



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 certified teachers for promoting citizenship education. Three teachers, one from each level (grades K-5, 6-8 & 9-12) are selected as department winners. Each department award teacher winner and their school receive a National Citation. Visit this link for more information and for an entry form: vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/teacher-of-the-year.

Eligibility

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.

All current certified/licensed teachers in grades K-12 are eligible. Previous national winners are ineligible. Nominations can be submitted by themselves, fellow teachers, supervisors, family members or other interested individuals.

Deadlines

Post judging should be completed and winners sent to the Department by January 1. Department judging should be completed and winners name and school name only submitted to VFW National Headquarters by February 1 by completing a VFW Department Teacher Award Citation Request Form located on the VFW website. Post chairmen must be sure to send the original entry form of the winner from each grade's category level — along with one-page resume as a minimum, or up to five pages as a maximum of documentation of their teaching experience, such as references, news articles, etc. Also 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 entry forms to ensure they adhere to the rules.

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 vfwstore.org for ideas.)
- Forward your winning Post's entries to the Department as soon as the competition is finished.

Winning Entry Checklist

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

- Winning teacher's entry form
- Teacher's one-page resume as a minimum or up to five pages as a maximum of documentation of their teaching experience, such as references, news articles, etc.
- Good quality head and shoulders photograph of the teacher.

If you have any questions, please contact your Department Headquarters or Tammy Beauchamp in VFW Programs: phone: 816.756.3390, ext 6287 email: tbeauchamp@vfw.org.



VFW Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Entry Form

NOTE: VFW Point of Contact should fill out their section below prior to distributing this form.
This will provide individuals from outside of the VFW with the needed information to submit their packets successfully.

To be filled out by VFW representative

Sponsoring VFW Post #:

Sponsoring District #:

Date of Presentation: MM/DD/YY (if available)

VFW Post POC

Full Name:

Phone:

Email:

Address: (where to mail entry)

City:

State:

Zip:

Individual Submitting Nomination

Full Name:

Phone:

Email:

Nominee Information

Choose appropriate teacher citation:(Elementary, Middle, High)

Full Name: (please list as you wish it stated on the citation) :

Phone :

Email:

Occupation Title: (if any) (please list as you wish it stated on the citation)

School Name: (please list as you wish it stated on the citation)

Address of School:

City:

State:

Zip:

School Phone:

School Email: (if available)

Please complete this form and submit to your local VFW Post using the information provided above. Ensure to include all required documentation that is outlined on the instructions sheet provided with this form. All winning post entries must be received by their **VFW Department Headquarters no later than January 1st**. If you have any questions, please contact your Department Headquarters.

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, or utilizing 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.

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.