



Message from Mary E. Davis, 2016-2017 National President

To all American Legion Auxiliary members,

I am excited about the 2016-2017 Auxiliary year — another year to enhance the lives of America's veterans, military, and their families. I hope you are looking forward to continuing your work by finding inspiration to try new ideas within these pages.

The following pages, as well as on www.ALAforVeterans.org, contain the 2016-2017 Programs Action Plan. It was inspired by the work you do and by common objectives for each program. I invite you to review the entire Plan, but most importantly, review the programs you and your unit are interested in. If you are a department chairman, please take time to review the information for your program area, then help unit members with their quest to follow the mission.



You may have noticed an updated name change to our annual plan. The Plan of Action is now called the Programs Action Plan. Whatever the name, the Plan is here to help you throughout the year and to give inspiration in providing services for your veterans and military community.

Our Centennial Strategic Plan is a work in progress. Every month strategy members are completing initiatives to roll out to you, our members. You will even see some of these initiatives in the Programs Action Plan. As a fluid document, the Centennial Strategic Plan contains concrete goals we think you would like to see our organization achieve. Please review these goals:

- Goal 1 – Enhance Membership Strength
- Goal 2 – Create an Internal Culture of Goodwill
- Goal 3 – Develop Leadership at all Levels
- Goal 4 – Strengthen Departments and Units
- Goal 5 – With The American Legion, Build Brand Loyalty

The goals in the Centennial Strategic Plan are much like the goals each of us set in everyday life. They are goals we work to achieve. Along the way we set steps to help us achieve our goals, we call them initiatives. The concept of goals is to work to achieve a higher level of commitment and growth. We set our goals high. If they are set too low we don't really stretch to reach personal growth – so it is with the Centennial Strategic Plan goals. We want to stretch, as individual members, to reach these goals. Are they all attainable? We think so. Will we attain them all by our 100th anniversary? If every member aspires to work hard to reach each goal, we can.

It is you, me, and the members who have gone before us, who are the basis for achieving the work and mission of the American Legion Auxiliary. As with most mission-related activities we plan and participate in, there is an overwhelming sense of accomplishment. This year, my hope is to highlight that pride in belonging to our organization and in working our mission. **ALA Member Pride** is the theme this year: pride in helping veterans, military and their



families; pride in making a difference; pride in a job well done; or pride in belonging to an organization whose mission we totally embrace.

If asked why you stay a member when there is so much work to be done, such as Goal 2, you can say, "I am proud to belong because of the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary and because of the part I play in the work we do. I make a difference." **That's ALA Member Pride.**

If asked by another, "Why should I belong?" You can answer, "I make a difference by actively participating in the projects my unit and I provide to veterans, military and their families in my community. I'm proud to be a member and you can be too if you join." **That's ALA Member Pride.**

College scholarships remain an integral part in every student's ability to afford a higher education. It has been many years since we have visited the dollar amount the American Legion Auxiliary provides in its scholarships. I hope you will join me in contributing to the ALA youth scholarships. This is just one aspect of making a difference for the family of veterans — the children. Our scholarship grants should be significant, raise our visibility in every community, and be a much sought after award that every winner talks about with pride. You should be proud of the scholarship amount that funds the education of America's future leaders. **That's ALA Member Pride.**

Also, this year, I hope to raise awareness of the American Legion Auxiliary Foundation's Planned Giving program. It is such a painless way to become a philanthropist in support of the American Legion Auxiliary. As the title states, planned giving allows you to continue to give to the American Legion Auxiliary long after you are gone. Again, honoring the reason you belong, because you make a difference. **That's ALA Member Pride.**

As you begin this year, please use the Programs Action Plan as your personal call to action; use it as your guide to creating a better member, unit and department. And please, above all else, remember, your membership is appreciated, and by belonging and asking others to join you, you are making a difference.

Thank you for all you do for America's veterans.

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