



**Department of
South Carolina
The American Legion**

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SOUTH CAROLINA NEWS LINE

Progress is impossible without change and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything. (George Bernard Shaw)

**Child Welfare
Foundation News**

The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, in its 60th year, has awarded \$566,691 to 18 non-profit organizations. These grants, determined during the annual meeting of the Board of Directors, held at the Sheraton Hotel City Centre in Indianapolis, Indiana, on Sunday, October 12, 2014, have been awarded to support youth-serving projects that seek to enhance the lives of children by addressing the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs of children. The following is a brief summary of the grants awarded for 2015.

Angel Flight West of Santa Monica, California, was awarded \$10,000 for their project, "Promoting Fly-Anthropy – the charitable use of aviation to help children in need." This grant will provide outreach and marketing efforts to reach families in need of medical transportation and to potential volunteer pilots.

Beads of Courage, Inc. of Tucson, Arizona, was awarded \$40,000 for their project, "Beads of Courage." This grant will fund the purchase of beads to encourage ill children as part of the Beads of Courage program. The American Legion Auxiliary and The Sons of The American Legion sponsor this grant.

Birth Defect Research for Children (dba Association of Birth Defect Children) of Orlando, Florida, was awarded \$22,650 for their project, "National Outreach for Birth Defect Prevention." This grant will help redesign the organizational website and advertise available resources to families and medical professionals. The American Legion Auxiliary sponsors this grant.

Children's Cardiomyopathy Foundation of Tenafly, New Jersey, was awarded \$25,400 for their project, "7 minute video to answer genetic testing questions as it relates to Pediatric Cardiomyopathy." This grant will fund the production of a video to be distributed via electronic newsletter and online to reach interested families and physicians. The American Legion Auxiliary sponsors this grant.

Children's Craniofacial Association of Dallas, Texas, was awarded \$10,000 for their project, 'Wonder-Choose Kind.' This grant will provide educators with resources to teach children anti-bullying and kind behavior towards those afflicted with craniofacial issues. The American Legion Auxiliary sponsors this grant.

Children's Institute, Inc. of Rochester, New York, was awarded \$7,580 for their project, "Strengthening Military Family Relationships Through Play." This grant will underwrite the production and dissemination of instructional DVDs to educate Boys and Girls Club staff on the needs of military children. The American Legion Auxiliary and The Sons of The American Legion sponsor this grant.

Children's Organ Transplant Association of Bloomington, Indiana, was awarded \$43,595 for their project, "The American Hometown Heroes for COTA Campaign." This grant will fund an informational campaign that will connect Reserve and National Guard COTA families to Legion posts that support COTA. The American Legion Auxiliary and The Sons of The American Legion sponsor this grant.

CureSearch for Children's Cancer of Bethesda, Maryland, was awarded \$31,500 for their project entitled, "CureSearch 2014 Educational Video Series." This grant will produce and distribute videos on staying healthy while on chemotherapy, eating healthy and information on clinical procedures such as biopsy and ultrasound. The American Legion Auxiliary and The Sons of The American Legion sponsor this grant.

Diabetes Education & Camping Association of Florence, Alabama, was awarded \$39,640 for their project, "Optimizing Outcomes at Diabetes Camp – Integrated HER System." This grant will fund a mobile application and software for health data management. The American Legion Auxiliary sponsors this grant.

JAYC Foundation, Inc. of Santa Rosa, California, was awarded \$50,540 for their project, "Creating Protected Spaces." This grant will provide comprehensive education between families, mental health professionals and law enforcement agencies through booklets and videos.

Marfan Foundation of Port Washington, New York, was awarded \$30,000 for their project "Parent's Toolkit: Your Child and Marfan Syndrome." This grant will provide informational toolkits for parents of children with Marfan Syndrome. The American Legion Auxiliary and The Sons of The American Legion sponsor this grant.

Mercy Flight Southeast of Leesburg, Florida, was awarded \$21,761 for their project, "Project Outreach SE USA 2014." This grant will fund a marketing campaign to advertise medical transportation services offered by the organization for public awareness and pilot recruitment.

Mercy Medical Angels of Virginia Beach, Virginia, was awarded \$44,000 for their project, "Child Health Program – Info Dissemination Upgrade." This grant will update and disseminate information on the organization's child health program. The American Legion Auxiliary and The Sons of The American Legion sponsor this grant.

National Autism Association of Attleboro Falls, Massachusetts, was awarded \$58,075 for their project, "Big Red Safety Box Program." This grant will enable the continuation of the Big Red Safety Box program that addresses dangerous wandering incidents. The American Legion Auxiliary and The Sons of The American Legion sponsor this grant.

Our Military Kids of McLean, Virginia, was awarded \$31,350 for their project, "Our Mission Continues: Moving into the Next Decade of Supporting Our Kids." This grant will enhance outreach and marketing efforts of the organization. The American Legion Auxiliary and The Sons of The American Legion sponsor this grant.

Spina Bifida Association of Arlington, Virginia, was awarded \$25,000 for their project, "Educating Children with Spina Bifida on Staying Healthy." This grant will underwrite the printing of "Another Way to Go," a publication that teaches children about catheter care. The American Legion Auxiliary sponsors this grant.

The American Legion of Indianapolis, Indiana, was awarded \$55,500 for their project, "2015 American Legion National Youth Programs Scholarships." This grant will provide academic scholarships to the top youth participants of the organization's national youth programs. The American Legion Auxiliary sponsors this grant.

United States Association of Blind Athletes of Colorado Springs, Colorado, was awarded \$20,000 for their project, "USABA Mobile Coach." This grant will expand the number of sports offered on Mobile Coach to assist blind youth athletes compete. The Sons of The American Legion sponsor this grant.

New VA Regulation

On September 23, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) published its final regulations and fact sheet related to the Camp Lejeune historical drinking water contamination as required by law. VA announced the publication of two regulations: one providing health care for Camp Lejeune Veterans, and the other reimbursing for health care expenses of their family members potentially affected by contaminated drinking water at United States

Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. The regulations implement provisions of the “Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012.”

The first regulation, entitled *Hospital Care and Medical Services for Camp Lejeune Veterans (AO78)*, took effect immediately. The second -- *Payment or Reimbursement for Certain Medical Expenses for Camp Lejeune Family Members (AO79)* – will take effect in 30 days. The published regulations now allow VA to reimburse eligible Camp Lejeune family members for out-of-pocket health care costs related to any of the 15 covered medical conditions listed in the 2012 Act. Under that law, VA can reimburse costs from March 26, 2013, onwards. Family members can start applying 30 days after the regulation publication date. For information about VA's Camp Lejeune program, including eligibility and how to apply, visit <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/camp-lejeune> or call 1-877-222-8387. Since the passage of law, VA has enrolled and provided health care to those Veterans who served on active duty at Camp Lejeune for at least 30 days between January 1, 1957 and December 31, 1987.

Background:

President Obama signed the *Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012* into law on August 6, 2012. In compliance with the law VA provides healthcare for those Veterans who meet the criteria for health care. From 1957 to 1987, people living or working at Camp Lejeune were potentially exposed to drinking water contaminated with chemicals known as volatile compounds, including industrial solvents and benzene from fuels.

The law provides that Veterans stationed at Camp Lejeune between 1957 and 1987 will be eligible to receive health care through VA, and exposed family members will be reimbursed for health care costs, for the following medical conditions:

Esophageal cancer; Lung cancer; Breast cancer; Bladder cancer; Kidney cancer; Leukemia; Multiple myeloma; Myelodysplastic syndromes; Renal toxicity; Hepatitis steatosis; Female infertility; Miscarriage; Scleroderma; Neurobehavioral effects; and Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. For family members, VA will be the last payer and will provide reimbursement after all other health insurance coverage and reimbursement is received, as required by law.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Who is eligible for the Camp Lejeune program?

A: Veterans may be eligible for Camp Lejeune coverage if they meet the following criteria:

- Served on active duty at Camp Lejeune for no less than 30 days between January 1, 1957 and December 31, 1987, and
- Meet all the qualifications for VA benefits, including meeting the VA definition of “Veteran,” and receiving a discharge other than dishonorable. Additional qualifications can be determined by completing the 10-10EZ form and enrolling in VA benefits.

Family members may be eligible for the program if they resided on Camp Lejeune as a dependent of an Active Duty Servicemember, or were in *utero*, for no less than 30 days between January 1, 1957 and December 31, 1987, and have one of the illnesses or conditions listed in the law. VA may reimburse costs associated with hospital care and medical services, as the last payer, for the eligible family members for the 15 illnesses or conditions. Once those family members have submitted claims to their insurance companies, they can apply to VA for reimbursement of the remaining balance of charges and fees connected to the qualifying illnesses.

Q: How do Veterans and family members apply for the Camp Lejeune program?

A: For Veterans: Veterans seeking to enroll in VA health benefits can enroll online at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/apply or at their local VA Health facility (www.va.gov/directory). Veterans seeking more information about VA's Camp Lejeune Program or to apply via phone can call 1-877-222-VETS (8387). Veterans should locate relevant documentation to show proof of Camp Lejeune residency of not less than 30 days (e.g., copies of orders, base housing records, medical or school records, etc.). This information will be utilized by the Veteran Health Administration to validate eligibility for care under this authority.

For family members: Once the family member regulation is effective, interested family members will be able to apply online. Submitted applications and supporting documentation will be reviewed to determine family member eligibility for the program. Once deemed eligible for the program, family members who have received

care for one of the 15 Camp Lejeune conditions since March 26, 2013, can submit a claim for reimbursement. Family members should keep receipts for medical expenses related to the covered illnesses/conditions. Because the Camp Lejeune law only reimburses expenses, as the payer of last resort, related to the 15 conditions, family members should not change their existing health insurance. Family members who have questions regarding applying for Camp Lejeune Family Member Program benefits, claims payment, appeals, or other related matters should call toll-free 1-866-372-1144 between the hours of 7 am and 4:30 pm CST.

Q: Is the reimbursement for care retroactive?

A: No, reimbursement is only from the point in time the Veteran enrolls in VA, if after 8/6/12 or reimbursement of VA copayments back to 8/6/12, if already enrolled and identified as a Camp Lejeune member within 2 years of publication of the rule. VA began providing Veteran care for Camp Lejeune on 8/6/12, following the passage of the “Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012”.

Q: Does this law provide Veterans with disability compensation?

A: No. This law allows Camp Lejeune Veterans to enroll in VA health care. It does not provide service connection and compensation. Veterans who believe they have an injury/illness related to their military service may file a claim for disability for their condition at their Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office.

Veterans Preference

The federal government’s veterans preference policy has been criticized in report released last August by the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB), which suggested that such preference causes resentment among civilian federal workers, and decreases the number of women being hired into the federal work force. The Washington Post and Government Executive have reported on MSPB’s findings without challenging the conclusions. “We’ve seen the report and its claim that veterans preference for federal jobs is creating resentment among federal workers who are civilians,” said Michael D. Helm, national commander of The American Legion, “and the claim that it interferes with the hiring of women. “To any civilian workers who have problems with veterans preference, The American Legion’s message is simple: Become a veteran. Those who have served in uniform have earned such preference.” Helm also took issue with MSPB’s finding that veterans preference had a negative impact on the hiring of women. “The federal government has been hiring fewer people in general since fiscal 2011 – that includes women. But the good news is that more women veterans, and more veterans in general are being hired.” Noting that the percentage of women employees in the federal work force has dropped only one percent since 2000, Helm said veterans preference needed to remain in place to help veterans compete with civilians in the job market. “We understand that some individuals abuse the policy, and that needs to be corrected. But helping those who have served in uniform get jobs, especially those who are disabled, is a policy that must remain in place.” Mark Reinhold, associate director for the Office of Personnel Management, wrote in a letter that “OPM does not concur in your somewhat negative assessment,” and that MSPB “seems really to be taking aim at the entire civil service system in its current form.” Helm said The American Legion will closely monitor any suggested changes to veterans preference policy. “We urge the Office of Personnel Management – and Congress -- to continue supporting our veterans in the federal job market with its hiring policies.”

LIT Information

The Legionnaire Insurance Trust is pleased to announce that online enrollment is now available for the LegionCare No Cost Accidental Death benefit. Please be sure to let your Department know about this one-of-a-kind benefit offered exclusively to Legionnaires.

LegionCare provides all Legionnaires with:

- \$5,000 in Accidental Death Coverage for covered accidents that occur if you are traveling on official Legion business.
- \$1,000 for all other covered accidents.
- 24/7 protection that covers Legionnaires at home, at work and while they are travelling away from home available for all Legionnaires in your Department.

To learn more or to sign up, please visit <http://www.thelit.com/no-cost-legioncare>.

What's Happening

October 18, Saturday-District #5 Woodruff #133 10a, 6998 Hwy 101 N, meal following. Please RSVP # attending to District Commander Jack Wright 864-680-7114 (c), 864-578-1933 (h), jpb200@aol.com

October 19, Sunday-Task Force Marshall Graduation 1p Bldg 3910 McCrady Training Center

October 20-22, Florence Airport Wings of Freedom Tour honoring WWII veterans. P-51, B-17 and B-24 aircraft be landing and on display for viewing. Adults \$12 children 12 and under \$6. **FMI** Hunter Chaney 800-568-8924

October 25, Saturday-District #8 St. George #105 10a, 5429 Memorial Blvd.

October 28, Tuesday-District #3 Greer Post #115 7 pm Corner of Main St & Snow St., Coffee & Doughnuts

November 1, Saturday-District #13 Central Post #151, 375 Garvin Rd, Liberty 10a-12 noon light refresh.

November 3, Monday-District #4 6p meal 7p meeting Loris #41, 2556 Main St., Loris

November 9, Sunday 10:30a St. Thomas Church, 215 St. Thomas Church Rd., Chapin Service to honor veterans. Please RSVP. **FMI** Richard Strobel 803-608-8329

November 18, Tuesday-District #15 6:30p Johnston Post #154, 99 Edisto St. **RSVP** Cmdr Dandy (803)649-6752

November 25, Tuesday-District #17 6p Post #15 Sumter

Task Force Marshall

Ms. Davis advises that planning for the 7th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner for our deploying Sailors will be held on Sunday, November 16, 2014 at the National Guard Armory on Bluff Road. There are a number of food and non-food items that will be needed for the dinner. A listing of those items is separate from this article. More information will be forthcoming for interested to sign up to volunteer to help with the set-up and decorating of the Armory as well as helping serve and other areas where help will be needed the day of the dinner. **FMI** Carol Davis (803)739-2774/(803)467-4482.

Post Officer Listings

District and Post Commanders Please Note: Even though you may have the same officers in the same positions for the 2014-2015 year, you should also submit a listing to department. Also, for those that have email addresses, please indicate that on the listing. Your assistance and attention to this matter will be greatly appreciated.

New Provider

LifeStation, a newly authorized discount provider for The American Legion, will be mailing a promotional offer to some of our members. LifeStation is a provider of home medical alert products and offers these products to our members at a discounted price. In order to promote their products, they are mailing the attached letter to members in their primary age group. Over the next 3 weeks, about 60,000 of our members who are ages 80 and 81 will receive this letter from LifeStation. I wanted to make you aware of this mailing so that you could respond to inquiries from members in your department. Several important factors that should be noted in response to any questions are:

1. LifeStation is an authorized discount provider, and does have an agreement with The American Legion to provide its products and services to our members.
2. This mailing was mailed from The American Legion's mailing operation in Indianapolis.
3. Our members' names have not been sold or given to any outside companies or services, for this mailing.
4. The discount is available to all members, and not only those receiving the mailing.
5. Information about LifeStation is available on our website at: www.legion.org/benefits/home

If you have any questions or concerns about this mailing, please feel free to contact Greg Roth, Director, Membership Support Services Division, Phone 317/860-3040; Fax 317/860-3001.

Oratorical Contest

The **2015** Oratorical Contests will be held on Saturday, February 14, 2015 in the following locations. For more information please contact each contact individual listed.

Quadrant #1 – Greenwood Post #224, 1310 E. Cambridge Ave., Greenwood, SC 29646 @ 9 a.m.

Contact: Vice Commander Michael Strauss (803)599-3131 or legion100percent@bellsouth.net

Quadrant #2 – Cayce Post #130, 402 Naples Ave., Cayce, SC 29171 @ 10 a.m.

Contact: Vice Commander Bob Scherer (828)292-6031 or rdscherer@ymail.com

Quadrant #3 – Florence Post #1, 3631 Palmetto St., Florence, SC 29503 @ 10 a.m.

Contact: Vice Commander Harry Brown (843)270-5583 or hlbrown2943@comcast.net

Quadrant #4 – James Island Post #147, 968 Folly Rd., Charleston, SC 29412 @ 10 a.m.

Contact: To Be Announced

Proud To Serve

Lloyd H. Woods
Department Adjutant