

SERIES 2013-2014 PR-12

DATE: August 1, 2014

FROM: Vickie Thrower-Mills, National Public Relations Committee Member

SUBJECT: ALA Programs Overlap

Public Relations benefits all of our programs, especially since they overlap in many areas. We know that, what our members do makes a difference in the lives of veterans, servicemembers, their families and our communities. Let's make sure the public knows about it. Utilize your Public Relations Toolkit!

When you are hosting an event at your unit, district or department, publicize the activity using social media (such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Pinterest and You Tube). Please attempt to utilize "traditional media" like newspapers and television to publicize your program events as well. Make sure you are posting picture of the event before, during and afterwards to let people know what we do. Our Mission will be accomplished with the right Public Relations activities.

Facebook discussion groups can be set up for any American Legion Auxiliary program, and every unit, district, department and division may choose to set up a group to enable information to be distributed quickly. This is already a very common practice by Unit, Department and National Chairman in our organization. American Legion Auxiliary Chaplains, ALA Juniors and ALA Girls State/Girls Nation pages are already actively linked to our National Headquarters Facebook page.

National Security/Legislative: We should use the internet and social media to publicize important Legislative issues being voted on by Congress and Senators and encourage email or letter writing. For instance, solicit donations for your next care package drive or share the Legion's Action Alerts for immediate action with all of your supporters. (Remember, we love our members, but membership isn't required to make a difference.)

Americanism/Education/ALA Girls State: Promote our Americanism essay contest, ALA Girls State/Nation program and Education scholarships. Most scholarship applications and Girls State applications can be added to unit and department web pages for easy access. ALA Girls State websites from almost every state are linked to our National ALA organizations website. You can even use Facebook and/or Twitter to tag local schools, in an attempt to get the word out. (You may or may not get a response, but if you do, GREAT! and if you don't, you're no further behind for trying.)

Membership: Use Public Relations to recruit volunteers and new members. You can obtain the National Membership Promotional DVD and distribute to local organizations, television stations and other appropriate outlets. See www.ALAforVeterans.org for more information and retrieve, review and actively implement tools available that will attract new members and volunteers. Units and departments should take advantage of "How To" with step-by-step instructions for starting an eUnit by going to the Membership Plan of Action and following the easy instructions.

Children & Youth/Community Service/Junior Activities: Coordinate with school counselors, about available American Legion safety publications/comic books to supplement their programs to include Bullying Prevention; Gateway Drugs; Suicide, Warning Signs; Halloween Safety and Missing Children. (Visit www.legion.org/youth/publications for information.) Use Public Relations to make the

community aware of our “Host a Safe Child Class” for new moms; distribute Play it Safe, A Short Course in Child Safety, a publication of the American Legion. Coordinate with local health resources to include your county health office or grade school counselors. Junior Members can earn their Technology patches and assist older members with using social media, email, text, upload photos and basic computer skills.

And remember: Public Relations can make a difference in how successful our programs are on all levels!

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