service employees or other sources must be sent to Department of Tennessee Headquarters. The Department then selects **one** nominee each in

the LVER, DVOP, and Employment Service Office categories, and sends the winning nominations with their supporting information to the National.

The National Commission provides free plaques to each department that submits nominations. The National Winner will receive a large plaque to be presented by the National Commander at the annual National Convention and will receive a stipend to help defray the cost of their representative's travel to the convention city to accept the award.

EMPLOYER OF OLDER WORKERS AWARD

Deadline: January 4, 2027

To confer recognition on one employer in each state for an outstanding record in the hiring and retention of older workers.

Nominations from posts, or other sources must be sent to the Department of Tennessee Headquarters. The department will then select **one** nominee and send the winning nomination along with their supporting information to the National

The commission provides free plaques to each department that submits nominations. The National Winner will receive a large plaque to be presented by the National Commander at the annual National Convention and will receive a stipend to help defray the cost of their representative's travel to the convention city to accept the award.

DANIEL J. O'CONNOR AMERICANISM TROPHY

Awarded annually to that department selected from among the top three departments attaining the greatest number of percentage points which are derived from the activities reported on the Consolidated Post Report form and which submits the best narrative statement supporting the claim of points shown.

a. The Americanism Commission shall determine the top three departments achieving the greatest number of credit points based upon a review of all Consolidated Post Reports submitted to National Headquarters.

b. A Certification by the department as to the number of active posts is required.

c. The winner shall be selected from the aforementioned 3 departments based on the best narrative statement supporting the claim of points determined from the Consolidated Post Report. Such a narrative statement is to be no less than two hundred words and not more than 500 words.

MICHAEL GUTY HOMELESS VETERANS OUTREACH AWARD

Deadline: January 4, 2027

In January of 2003, the Veterans Employment & Education Commission requested that each department appoint a ***Homeless Veterans Task Force Chairman***, who should coordinate the department's activities and report on them to the **Department Adjutant** and to the **Veterans Employment & Education Division at least once a year.**

The Homeless Veterans Outreach Award, instituted in 2005, recognizes departments for their activities toward eliminating homelessness among veterans and prevention of future homeless veterans.

This award will be given to The American Legion Department that demonstrates American Legion family involvement in homeless veteran initiatives that show outstanding support for activity in any or all these areas: volunteerism, prevention, supportive housing, advocacy, and fundraising.

Have you appointed a Homeless Veterans Task Force chairperson? Does he/she have a committee? How often do they meet? Are your members collaborating with the Sons of The American Legion? The American Legion Auxiliary? Are they working with agencies within the Departments of Defense, Labor, and Veterans Affairs? Are they working with local and county agencies, shelters, and faith-based and community-based organizations?

Tell us how many of your members participate in your programs. Do programs operate year- round or once a year? How are your activities organized? Please tell us in narrative form what you are doing toward the goal of ending homelessness among veterans.

The Homeless Veterans Task Force executive committee will review the reports during the Washington Conference, and the winner was chosen by the National Veterans Employment & Education Commission Awards Subcommittee.

THE AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL EDUCATION AWARD

a) An individual, group or organization that has promoted the education programs of The American Legion.

b) An individual, group or organization that has promoted education programs that correspond to the goals of The American Legion

c) An individual, group or organization that has promoted or advanced education programs at the National level.

Department Award for 100% Post Children & Youth Reporting Description A certificate signed by the National Commander, National Adjutant, Americanism Chairman and Committee on Children & Youth Chairman. Sponsored By National Headquarters, The American Legion, Americanism Commission. Authority April 30, 1963, report of the National Child Welfare Commission; Resolution No. 1, National Executive Committee, October 18-19, 1967; NEC Resolution No. 7, October 9-10, 1974. How Awarded Certificates are shipped to departments for appropriate presentation at a department meeting immediately following the report year. Conditions

1. To achieve 100% of posts indicating Children & Youth activity on Consolidated Post Report forms.
2. Submit its Department Children & Youth Report to National Headquarters by the deadline date.
3. Any department whose membership is equal to or above the membership of the smallest department of the 50 states and the District of Columbia shall be recognized for this award.
4. The size of the departments, for comparative purposes, shall be determined by the immediately preceding full calendar year's membership for all departments concerned.

DEPARTMENT AWARD FOR 100% POST CHILDREN & YOUTH REPORTING

A certificate signed by the National Commander, National Adjutant, Americanism Chairman and Committee on Children & Youth Chairman.

Certificates are shipped to Departments for appropriate presentation at a department meeting immediately following the report year.

1. To achieve 100% of posts indicating Children & Youth activity on Consolidated Post Report forms.
2. Submit its Department Children & Youth Report to National Headquarters by the deadline date.
3. Any department whose membership is equal to or above the membership of the smallest department of the 50 states and the District of Columbia shall be recognized for this award.
4. The size of the departments, for comparative purposes, shall be determined by the immediately preceding full calendar year's membership for all departments concerned.

THE AMERICAN LEGION AND SCOUTING "SQUARE KNOT" AWARD

This award is designed to recognize American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion members who are actively involved in the Scouting program. This award is not meant to be a selective or limited award, but one that is available to any American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion member who completes the requirements for the award. The award is meant to recognize dedication and work required by an American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion member to assist in furthering the Scouting program in The American Legion.

The award includes a gold and purple square knot, which may be worn on the Scout uniform. A certificate and congratulatory letter from the national commander of The American Legion are also included as recognition for the award.

To be considered for The American Legion Square Knot, it is expected that American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion members will work to provide the maximum impact of The American Legion's support of the Scouting program and to achieve maximum visibility.

A. Service

1. Be a current member of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of The American Legion.
2. Be a current registered Scouter in a leadership

position at the unit, district, or council level; or as a Chartered Organizational Representative (COR); or as a district, council, area or regional member-at-large; or as a commissioner at any level.

B. Training

If serving as a unit leader complete five of the following:

1. Complete your unit leader Position-Specific (Role Based) Course (Scoutmaster Position-Specific, Venturing Advisor Position-Specific, Cubmaster and Assistant Cubmaster Position-Specific, or Sea Scout Leader Position-Specific).

2. Complete "Youth Protection" training within the past 24 months.

3. Complete a certified "First Aid and CPR" certification within the past 24 months through either the American Red Cross or Emergency Care & Safety Institute.

4. Earn the Scouter's "Training Award" for your position.

5. Complete a Woodbadge, Powderhorn or Seabadge training program.

6. Attend a national training conference at either Bechtel Summit's John D. Tickle Training Center, Florida Sea Base or Philmont Training Center.

If serving as a Chartered Organizational Representative (COR), or as a district, council, area or regional member-at-large, or as a commissioner at any level, complete three of the following:

1. Complete the Position-Specific (Role-Based) Course for your position (Commissioner Position Specific Basic Training or Chartered Organization Representative Position Specific Training).

2. Complete a Woodbadge training program.

3. Complete a council or area specific degree program through the College of Commissioner Science or University of Scouting.

4. Attend a regional or area training conference such as the OA National Leadership Seminar or Regional/Area Commissioner Conference.

5. Attend a national training conference at either Bechtel Summit's John D. Tickle Training Center, Florida Sea Base or Philmont Training Center.

C. Tenure

1. Serve a total of three consecutive years in a Scouting leadership position at the unit, district, or council level; or as a Chartered Organizational Representative (COR); or as a district, council, area, or regional member-at large; or as a commissioner at any level.

D. Performance

While serving in a Scouting leadership position at the unit, district, or council level; or as a Chartered Organizational Representative (COR); or as a district, council, area or regional member-at-large; or as a commissioner at any level, complete a minimum of five of the following:

1. Serve a minimum of two years as a Post Chartered Organizational Representative for Scouting or Scouting unit leader and demonstrate success with your unit(s) in terms of growth in membership.

2. Assist your post, district, or department to raise funds to support Scouting. Participate with a local BSA district or council friends of scouting fundraising effort.

3. Participate as member of a BSA District or council membership/relationships committee and represent The American Legion.

4. Assist in organizing or reorganizing a cub pack, Scout troop, sea scout ship or venturing crew chartered by an American Legion post.

5. Participate in the Eagle Scout of the Year program at the post, district, or department level.

6. Contact Scout troops and venturing crews in your area through visits, roundtables or other means and solicit their participation in the National High School Oratorical Contest, Junior Shooting Sports Program, Boys State, American Legion Baseball, and other Americanism programs and document the results of your efforts.

7. Recruit manpower from your post or district to support a Scout activity such as a camporee, bicycle rodeo, merit badge day or other related event to help further American Legion recognition in support of the Scouting program.

8. Develop and carry out or participate in an American Legion program to recognize the leaders of Scouting programs in your post, district, or department.

9. Promote and coordinate the development of a network of department American Legion Scouting Team members to assist in the

development of Scouting within The American Legion.

10. Earn the Den Leader Training Award or Scouters Training Award.

11. Earn the Unit Leader Award of Merit or District Award of Merit.

12. Earn any Scouter's Key Award.

13. Earn the Distinguished Commissioner Service Award or Commissioner Award for Excellence in Unit Service.

E. Approval

1. Submit appropriate documentation (photocopies of membership card, course completion certificates, memorandum/letters signed by Scouting leadership highlighting accomplishments, etc.) in order to fully document the attainment of the requirements as outlined in sections A, B, C and D.

2. Obtain the written endorsements of your American Legion post commander, American Legion Auxiliary unit president or Sons of The American Legion squadron commander and the department Scouting chairman, department adjutant and department commander that you have satisfactorily completed the requirements for this award. (A website link to department headquarters addresses can be found on the back of the brochure to assist in obtaining the written endorsements of the department Scouting chairman, department adjutant and department commander.)

3. Submit the appropriate documentation and written endorsements to the Americanism Commission online at www.legion.org/scouting.

4. Note: Application packets that lack the appropriate documentation or written endorsements will be returned.

F. Awarding Process

The department would arrange for presentation of The American Legion Square Knot, certificate and congratulatory letter at an appropriate place and time.