LEADERSHIP
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What is this program and why do we have it?
The Leadership program raises awareness of American Legion Auxiliary leadership development opportunities. The Leadership committee raises awareness of leadership development opportunities.

Sharing:
Taking time to share a favorite story about the positive impact you or someone you know that has made our mission worth doing! It helps tell the world who we are, what we do and why we matter. Tell anyone that will listen! (A great way to grow membership)

Find what you want to learn about:
If you go online to ALAforsVeterans.org there is many, many things you can learn and read about. You can download some of the handouts. You can learn lots through taking the Basics Course, Junior Basics Course, Senior Basics Course, the ALA Academy. Learn about flag etiquette by downloading the Be Right on Flag Etiquette. Lots of information is in the Unit Guide Book. These are just a few of the over 2000 items, forms and how to sheets. You can learn about member discounts and all about ALL the Auxiliary programs. You actually could spend hours on the sight and only see a small portion of the information available!

A little history about Leadership:
Throughout the history of the American Legion Auxiliary, there have been many outstanding leaders who helped make this great organization what it is today. In the early days, our members worked together with The American Legion to launch activities in the fields of rehabilitation, child welfare and Americanism. Over the years, leaders from units in small rural towns to those in large metropolitan cities worked diligently to establish programs that we still have today. The Poppy program, Christmas Gift Shops and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation are still some of the strongest programs we have, thanks in no small part to the great leaders of the past.

I wasn’t until the mid-1960’s that the Auxiliary considered having a formal leadership committee. In 964, the Finance Committee approved funding for the first Leadership School. The Leadership Development Conference was held at national headquarters in July, conducted by tree Indiana University professors from the graduate school of business. This project underwent a new phase for the 1966-67 administrative year when a Leadership Training Course Director was named. A series of courses to train Department leaders was instituted. Shortly after, Leadership became a nation committee, with a chairman and vice chairman. Leadership training and classes have taken on many forms over the years, including our current Mission Trainings.
Be a Leader:
As we celebrate our Auxiliary Centennial, we hope more members will become interested in
taking leadership roles so we can continue our legacy of service into our next hundred years.

Although many Units are having a difficult time getting members to run for an Officer position,
it is important that members know that you don’t have to be an officer to be a “leader”. Anyone
can be a leader by demonstrating strong ethics, working toward a common goal, and showing
lots of enthusiasm towards what you are doing!

I am encouraging UNIT MEMBERS to attend one of the Department Leadership Classes. They
are designed for the member, although some of the office duties are touched upon. There is so
much to learn about the Auxiliary programs and the protocol of the way we do things.

The Unit can learn:
It would be GREAT if those in charge of meeting agendas scheduled a section of each meeting
for a small “leadership tidbit”. Tell about how a program had come about. How Department and
National Chairmen are appointed. How to grow your membership. Every little “tidbit” of
information is leadership learning! Let’s all go out and get those tidbits so we are a stronger and
knowledgeable members of this wonderful organization!

NATIONAL AWARDS:
Please follow instructions as you fill out the National Report and Awards Cover Sheet (which I
will have available at the Fall Conferences and Leadership Classes).
Provide details/examples about the activity as outlined.

UNIT AWARD: Most Outstanding Unit Leadership Program (per division)
❖ Deadline: June 1, 2020
❖ Send to national division chairman postmarked by 5 pm EST.
   Marrick McDonald
   103 Summit Road, Ext
   Newport, NY 13416
   marrickm@icloud.com
   301-86-3812

DEPARTMENT AWARD: Due to this chairman by May 1, 2020
   NICHOLS TROPHY - To the District who has the highest percentage of Units
   attending a Leadership Awareness Course.

MID-YEAR REPORT: Due to this chairman by December 15, 2019. A quick narrative about
what your Unit has done, working on the leadership program since May.

For either report: Even if you have nothing to report, please send a report stating “No
Activity” or “Inactive” so that I can get 100% reporting.
HOW TO BE A GOOD LEADER

Committee:
Leadership

Contact Information for Questions:
leadership@ALAforVeterans.org

To some the title “leader” implies a domineering, take-charge, charismatic individual. Leadership isn’t an adjective. You don’t need to be an extrovert or charismatic to be a leader. Most members define leadership as the ability to achieve a position, not the ability to get followers.

Leadership is a mindset in action; it stems from social influence, not authority or power. Leadership has nothing to do with titles. You can be a leader in your workplace, your neighborhood, your family, and/or our organization, all without having a title.

Step-by-Step Instructions:
Be Knowledgeable — It is not necessary to be an expert on everything, but basic knowledge is essential. Where are your resources?

- Familiarize yourself with documents that govern the operation of your Unit or Committee
  - National Constitution and Bylaws (www.ALAforVeterans.org)
  - Department Constitution and Bylaws (contact your Department Headquarters or Department Chairman)
  - Sample Constitution and Bylaws (www.ALAforVeterans.org)
  - Unit Guide Book (sold through American Legion Emblem Sales at http://emblem legion.org)
  - Parliamentary Procedure (sold through American Legion Emblem Sales at http://emblem legion.org)
  - Local bookstores
  - Internet, etc.

- Possess a level of familiarity with programs of the American Legion Auxiliary
  - Finding program helpful hints: (www.ALAforVeterans.org) The following Committee tabs will provide additional information: Americanism, Children & Youth, Community Service, Education, ALA Girls Nation, Junior, Legislative, National Security, Poppy, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation.

- Strengthen knowledge on Parliamentary Procedure
  - Parliamentary Procedure (“How to Run a Meeting”)
  - Unit Guide Book (How to be a Successful Unit Leader)
  - How to Sheets

- Know the process for the appropriation and control of money. Bad financial practices do not just hurt the organization; they can result in criminal investigations and prosecution.
- www.ALAforVeterans.org
- Finance: How to monitor finances

Be Passionate - A good leader exhibits excitement; and through demonstrated, unwavering commitment to our vision, instills hope and inspiration to other members. A good leader “walks the talk” and in doing so earns the right to lead.

Listen - If you exhibit a proper attitude in listening, really listening, to your members the potential for identifying new opportunities will emerge. Instill in yourself, and others, that listening is an opportunity to grow. In the end, your success as a leader will be predicated upon your ability to listen and understand the viewpoint of others.

Have a Positive Attitude - Leaders should have an upbeat, optimistic attitude that serves as a source of inspiration for others. If leaders seem discouraged or apathetic, members are likely to also become uninspired and demotivated.
  - Be a cheerleader. Motivate others by your enthusiasm.
  - Follow up with your members to ensure they are achieving the goals, objectives and milestones established.

Lead with Integrity - A good leader must possess unquestionable character and lead with integrity. Integrity gives you so much as a leader; credibility, trust, confidence, influence and more.

Lead by Example - Who says leadership is a one-way relationship? As you work toward developing leadership qualities in yourself, don't forget to look to your fellow members for feedback and inspiration.
  - Pay attention to the things that have been effective in the past and always be on the lookout for new ways to inspire, motivate and reward your members.
  - Be willing to delegate responsibility – use the talents of others!
  - Always instill a climate of goodwill.
  - Be respectful. Remember those all-important "shout outs" to deserving members and certainly the two most important words, Thank you.
  - Do you care about your members and strive to help build leadership capacity in them?

Be Confident - Be aware of the way and manner which you present yourself. Bearing is everything! Be confident and decisive in your decision-making. Members will pick up on your approach to leadership and find reassurance, clear direction and security when a leader portrays confidence and positive demeanor.

Act Professionally - As a leader, you should be cordial to all of your members. You should also recognize the importance of dressing appropriately, showing up for meetings on time, and communicating in a professional manner. Your goals and expectations should be clear from the beginning. Members will be more motivated and less confused. Ask for input. Tell them that their perspective is crucial to your success.