

PUBLIC RELATIONS

2017-2018 American Legion Auxiliary Program Action Plan

What is this program and why do we have it?

Public Relations promotes who we are, what we do, and why we matter. Promoting who we are strengthens our brand and allows our communities to know how we make a difference. It also makes us appealing to potential members who will recognize our goal of helping veterans, service members, and their families.

What can you do?

1. Promote a positive image of the American Legion Auxiliary by supporting and promoting the efforts of Goal 5 of the ALA Centennial Strategic Plan (With The American Legion, Build Brand Loyalty).

Ideas:

Member

- Give an Auxiliary magazine gift subscription to your library or other local businesses.
- Distribute ALA brochures and posters in the community at libraries, job fairs, medical facilities, Post Homes, etc. You can print brochures online from the PR/Marketing Resources section at www.alaforveterans.org or order them from your Department Secretary.
- Wear your officially branded ALA apparel and “Honor Their Service” button when you are out in public. Button order forms are available at www.alaforveterans.org.
- Be prepared to answer when asked who the Auxiliary is, what we do in your community, and why we matter.

Unit

- Develop a list of local media contacts for your Unit to use. Step-by-step instructions are included in the ALA Public Relations Guide and Tips for Volunteer Recruitment toolkit that is available in the PR/marketing Resources in the Members Only section at www.alaforveterans.org.
- Build relationships with your local media and political figures to educate them on who we are, what we do and why we matter.
- Write a letter to the editor and/or news release for patriotic holidays and other events. Templates can be found in Marketing & Promotional Materials in Member Resources section at www.alaforveterans.org. (Team up with other Chairs to promote the Americanism, Poppy or other Programs and events in your community.)

- Familiarize yourself with and use the Public Relations Guide and tips for Volunteer Recruitment toolkit, the ALA Branding Guide and other tools available in the member resources section at www.alaforveterans.org.
- Order a copy of the “Step Up, ALA public service announcement DVD (\$10) to take to a local television station and request they air it, or request a free 15-second version for your public broadcasting station.

2. Build brand loyalty of the American Legion Auxiliary through utilization and promotion of websites, social media, and other electronic communications.

Ideas:

Member

- Promote Auxiliary events on your personal social media accounts
- Subscribe to *ALA eNews* and *In the Know eBulletin* via www.alaforveterans.org
- Link to www.alaforveterans.org in your personal email signature.

Unit

- Create or improve and actively maintain a Unit website that adheres to brand standards (for tips, see ALA branding Guide available in the Members Only section at www.alaforveterans.org.)
- Create and maintain an active social media presence for your Unit on one or more platforms that you are comfortable with (I.E. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram).

Public Relations Reporting

Mid-Year Reports-reflect the program work of Units in the Department. Each Department PR Chair is required to submit a narrative report to the Division PR Chair by January 5, 2018. Your Unit input is needed by December 20, 2017.

Year-End Reports-Our Annual Reports reflect the program work of all Units in our Department, and may result in a national award for participants if award requirements are met. Our Department PR Chair is required to submit a narrative report by May 15, 2018 to the Division PR Chair. Members and Units should follow their Departments protocol and deadlines.

As part of your Narrative Report, please include answers to the following questions:

- How has your Department website and/or social media page inspired your Unit to develop social media at the local level?
- Has your Unit been mentioned in the local media promotion of mission-related activities? What type of promotions have you received?

- Were PSA's distributed in our Department and what type of response did you receive?
- Does your Department keep an active and updated media contact list? How has this list impacted units?
- Have there been specific social media events coordinated by either a Unit or Department that broadly spread the ALA brand? (Example on Facebook, how many people reached or how many shares of a post?).
- What specific activities have you done to help build brand loyalty?

Public Relations Awards

Taking the time to share a favorite story about the positive impact you or someone you know has had on our mission or programs is worth sharing! Did a member of your Unit participate in an event or effort that provided a positive image of our programs or organization?

*****Department of Michigan Public Relations Awards*****

Press Books...

Gladys Lee Citation-To the Unit with the most publicity in a WEEKLY newspaper, substantiated by articles in their Press Book. Will be judged based on word the count.

Alma Viergever Citation-To the Unit, under 75 members, with the most publicity in a daily, weekly, or monthly paper, substantiated by articles in their Press Book. Will be judged based on the word count.

Leslie F. Kefgan Citation-To the Unit with the most inches of publicity in a daily newspaper, substantiated by articles in their Press Book.

Ivy Lee Reinhardt Citation-To the Unit with the best all-around Press Book.

Ada Bogart Citation-For the best Junior publicity Press Book.

Criteria for Press Book Entries:

1. Material must be prepared in a Press Book no larger than 12" X 15" on 8-1/2" X 11" pages.
2. The first page of the entry must include the name, address, and phone number of the Unit Chairman, name of the Unit and the total number of inches and pictures in the Press Book.
3. The entry must also include a completed copy of the Unit's Annual Report Form.
4. Photostat copies of articles may be used.
5. The name of the newspaper, date, and page number must be at the top of each article.
6. Newspaper articles, bulletins and photographs concerning an Auxiliary and/or Legion Family function/program should be included in chronological order.
7. Paid articles are not to be included.
8. The Press Book should tell the story of how the Programs of the ALA were promoted in the Unit.
9. *Do not underline anything!*
10. American legion Auxiliary or American Legion should be included in each article.

Website...

Marian "Pic" Webster Citation-Website award to the Unit creating/maintain the best website.

Newsletters...

Unit "Letter Style" Newsletter-Award for a Unit unable to publish a large formal newsletter, but sends out a newsletter in the form of a letter to their members.

District "Letter Style" Newsletter-Award for District who prefer not to publish a large formal newsletter, but sends out a newsletter in the form of a letter to their members.

Criteria for "Letter Style" Newsletter Publications:

1. Send one copy each of three (3) issues to be judged (published between April-March), to the District PR Chairman, postmarked no later than the deadline.

2. Include a copy of the Unit's Annual Public Relations Report with entry.

3. Entries will be judged as follows:

Unit or District name, number, address, editors' name.....	10 points
Meeting information (time, place &contact if needed).....	10 points
Member Information (new members, illness, etc.).....	15 points
Summary of recently completed projects or activities.....	10 points
Upcoming Unit activity(s).....	25 points
Auxiliary Programs.....	15 points
General Appearance.....	15 points
Total possible points.....	100 points

Best Unit Newsletter-To the Unit with the best newsletter publication.

Best Unit/Post Joint Newsletter-To the Unit with the best joint newsletter publication.

Best District Newsletter-To the District with the best newsletter publication.

Criteria for Newsletter Publications:

1. Send one copy each of three (3) issues to be judged (published between April-March), to the District PR Chairman, postmarked no later than the deadline.

2. Include a copy of the Unit's Annual Public Relations Report with entry.

3. Entries will be judged as follows:

Masthead (emblem, name of newsletter, date & editors' name)..	10 points
Meeting information (time, place &contact if needed).....	10 points
Unit Officers & Chairmen (list or names by articles).....	5 points
Member information (new members, illness, birthday, etc.).....	10 points
Summary of Unit activity/projects recently completed.....	10 points
Unit activity/projects coming up.....	15 points
Auxiliary Program Reports.....	15 points
Calendar of Events (incl. Dist. & Dept. Mtg. & events).....	10 points

General Appearance.....15 points
Total possible points.....100 points
***Items listed as Unit should include Legion/SAL if joint publication.

Broadcast...

Kanaby Broadcast Citation-For the best script for either radio or TV program by a Unit. Script verification from radio and/or TV with written confirmation form said radio and/or TV.

Unit effort/event narrative...

Viola Starkey Citation-To the Unit with the best narrative describing their outstanding effort/event that positively projects our image or programs.

Criteria for Viola Starkey Citation:

1. Article must be written in a narrative form, not to exceed 300 words.
2. Articles must be of some outstanding activity pertaining to the American Legion Auxiliary or some special community event that involved the Auxiliary. Activity must have taken place in the current Auxiliary year (April 1st to March 31st).
3. Unit may submit more than one entry in any given year.
4. Articles must be signed by Unit President and Secretary or PR Chairman.

*****National Public Relations Awards*** (For Members & Units)**

Include Awards Cover Sheet-ALA Member ID # needed. Provide details/examples about activity as outlined in the awards materials and guidelines section.

Member Award: ALA Brand Ambassador

- Award: Citation
- Presented to: one member in each Department who achieves excellence in promotion of the ALA with her use of social media, her appearance in public wearing ALA-branded apparel, and other activities that showcase the Auxiliary's unique branding through visual identity.
- Materials and guidelines: Document with action photographs, screen shots and other evidence of brand promotion activities. Activity must occur between May 1 prior to start of current admin year and May 1 before the end of the current admin year.

Unit Award: New Website or Social Media Account Launch

- Award: Personalized mouse pad and congrats letter
- Presented to: All Units developing a properly branded website or social media account during the current ALA administrative year

- Materials and Guidelines: Web address/URL, webmaster name and contact info, or name and contact info for ALA coordinator if webmaster/administrator is a third party. Site/Account must have been created after September 1 of the current ALA admin year. Website/Facebook page must conform to “Website and Social media Guidelines” in the *ALA Branding Guide*.

Unit Award: Most Outstanding Unit Public Relations Program

- Award: Citation Plaque
- Presented to: One Unit in each Division (5)
- Materials and Guidelines: Include three different media placements/coverage highlighting different ALA programs, featured in three different months (September 1- May 1 of current ALA admin year). Acceptable media publications must support the Auxiliary’s mission and goals.

Additional Resources

1. *American Legion Auxiliary Branding Guide*, available under PR/Marketing Resources in Members Only area at www.alaforveterans.org
2. “Photography Guidelines,” see ALA Branding Guide pages 20 & 21, available at www.alaforeterans.org
3. *ALA Public Relations Guide and Tips for Volunteer Recruitment* toolkit: www.alaforveterans.org.
4. ALA Style Guide: Available by emailing publicrelations@alaforveterans.org; and the AP Stylebook: www.apstylebook.com
5. www.alaforeteans.org: For submissions to national ALA media, templates for posters, flyers, news releases, and others; marketing materials: and much more.
6. The national Public Relations Committee Facebook group, search “ALA Public Relations”
7. Your national Public relations committee members (see Public Relations program page on the national website or Annual Supplement for contact information.

Department PR Committee Contact Information

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