

## VFW Post 392 - Scholarships 2021 - 2022

### Scholarships

September is the kick-off for the VFW and VFW Auxiliary Scholarship competitions for the 2021-2022 year and there are thousands of dollars in scholarships and monetary awards available through the VFW and VFW Auxiliary. Each year it provides millions of dollars' worth of awards and college scholarships. Awards can be given at the local, district and state levels.

For those who may not know, the VFW sponsors the ***Voice of Democracy, Patriot's Pen, Teacher of the Year, and Scout of the Year.*** The VFW Auxiliary sponsors the ***Young American Creative Art Scholarship and the Continuing Education Scholarship,*** all of which are explained below.

These scholarships are open to all students, whether you are in public, private, parochial or a home study program. Students do **not** have to be related to a VFW or VFW Auxiliary member to participate. The only exception to this rule is the Continuing Education Scholarship (*see details below*). Regardless of which competition you may decide to enter, all students must be a U.S. citizen or U.S. national.

What many interested parties may be unaware of is that there is a chain and/or steps that must be followed. The first step in the chain for all programs is the entry form, and it is entered at the **Post level**, which in this case would be VFW Post 392, Virginia Beach. The entries are judged and the first-place winner advances. [Rule: If there are 1-15 entry forms, only the first-place winner is put forward. If there are 16-30 entries, the first and second-place winner will advance. If there are 31 to 45 entries, the first, second and third-place winners will advance. Three is the limit.]

Step two, **Post** winners advance to the **District (regional) level** (up to a maximum of three based on the rule set out in step one) where the one first-place winner is chosen to advance. Step three, **District's** one-first-place winner advance to **Department (state) level**. Step four, the winner from each **Department (state)** then competes for the **national** prizes.

For the ***Young American Creative Patriot Art Contest,*** entries go from the **Post 392** straight to **Department**. This may not be true for all Posts.

The following is a brief explanation of each Scholarship:

**Middle School, grades 6 - 8:** Students are asked to write a 300–400-word essay expressing their opinion on a patriotic theme under the ***Patriot's Pen*** competition. The theme for the 2021-2022 school year is ***"How Can I Be a Good American?"*** The **Department** winners compete for \$55,000 in awards at the **national level**. The first-place **national** winner receives a \$5,000 award and an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., where they will tour the city (subject to COVID 19 restrictions). Your entry must be submitted to Post 392 by the deadline date of **October 31, 2021**. The entry form can be found at [vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships](https://vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships). Scroll down past "Voice of Democracy" and "Find a Post Near You," where you will find the entry form for ***Patriot's Pen.***

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As indicated above, awards are also available at the **Post level**. For example, this past spring, Post 392's first-place winner for Patriot's Pen was awarded \$700. Awards were also handed out to the second and third place winners.

**High School Students, grades 9 – 12:** There are two programs. The *first* is the ***Voice of Democracy*** competition. Students must write and record an audio essay on a patriotic theme. This year's theme is ***"America: Where do we go from here?"***

Record your reading of the draft to an audio CD or flash drive or sharable file through email. The recording can be no shorter than three minutes and no longer than five minutes (+/- 5 seconds max). Submit the audio together with a typed version of your essay and the ***Voice of Democracy*** entry form to VFW Post 392 by no later than **October 31, 2021**. The entry form can be found at [vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships](http://vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships). Students will compete for more than \$2 million in college scholarships and incentives. State winners receive an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. (subject to COVID-19 restrictions) to enjoy the nation's capital and compete for \$154,000 in scholarships – first place receiving a \$30,000 scholarship to any American college of their choice.

Just like Patriot's Pen, the first-place **Post winner** for the ***Voice of Democracy*** received an award of \$1,200 at an Award Ceremony held at Post 392 this past spring. An award to the second and third place winners were also presented.

***Side Note:*** *Judging is based on your audio recording. Therefore, you are encouraged to submit your entry as soon as possible, so that your audio CD or flash drive or shareable file through email, can be checked before judging commences to confirm there are no problems with hearing your audio. If there are problems, we will contact you so you can correct the problem and return it before the entry deadline.*

The *second* competition for high school students is the ***Young American Creative Art Contest***. It can either be two-dimensional or three-dimensional art.

- Two-dimensional art must be on canvas or paper. Watercolor, pencil, pastel, charcoal, tempera, crayon, acrylic, pen, ink, oil, marker, or other media taught may be used. Submit canvas entries on stretcher frames or canvas board; other entries must be matted on white. Do not frame. Art should be no smaller than 8" x 10", but no larger than 18" x 24", not including the mat.
- Three-dimensional art can be paper, papier-mâché, pottery, clay, metal work, fabric, etc. Pieces should be no larger than 18" in any direction and can weigh no more than 5 lbs. in weight.

Other requirements:

- Please note that digital art, photography, and jewelry are **not** accepted.
- A typed explanation of your entry in 250 words or less.
- A teacher or supervisory adult signature on the entry form.
- Should you choose to do something along the lines of the American flag, be aware that flag etiquette and positions is particularly important in this type of artwork.

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The first-place winner from each state competes for **national** awards totaling \$33,000. Again, monetary awards are available at the **Post level** as well. Your entry must be submitted to Post 392 by the deadline date of **March 31, 2022**. An entry form can be found at [vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships/](http://vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships/).

Here at the **Post level**, our first-place winner received an award of \$300 this past spring.

### **All Students, grades K - 12:**

In 1999, the VFW launched the *Smart/Maher National Citizenship Education Teacher Award* to recognize three exceptional teachers for their outstanding commitment to promote Americanism and patriotism to their students. Three teachers, one from each level (grades K-5, 6-8 and 9-12), are selected as **national winners**. Each **national** award teacher winner will receive the Past Commander-in-Chief John Smart Award and \$1,000. Their respective school will also receive \$1,000. If you know of a teacher who promotes civil responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism, then help give them the recognition they deserve by nominating them for the **Teacher of the Year Award!** The deadline entry date for Teacher of the Year Award is **October 31, 2021**, to VFW Post 392. The entry form can be found at [vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/teacher-of-the-year](http://vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/teacher-of-the-year). *Note: All current certified/licensed teachers are eligible. Nominations can be submitted by themselves, fellow teachers, family members, supervisors, or other interested individuals. Previous national VFW winners are ineligible.*

Like our other programs, the first-place winners from each of these three categories each received an award of \$400 here at the **Post level**.

**Scouts:** Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Venturing Crew or Sea Scouts and you are working toward Eagle, Gold, Summit Award or Quartermaster Rank, this Scholarship Program is called **Scout of the Year!** Anyone who completed their highest award and follows all the guidelines on the brochure is welcomed to enter. The deadline is **March 1, 2022**, to VFW Post 392. The entry form can be found at [vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/scout-of-the-year](http://vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/scout-of-the-year). Start now to make sure you complete your entry and paperwork.

Last year's first- place **national** winner received an award of \$5,000. Here at the **Post level**, the first-place winner received an award of \$400 at the Award Ceremony held in the Spring.

**Continuing Education Scholarship:** Finally, if you are 18 years of age or older and are a current member of the VFW Auxiliary and have been for at least one year, or you are the spouse, son or daughter of a current VFW Auxiliary member who has been a member for at least one year, submit your entry form and a brief essay of no more than 300 words your commitment to your goals and how this scholarship will help you obtain these goals. Four \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded each year, one in each of the four VFW Auxiliary Conferences. The entry date for the **Continuing Education Scholarship** is no later than **February 15, 2022**, and it must be submitted direct to VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters at the address or email address on the application form. The entry form can be found at [vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships/](http://vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships/).

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Contact me at the email address below for copies of any of the entry forms, particularly the Young American Creative Patriotic Art contest, as I have additional information to provide to help you along. Be sure to read the entire entry form for the contest you wish to enter, as the entry form provides complete detailed information on eligibility requirements, contest rules and the awards available.

Submitted by,

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