



Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award Chairman's

Manual

HONORING THOSE WHO TEACH

The VFW launched the Smart/Maher National Citizenship Education Teacher Award in 1999 to recognize classroom teachers for promoting citizenship education. Three teachers, one from each level (grades K-5, 6-8 & 9-12) are selected as national winners. Each national award teacher winner receives the Past Commander-in-Chief John Smart Award and \$1,000. Their respective schools also receive a \$1,000 award. They also receive a paid trip to the VFW National Convention to receive their award. NOTE: Winners will receive a 1099-MISC as a result of their award and all expense paid trip. Visit this link for more information and for a nomination form:

<https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/teacher-of-the-year>

Eligibility

All current classroom teachers (teaching at least half of the school day in a classroom environment) are eligible. Previous national VFW winners and home school teachers are ineligible. Nominations can be submitted by fellow teachers, supervisors or other interested individuals (not relatives.) Self-nominees are not eligible. While a school official may nominate a teacher, permission from a school or district is not required.

Deadlines

October 31st - Deadline for teacher nominations at the Post. Post judging should be completed by **November 15th** and winners sent to District. District judging should be completed by **December 15th** and winners forwarded to the Department. Department judging should be completed **January 10th** and winners submitted to VFW National Headquarters by **January 15th**. Post chairmen must be sure to send the original nomination form, essay and official VFW Post teacher entry form of the winner from each grade's category level — along with one-page resume, up to five pages of documentation and a good

quality head and shoulders photograph from the winning teachers.

Judging

Select competent and unbiased judges. A panel of at least three to five judges is recommended. The VFW chairman should be present at the judging to provide assistance but should not be one of the judges. Prior to the judging, the chairman should review all nomination forms to ensure they adhere to the rules. Make sure entry is not a self nomination. The nominator should keep to the 350 word limit and sign the nomination.

Judges should grant points based on four criteria with the potential of 100 points as follows: **1-25 points** - Does the teacher teach and/or model good citizenship and community involvement?

1-25 points- An innovative approach to teaching citizenship. **1-25 points** - Development of resources to teach citizenship education.

1-25 points – Passion for teaching citizenship education.

NOTE; JUDGING SHEETS ARE AVAILABLE ON LATER PAGES.

Running the Program

Here are some important points to remember when conducting the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award Program.

- Know the program procedures and judging guidelines thoroughly.
- Develop a good working relationship with your Post's Auxiliary chairman.
- Contact schools early and make a point of explaining the importance of the program to the principal.
- Send a news release to your local media with the names of your winning teachers (see website for sample.)
- Recognize your participants (both winners and judges) with official VFW awards - see the official VFW Store catalog (or visit www.vfwstore.org for ideas.
- Send an accurate and detailed report of your competition along with your winning Post's entries to

the District as soon as the competition is finished. This report should include the following:

- 1.) Auxiliary participation
- 2.) Number of schools
- 3.) Total amount of money spent (including banquet costs, gifts and citations.)

- Teacher's one page resume (no more than two sides).
 - Up to five pages (both sides) of documentation such as news articles or supervisor's recommendations. Good quality head and shoulders photo of the teacher.
- The above requirements are the same for Districts to send to the Department.

If you have any questions, please contact Tammy Beauchamp in VFW Programs, phone: (816) 756-3390 ext 6287, E-Mail: tbeauchamp@vfw.org

Winning Entry Checklist

Here's what your Post needs to have to your District:

- Winning Post teacher's entry form, original nomination form and essay by individual making the nomination. (Up to 350 words.)

Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Advancement Form (Post Teacher Entry Form)

(Attach to original Post entry documentation for each teacher nominated.)

Nominee's Full Name _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Social Security Number _____ Grade level K-5 6-8 9-12

Name of School _____ School's Phone _____

School Address _____

Post/Auxiliary Chairman Section

I certify that the teacher named above is the duly selected Post winner of the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award Program in his/her grade level category and is our Post's authorized entry into the District finals.

Signature of Post Commander/Chairman _____ VFW Post No. _____ Phone _____

Post Address _____

Signature of Auxiliary President/Chairman _____ Auxiliary No. _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Total number of teacher nominations for all categories _____ Total dollar amount spent by Post/Auxiliary for awards for all categories and other (citations, gifts, medals, banquet) \$ _____

District/Auxiliary Chairman Section

I certify that the teacher named above is the duly selected District winner of the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award in his/her grade level category and is our District's entry into the Department finals.

Signature of Dist. Commander/Chairman _____ Dist. No. _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Signature of Auxiliary Dist. President/Chairman _____ Dist. No. _____ Phone _____

Address _____

List all Posts participating in program _____

Total dollar amount spent by Posts/Auxiliaries for awards for all categories and other (citations, gifts, medals, banquet) \$ _____

VFW Department Commander/Chairman Section

I certify that the teacher listed above is the duly selected winner of the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award in our Department in his/her grade level and is our official entry into the National judging. This winner will be/was notified that they are the first place **state** winner in their grade level on the following date: _____

Signature of Dept. Commander/Chairman _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Note: Be sure this form is entirely completed before sending to National Headquarters with your state winner's original nomination form, essay, one page resume, up to five pages of documentation and a good quality head and shoulders photograph. Remember this form is due back to VFW National Headquarters Programs Department by April 5th.

Mail to: VFW PROGRAMS, VFW NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS, 406 W. 34TH ST., KANSAS CITY, MO 64111.

TEACHER'S AWARD JUDGING SCORE SHEET

TEACHER'S NAME	CITIZENSHIP (1-25 points)	INNOVATION (1-25 points)	RESOURCES (1-25 points)	PASSION (1-25 points)	TOTAL (possible 100 points)
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JUDGING CRITERIA

CITIZENSHIP – 1-25 Points – On a scale of 1-25, to what extent does the teacher encourage and/or model good citizenship and community involvement?

INNOVATION - 1-25 Points – On a scale of 1-25, how much innovation (new ideas, new tools, new resources, and new approaches) does this teacher utilize in the classroom? Does this teacher’s effort reflect an ongoing desire to stimulate the students with new things?

RESOURCES – 1-25 Points – On a scale of 1-25, to what degree has this teacher demonstrated an ability to identify and utilize new and exceptional resources to fund, facilitate and provide materials for his or her classroom? Does this teacher tap into outside agencies, organizations and individuals to acquire materials and expertise in the classroom? As an example – bringing speakers, finding in-kind and monetary donations, utilize local opportunities like museums, field trips and local events.

PASSION – 1-25 Points – On a scale of 1-25, to what degree does this teacher appear to be passionate about the profession of teaching? Are they regularly seeking to upgrade their skills? Do they try and find ways to encourage their students? Do they take a personal interest in their student’s individual success?

DATE _____ **POST #** _____ **GRADE LEVEL** K-5 6-8 9-12

JUDGE’S NAME (please print) _____

JUDGE’S SIGNATURE _____

NOTE: Judges should be carefully selected, preferably from individuals who have classroom experience and understand the challenges of teaching. They should never have any affiliation with the nominees or the schools where the nominees teach. While it may be necessary to use VFW and its Auxiliary members, it is preferred that judges come from outside our ranks to avoid the appearance of impropriety. During the judging, the chairman should facilitate and observe but refrain from offering his or her observations on the candidates. The judges are encouraged to discuss the candidates but must arrive at their own numerical evaluation using the grid above. Make sure all judges are kept aware of the progress of the teachers they have judged and are invited to any awards presentations.

VFW Teacher Nomination Form

Please photocopy or cut out and attach to nomination essay.

Nominated Teacher

Name: _____

Email: _____

Subject and grade taught: _____

Current school: _____

School address: _____

School phone #: _____

On a separate piece of paper, please describe (type or print) in 350 words or less why you feel your nominee should be selected for the Smart/ Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award, then sign the nomination statement.

Submit nomination materials to your local VFW Post. Visit www.vfw.org/find-a-post for locations. DO NOT send to VFW National Headquarters.

_____ Number of words in essay (not to exceed 350). Please provide this information.

Person Nominating Teacher

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

Date submitted: _____

Signature: _____

Deadline: Submit to local VFW Post by October 31.

Identify and recognize America's best educators. Wouldn't you like to see them get the honor they deserve?

Now you can.



For more information, contact your local VFW Post or its Auxiliary or visit our website at www.vfw.org.

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

406 W. 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111
(816) 756-3390 ext. 6287
E-Mail: tbeauchamp@vfw.org
www.vfw.org

Local VFW Post Information

VFW Honors America's Teachers



Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award

Grades K-12





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ecognize teachers who care about America

VFW Cares About Education

Founded in 1899, the VFW highly supports the education of America's youth. VFW and its Auxiliary have developed a slate of programs dedicated to helping America's educators. VFW Citizenship Education programs stimulate interest in America's history, traditions, Americanism, civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism.

VFW wants to identify and recognize America's best educators who instill a sense of national pride in students. It offers cash awards, commemorative plaques and all-expenses-paid trips to the VFW National Convention for these worthy teachers. The trip provides an opportunity for winners to network with like-minded individuals.

Teachers care deeply about America and its children. They're concerned about the perpetuation of America's noblest traditions and highest ideals. Wouldn't you like to see them get the honor they deserve? Now you can...

VFW annually recognizes the nation's top classroom elementary, junior high and high school teachers who teach citizenship education topics regularly and promote America's history and traditions effectively.

Teachers who promote civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism are prime candidates for this award. For example, do you know a teacher who plans field trips to city hall or organizes community volunteer projects? Maybe you know an instructor who invites veterans into the classroom to discuss their military experiences. Perhaps you are familiar with a teacher who fosters the development of democratic values and beliefs through special projects. If you know of such a teacher, honor him or her today with the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award.

How Does the Contest Work?

Based on the nominees submitted, VFW local chapters, called Posts, will recognize one outstanding teacher in grades K-5, 6-8 and 9-12. Posts then submit these winners' names and required documents to their District-level judging, who will forward their winners to the Department (or state) level. After judging, each Department then forwards the names of its winners to VFW National Headquarters for consideration in the national awards contest.

Who is eligible?

All current classroom teachers (teaching at least half of the school day in a classroom environment) in grades K-12 are eligible. Previous national VFW winners and homeschool teachers are ineligible. Nominations can be submitted by fellow teachers, supervisors or other interested individuals (not relatives). Self-nominees are not eligible.

How are teachers nominated?

Fill out the nomination form contained in this brochure. In 350 words or less, describe why you feel your nominee should be selected. Describe the teacher's innovative teaching and resource development methods, as well as his or her dedication to education. Please submit your completed nomination form and signed essay to your local VFW Post. Visit www.vfw.org/find-a-post for Post locations or call VFW Programs Department at (816) 756-3390 ext. 6287 to find the Post nearest to you.

All Post-level nominees, if they win, should provide a one-page resume, up to five pages of documentation of their teaching experience (references, news articles, etc.) and a head-and-shoulder photo of themselves. These items will be forwarded on to the District with the Post Teacher Entry form, nomination form and essay.

When is the deadline?

Nominations must be submitted to your local Post by October 31. Judging occurs November 1-15.

What are the National awards?

Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Awards include the items below:

- A national \$1,000 Past Commander-in-Chief John Smart award for each of the top K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 teachers for professional development expenses.
- \$1,000 award for each winning teacher's school.
- Plaques for both the winning teacher and school.
- An all-expenses-paid trip to attend the VFW National Convention.
- Top 10 high school teachers invitation to attend a summer Graduate Seminar at Freedoms Foundation in Pennsylvania.

NOTE: (Winners will receive a 1099-MISC as a result of their award and all-expense paid trip.)

Nominate Someone Deserving

Have a teacher in mind? Complete the nomination form and required essay, then submit it to your local VFW Post. The investment that a teacher makes in today's youth will be the dividends we will all reap from future leaders.