



JANUARY 2019 **MEMBERSHIP IMPACT REPORT**

A Report from American Legion National Headquarters



VOICES

"Just because a Washington flow chart structures the Coast Guard under Homeland Security does not mean they should not be paid. Whether they are performing rescues during a hurricane or stopping drug traffickers at sea, members of the Coast Guard regularly perform heroic and lifesaving tasks on our behalf. They should not have to worry about bills and living expenses just because Congress and the White House cannot agree on a budget."

- American Legion National Commander Brett Reistad in response to the federal government shutdown and its impact on U.S. Coast Guard personnel; The American Legion made available expedited Temporary Financial Assistance grant applications for minor children of Coast Guard members who are in need during the shutdown.

"I am an active-duty Coast Guard member. I just want to say thank you to The American Legion for offering assistance to Coast Guard members and their families during this time of uncertainty."

- E-mailed to American Legion National Headquarters



45

Benefits Delivery at Discharge reviews conducted by The American Legion to assist military personnel and accelerate the process of transition from DoD to VA health care.



537

Number of VA pension and debt claims handled for veterans and their families by The American Legion in December.



2,300

Approximate number of Student Veterans of America members who attended in SVA's 11th National Conference Jan. 3-5 in Orlando. American Legion National Judge Advocate Kevin Bartlett was a guest speaker, and national staff were on hand to discuss The American Legion and display a centennial exhibit honoring the GI Bill. Dozens of young veterans said they had recently become members of The American Legion and were working closely with posts in their communities.



JOB FAIRS

Seven American Legion-supported veteran career events are coming up:

- Jan. 24, 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m., Oklahoma City
- Jan. 29, 3 p.m. – 7 p.m., Lexington Park, Md
- Jan. 30, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m., Shaw Air Force Base, S.C
- Jan. 30, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., Dayton, Ohio
- Jan. 31, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Joint Base Andrews, Md.
- Feb. 06, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m., Fort Bragg, N.C.
- Feb. 07, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., Fort Bragg, N.C.



3

New American Legion posts chartered in the month of December: Louisiana No. 432, Florida No. 412 and Illinois No. 2011.

MEMBERSHIP

District Revitalization in California

The American Legion Department of California and national staff are teaming up for a district revitalization and membership outreach effort Jan. 17-19 in the Sacramento Valley area. Veterans in the area are invited to attend a special service session at Yolo American Legion Post 77, 523 Bush St., Woodland, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Jan. 17-18 and 9 a.m.-noon Jan. 19. Veterans service officer information will be available to assist veterans with claims or other benefits questions.



54

Number of times The American Legion presented testimony before Congress during the newly completed 115th Session. Among many legislative priorities of The American Legion that became law in the session were: the Veterans Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017; the Veterans Affairs Appeals and Modernization Act of 2017 (signed by President Trump on the stage of the 99th American Legion National Convention in Reno, Nev.); the VA MISSION Act; the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 (the "Forever GI Bill"); an act authorizing the U.S. Mint to strike a 2019 commemorative coin set in honor of the Legion's centennial; improvements to the Choice Act for VA health care; and advances in the Electronic Health Record system to make VA and DoD medical records more interoperable.



\$9,370

Funds disbursed from The American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance program to minor children of seven active-duty military and American Legion families in December.



\$43,750

Amount in American Legion college funds disbursed in December to recipients of Samsung, Oratorical and American Baseball scholarships.

CENTENNIAL

100 Years Ago in the Legion

A century ago this month, four line officers of the American Expeditionary Forces – Lt. Col. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr.; Lt. Col. George A. White; Col. William Donovan; and Lt. Col. Eric Fisher Wood – met in Paris to discuss the recent passing of former President Theodore Roosevelt, their imminent mustering out of service, the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and what might happen at home when nearly 2 million newly discharged combat veterans, many disabled and shell-shocked, returned to civilian lives.

Roosevelt, Jr., had discussed the idea of a veterans organization among troops still in Europe, whose morale was low as they awaited passage home. By this time, a U.S. group called Comrades in Service had originated in Europe, led by American Expeditionary Forces Chief Chaplain Charles Brent, but it didn't get much traction among the troops, who were frequently absent without leave and occasionally causing mischief while awaiting orders to ship out.

At this time, just two months after the armistice, the U.S. Public Health Service reported that it had 1,548 beds available for sick and wounded American veterans. The number of veterans diagnosed with mental illness and tuberculosis alone exceeded 74,500, and another 120,000 were recovering from wounds and illnesses in Europe.



238

Number of VA benefits appeals cases represented by The American Legion that were granted in favor of the appealing veteran December.



ROAR

The American Legion's Regional Office Action Review (ROAR) team will make site visits to:
St. Petersburg, FL – January 21-23
Lincoln, NE – February 11-13
New Orleans, LA – March 11-13

HEALTH CARE

System Worth Saving Site Visits

American Legion System Worth Saving site visits to VA health-care systems are scheduled for Tampa, Fla., Jan. 21-23; Palo Alto, Calif., Feb. 4-6; and El Paso, Texas, Feb. 11-13. Preceding the visits are local town hall meetings where veterans are encouraged to share their thoughts and concerns about VA health care in their communities. Visit reports are assembled into one annual document that is distributed to Congress, the White House and VA that helps The American Legion shape VA health-care priorities.



93,315

Number of Twitter impressions from The American Legion Tournament of Roses Parade centennial float's nationally televised appearance in Pasadena on Jan. 1.



474,723

Minimum number of Facebook users who saw The American Legion's Tournament of Roses Parade centennial float before, during and after the nationally televised event.