

Community Service

Program Action Plan - 2016-2017

Tanna Shepherd, Chairman

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

The Community Service Program has been a major outreach program of the American Legion Auxiliary since 1926. The Community Service Program promotes the American Legion Auxiliary's visibility within our localities through our commitment to community, state, and nation. By being visible in our localities, the Community Service Program demonstrates **Who We Are, What We Do and Why We Matter.**

What Can You Do?

Become visible within your community by hosting and participating in service projects for Veterans, Service Members and their families, and other local community programs. Promote suggested **ALA** Days of Service. Please note that your service projects could be small, medium or large-scaled events. Remember it does not matter how big or small an event, you can make a difference!

Ideas:

Member

- Volunteer and help organize service projects on suggested ALA Days of Service
 - 9-11 National Day of Service and Remembrance (September 11, 2016)
 - Make a Difference Day (October 22, 2016)
 - Veterans Day (November 11, 2016)
 - National Family Volunteer Day (November 19, 2016)
 - Martin Luther King Day (January 16, 2017)
 - National Volunteer Week (April 23 – 29, 2017)
- Use the ALA Service Not Self Volunteer Toolbox to be a better volunteer and offer well-rounded service projects.
 - www.ALAforVeterans.org, members only, resources, Community Service Committee
- Volunteer at local libraries, food pantries, shelters (domestic violence and homeless veterans), senior citizen centers, assisted living centers, nursing homes and for service projects and causes (walks, special events, etc.) in your communities. Wear ALA apparel while doing so.
- Be a member of local community boards and represent the ALA.
- Attend and represent the ALA at special events and celebrations in your communities.
- Remember to always be a visible representative of the American Legion Auxiliary. Do this by wearing a shirt with the ALA name or emblem, an emblem pin, etc.
 - **Note:** If you are ordering anything with the ALA name or emblem from a source other than Emblem Sales, remember that a request first must be submitted through Department Headquarters to National Headquarters for approval by the National Secretary. Contact the Department Secretary for more information on this process.

Unit

- Purchase shirts with the American Legion Auxiliary name or emblem for members to wear while they volunteer.

- **Note:** If your unit is ordering anything with the ALA name or emblem from a source other than emblem sales or your department, remember that a request first must be made submitted through your Department Headquarters to National Headquarters for approval by the National Secretary. Contact Department Headquarters for more information on this process.
- Always be a visible representative of the American Legion Auxiliary in your community.
- Implement and promote the ideas and tips found in the ALA Service Not Self Volunteer Toolbox found on the National Website (www.ALAforVeterans.org, members only, resources, Community Service Committee) to help your unit choose a project(s) that promotes community service.
- Organize and participate in service projects for veterans, service members and their families, and local community programs on ALA suggested days of service.
- Attend and represent the Auxiliary at special events in your community.
- Register service projects on websites, community forums and social media to attract other community members to participate in your service project.
- Collect items to fill Blessing Bags and assemble and distribute to homeless veteran shelters.
- Work on Community Service Projects with the Legion Family (Legion, SAL, and Legion Riders) and ask other organizations from you localities to assist with you on the project.

Community Service Reporting

Mid-Year Reports

- Each Unit Chairman is to submit a narrative report to their District Chairman by December 1st, 2016.
- Each District Chairman should submit a narrative report to the Department Chairman by December 15th, 2016.

Year-End Reports

- Each Unit Chairman is to submit a year-end report with a narrative and pictures/newspaper articles to your District Chairman by April 15th, 2017.
- Each District Chairman is to submit a year-end report with narrative and pictures/newspaper articles to the Department Chairman by May 1st, 2017.

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

- How did members recruit community volunteers (non-members) while engaged in ALA Community Service activities and/or projects?
- How did members engage high schools students (with or without service hour requirements to graduate) in ALA Community Service activities and/or projects?
- Did members volunteer for or organize service projects for any of the ALA suggested Days of Service? If so, which days were most successful for offering service projects?
- What type of community service activities and/or projects were accomplished by your Unit/District?

National Awards:

Each award application must include the cover sheet found in the program plan. All awards will be announced at National Convention during the Community Service pre-convention meeting.

Unit Award: Unit Community Service Award

Type of Award: Citation

Presented to: One Unit in each division (5 awards)

Materials and Guidelines:

- Entries must include the award cover sheet located in the program plan.
- Awarded to the most outstanding overall Community Service program in the division during the 2016-2017 administrative year.
- Include pictures and newspaper articles.
- Attach an award cover sheet, including the name of the award, as well as the name and contact information for the Department and Unit Community Service Chairmen.
- All entries must be sent to the Department Chairman by May 15, 2017.

Department Awards:

- **Carolyn Cunningham Monetary Award:** The unit with the best year-round community service program.

Department Chairman Personal Awards

- To the unit with over 250 members reporting the most Blessing Bags distributed to homeless veteran shelters.
- To the unit with less than 250 member reporting the most Blessing Bags distributed to homeless veteran shelters.
- To the unit reporting the best community service project involving the American Legion Family working together.

Additional Resources you can use:

1. www.ALAforVeterans.org:

- ALA Service Not Self Volunteer Toolbox
- How to Partner with Organizations for Community Outreach
- How to Register a Service Project with All for Good
- How to Register a Service Project with Eventbrite
- How to Mobilize Community Service Support for Those Who Serve
- How to Participate in a Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service
- How to Offer a Day of Service to a Veteran/Service member/Family/Community

2. ALA suggested Days of Service:

- 9-11 National Day of Service and Remembrance (September 11, 2016)
- Make a Difference Day (October 22, 2016)
- Veterans Day (November 11, 2016)
- National Family Volunteer Day (November 19, 2016)
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service (January 16, 2017)
- National Volunteer Week (April 23-29, 2017)

3. 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance website: www.911day.org

4. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service website: www.mlkday.gov
5. The Community Blueprint website: www.pointsoflight.org/programs/military-initiatives/community-blueprint
6. Follow us on Facebook:
 - American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters: www.facebook.com/alaforveterans
 - American Legion Auxiliary Community Service Facebook group: www.facebook.com/groups/ALACommunityService
7. Joining Community Forces Alliance website: www.jointservicesupport.org/communityforces/
8. ALA call to Service Corps AmeriCorps Project: www.ALAforVeterans.org/About/ALA-Call-to-Service-Corps

The ALA Community Service Program is a great way to be involved in the events in your Community. By your involvement in community events, you have the opportunity to promote the American Legion Auxiliary and our work with Veterans. If you have any questions, about Community Service, please contact me via the information listed below.

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