



**Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.
Announces the 2025-2026 Patriot's Pen
National Scholarship Winners**

First place winner Andrew Ge, from San Ramon, California, represented the VFW Department of California, and was awarded the \$5,000.00 North End Post 144, Paul A. Spera Past Commander-in-Chief Award Scholarship.

Second place winner Michael Sieniawski, from Mt. Prospect, Illinois, represented the VFW Department of Illinois, and was awarded the \$4,000.00 VFW Award.

Third place winner Brandon Darnell, from Lake, Michigan, represented the VFW Department of Michigan, and was awarded the \$3,500.00 VFW Award.

Fourth place winner Canaan Ly, from Tempe, Arizona, represented the VFW Department of Vermont, and was awarded the \$2,750.00 Alaine Benson Memorial Award.

Fifth place winner Seanleander Hemanand, from Sussex, Wisconsin, represented the VFW Department of Wisconsin, and was awarded the \$2,500.00 Rehoboth Beach Post 7447 and Auxiliary (Dept. of Delaware) Award.

Sixth place winner Audrey Mudder, from Menno, South Dakota, represented the VFW Department of South Dakota, and was awarded the \$2,000.00 Clyde A. Lewis Department of New York and Auxiliary Award.

Seventh place winner Josiah Washington, from Reno, Nevada, represented the VFW Department of Nevada, and was awarded the \$1,750.00 Dept. of New Hampshire George J. Maxfield Post 1772 and Auxiliary John A. Knapper Memorial Award.

Eighth place winner Ashlynn Fertig, from Baltimore, Ohio, represented the VFW Department of Ohio, and was awarded the \$1,500.00 John F. Gwizdak Award.

Ninth place winner Olivia Smith, from Marble Hill, Missouri, represented the VFW Department of Missouri, and was awarded the \$1,500.00 VFW and James R. and Pat Mueller Award.

Tenth place winner Rayhan Luwaga, from North Providence, Rhode Island, represented the VFW Department of Rhode Island, and was awarded the \$1,500.00 VFW Award.

Emily Rossman, from Danville, Virginia, represented the VFW Department of Virginia, and was awarded the \$1,250.00 VFW Award.

Sophia Montag, from Buchanan, Georgia, represented the VFW Department of Georgia, and was awarded the \$1,250.00 Grace Minnix Memorial Award.

Prakrithi Balasubramanian, from Sherwood, Oregon, represented the VFW Department of Oregon, and was awarded the \$1,000.00 John V. Daniel's Jr. Post 2813 and Auxiliary (Dept. of New York) Award & John E. (Jack) Bales Post 10581 (Dept. of Colorado) Award (combined).

Gianna Desper, from Charleston, West Virginia, represented the VFW Department of West Virginia, and was awarded the \$1,000.00 Glenn D. Raney Memorial (Louisiana) Award & Gilbert N. Nelson Post 1326 and their Auxiliary, Bismarck, ND Award (combined).

Cora Peden, from Stratford, Oklahoma, represented the VFW Department of Oklahoma, and was awarded the \$1,000.00 Golden Valley VFW Post 7051 (Golden Valley, Minnesota) Award.

Luke Hoomes, from Loudon, Tennessee, represented the VFW Department of Tennessee, and was awarded the \$1,000.00 Louis W. Oppenheim VFW Post #1019 Award.

Jaelan McDonald, from Ocala, Florida, represented the VFW Department of Florida, and was awarded the \$1,000.00 Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Colorado Award.

Melanie Estrella, from Colwich, Kansas, represented the VFW Department of Kansas, and was awarded the \$1,000.00 Silver Spring Memorial Post 2562 (Dept. of Maryland) Award & Department of Utah Award (combined).

Levi Marthaler, from Hastings, Minnesota, represented the VFW Department of Minnesota, and was awarded the \$1,000.00 Department of Michigan Award & Warren A. Tressler Memorial (Dept. of Minnesota) Award (combined).

Carter O'Neal, from Mendenhall, Mississippi, represented the VFW Department of Mississippi, and was awarded the \$1,000.00 Department of Nevada Award & Chaplain Lyman Rollins Post 2005, Marblehead, Massachusetts Award (combined).

Kylee St. John, from Yadkinville, North Carolina, represented the VFW Department of North Carolina, and was awarded the \$1,000.00 Charlie H. Adamson, Jr. Memorial Award & Joseph A. Scerra Memorial (Dept. of Massachusetts) Award (combined).

Melissa Pitkin, from Olympia, Washington, represented the VFW Department of Washington, and was awarded the \$1,000.00 James L. Keeley Award & Department of Ohio Award (combined).

Mallory Diaz, from Kingman, Arizona, represented the VFW Department of Arizona, and was awarded the \$1,000.00 Department of South Dakota VFW and Auxiliary Award & Department of Idaho and Auxiliary Award (combined).

Lainey Skrdla, from Stuart, Nebraska, represented the VFW Department of Nebraska, and was awarded the \$1,000.00 Department of Georgia and Auxiliary Award.

Casseim Small, from West York, Pennsylvania, represented the VFW Department of Pennsylvania, and was awarded the \$1,000.00 Department of Connecticut and Auxiliary Award.

Richard Miskoff, from Woodbridge, New Jersey, represented the VFW Department of New Jersey, and was awarded the \$750.00 Department of Kansas VFW and Auxiliary Award & Department of Iowa Award (combined).

Piper Martin, from Fort Fairfield, Maine, represented the VFW Department of Maine, and was awarded the \$750.00 VFW Department of Washington and Auxiliary Eric G. Sandstrom Memorial Award.

Wren Bryant, from Park City, Utah, represented the VFW Department of Utah, and was awarded the \$500.00 Mary Margaret Romano Memorial (Dept. of Connecticut) Award.

Anne Stoneking, from Delta Junction, Alaska, represented the VFW Department of Alaska, and was awarded the \$500.00 VFW Southern Conference Award.

Thomas Summer, from Winnsboro, South Carolina, represented the VFW Department of South Carolina, and was awarded the \$500.00 Edward S. Banas, Sr. Award.

Addison Schmidt, from Harlan, Iowa, represented the VFW Department of Iowa, and was awarded the \$500.00 Deering Memorial Post 6859, Portland Maine Award.

Kynlee Waugh, from Hulett, Wyoming, represented the VFW Department of Wyoming, and was awarded the \$500.00 Department of Tennessee John Furgess Award.

Amelia Brick, from Lakeville, Massachusetts, represented the VFW Department of Massachusetts, and was awarded the \$500.00 Department of Missouri VFW and Auxiliary Award.

Shireen Koul, from Ellington, Connecticut, represented the VFW Department of Connecticut, and was awarded the \$500.00 The Robin V. Fell Memorial Award.

Dascha Gonzalez, from Baytown, Texas, represented the VFW Department of Texas, and was awarded the \$500.00 Deering Memorial Post 6859, Auxiliary Portland Maine Award.

Kinsey Stacks, from Bee Branch, Arkansas, represented the VFW Department of Arkansas, and was awarded the \$500.00 Department of South Carolina and Auxiliary Award.

Ryan Granzow, from Hobart, Indiana, represented the VFW Department of Indiana, and was awarded the \$500.00 Sanford-Springvale Memorial VFW Post 9935 Award.

Rigoberto Delgado, from Townsend, Montana, represented the VFW Department of Montana, and was awarded the \$500.00 Department of California Award.

Alessandra Flores, from Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, represented the VFW Department of New Mexico, and was awarded the \$500.00 Department of Arkansas "Dewayne Fletcher Memorial" Award.

Xander Cantrell, from Russellville, Alabama, represented the VFW Department of Alabama, and was awarded the \$500.00 Frederick H. Smalley Department of New Mexico Award.

Alexa Cruz, from Howard Beach, New York, represented the VFW Department of New York, and was awarded the \$500.00 VFW Department of Pacific Areas Award.

Alexis Sword, from Wayland, Kentucky, represented the VFW Department of Kentucky, and was awarded the \$500.00 VFW Department of New Jersey Award.

Camryn Carter, from Kailua, Hawaii, represented the VFW Department of Hawaii, and was awarded the \$500.00 Veterans of Foreign Wars of Ohio Charities Award.

Emma Givens, from Monroe, Louisiana, represented the VFW Department of Louisiana, and was awarded the \$500.00 Department of Wyoming and Auxiliary Award.

Ella Peavler, from Ansbach, Germany, represented the VFW Department of Europe, and was awarded the \$500.00 The Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Mississippi and Auxiliary Award.

Mike Roldan, from Bismarck, North Dakota, represented the VFW Department of North Dakota, and was awarded the \$500.00 Commander-in-Chief John Biedrzycki and 2015-2016 Department Commanders Award.

Melia Smith, from Fowler, Colorado, represented the VFW Department of Colorado, and was awarded the \$500.00 National President Francisca Guilford and 2015-2016 Auxiliaries Award.

Elsie Garrison, from Franconia, New Hampshire, represented the VFW Department of New Hampshire, and was awarded the \$500.00 Department of New Mexico and Auxiliary Award.

Gianna Campanella, from Gambrills, Maryland, represented the VFW Department of Maryland, and was awarded the \$500.00 Department of Nevada Award.

Crosby Haver, from Sweet, Idaho, represented the VFW Department of Idaho, and was awarded the \$500.00 Department of Pennsylvania 2015-16 "LDRSHIP" Award.

Ariyana Kurpad, from Wilmington, Delaware, represented the VFW Department of Delaware, and was awarded the \$500.00 Peter J. Mascetti Jr. & Department of Europe Award.

Jayce Shaffer, from Angeles City, Philippines, represented the VFW Department of Pacific, and was awarded the \$500.00 VFW and Auxiliary members of Southern Charles County Memorial Post 10081, Dept. of Maryland Award.