

I hope everyone that attended Fall Council found the training and presentation Dan and I did on ScholarsApp for Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy helpful. The presentation did go slightly over the hour we were allotted between the presentation and Q&A session, but there were so many good questions and discussions that time just flew by! There were a few items brought up during the presentation that are much different than reported in my previous newsletters and are very important to note for ScholarsApp and Patriot's Pen / Voice of Democracy.

The first item is that the Department of South Dakota VFW moved the original deadline date for Districts to get their submissions to the Department from January 10, 2025 to December 15, 2024. **This moves the deadline date up by almost a month. District Chairman – please be very mindful of this date change.**

The second item that was brought up was with regards to applicants being moved from one Post to another. Dan and I are leaving the decision up to the Post Chairman on if they want to keep the applicant in their Post or move them to the "correct" Post. Dan and I are just the people that can complete the transfer.

The final item that was discussed was the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the written portion. VFW National Representative Barb McKean had informed us that she had just gotten back from a National event that discussed this very topic. National had stated that they are not disqualifying applicants if ScholarsApp flags the essay as "Parts of their essay may include parts written by AI". After much discussion, it was decided we are leaving it at the discretion of the Post on if they want to accept the application for judging or disqualify it.

As I stated multiple times, this program falls during my busy season at work. If you call, please leave a voicemail. Whether it's a phone call, email, or text message, I will get back to you as soon as I can. Just a reminder that I will NOT be emailing any training or other sources during the 2024-2025 year. Everything that you will need is on our website (vfwauxsd.org). under "Programs" and "Scholarships".

- **Voice of Democracy Scholarship (essay and oral presentation)**

- o Theme: "Is America Today, Our Forefather's Vision?"

- ♣ **Post/Auxiliary Deadline: October 31, 2024**
- ♣ **District Deadline: November 15, 2024**
- ♣ **Department Deadline: December 15, 2024**
- ♣ **National Deadline: January 15, 2025**

- **Patriot's Pen Essay Scholarship**

- o Theme: "My Voice in America's Democracy?"

- ♣ **Post/Auxiliary Deadline: October 31, 2024**
- ♣ **District Deadline: November 15, 2024**
- ♣ **Department Deadline: December 15, 2024**
- ♣ **National Deadline: January 15, 2025**

- **Continuing Education Scholarship**

- ♣ **Department Deadline: February 15, 2025**
- ♣ **National Deadline: February 15, 2025**

- **Young American Creative Patriotic Art Scholarship**
 - o 2-Dimensional
 - ♣ **Post/Auxiliary Deadline: March 31, 2025**
 - ♣ **District Deadline: Optional**
 - ♣ **Department Deadline: April 15, 2025**
 - ♣ **National Deadline: May 5, 2025**
 - o 3-Dimensional
 - ♣ **Post/Auxiliary Deadline: March 31, 2025**
 - ♣ **District Deadline: Optional**
 - ♣ **Department Deadline: April 15, 2025**
 - ♣ **National Deadline: May 5, 2025**

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