

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.)

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.)
 - 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

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 _____ 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 January 15th.

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)

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.