



## VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS, DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA RECOGNIZES TEACHERS AND STUDENTS FOR DEDICATION TO OUR TROOPS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SACRAMENTO** – This week, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Department of California awarded several teachers and students for their continued commitment to the United States Military by distributing VFW's National Citizenship Education Teacher Awards, Patriot's Pen Award and Voice of Democracy Award.

The VFW launched the **National Citizenship Education Teacher Award** in 1999 to recognize classroom teachers for promoting citizen education with their students. This year, VFW was proud to present this award to three dedicated California teachers – all who have proven to be teachers dedicated to honoring our troops by educating their students on important veterans' issues.

The entries for all three teachers have been forwarded as nominees to VFW National Headquarters for the National Citizenship Education Teacher Award.

- K - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade: **Ms. Mary Wilson**, 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher, Don Juan Avila Elementary School located in Aliso Viejo, CA
- 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: **Mr. Kevin Corrinet**, 8<sup>th</sup> grade Math teacher, Richard Henry Dana Middle School located in Hawthorne, CA
- 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade: **Mr. Jeff Carpenter**, High School Social Science teacher, Rancho Bernardo High School located in San Diego, CA

The **Patriot's Pen** contest is in its fourteenth year and gives 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students the opportunity to express their opinion on a patriotic theme while improving their writing skills as they compete. This year's theme was "Are You Proud of Your Country?" State winners compete for \$7,500 in U.S. Savings Bonds with the national winner receiving \$10,000 U.S. Savings Bonds during the March 2012 VFW and Ladies Auxiliary Community Service Conference in Washington D.C.

The Department of California's First Place Winner is **Jadon Lippincott**, an 8<sup>th</sup> grader who is home schooled. Lippincott's essay has been sent to the VFW National Headquarters as a Nominee for the National Patriot's Pen Essay Contest.

*The deadline for the 2012-2013 program is November 1, 2012. The theme for 2012-2013 is: "What I Would Tell America's Founding Fathers."*

The National Association of Broadcasters started the **Voice of Democracy Scholarship Competition** in 1946. The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States became a national sponsor in the late 1950s and assumed sole responsibility for the program in 1961.

The Voice of Democracy Scholarship Competition provides high school students with the opportunity to write and record a broadcast script on a patriotic theme, competing for more than \$2.3 million in college scholarships and incentives.

State winners are invited to Washington, D.C. during the VFW and Ladies Auxiliary Community Service Conference in March to compete for \$146,000 in scholarships with first place receiving a \$30,000 scholarship.

The theme this year was "Is there Pride in Serving in our Military?" The Department of California received over 850 student entries.

**Jason Lippincott**, sponsored by District 24 in California's Central Valley, was awarded First Place in California's Voice of Democracy Contest and will go on to our Nation's Capital to compete with 53 other finalists for the grand prize – a \$30,000 scholarship.

To learn more about the VFW's National Citizenship Education Teacher Awards, Patriot's Pen Contest and the Voice of Democracy Contest, visit us online at [www.vfw.org](http://www.vfw.org) .

*The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is a nonprofit veterans' service organization composed of combat veterans and those who currently serve on active duty or in the Guard and Reserves. Founded in 1899 and chartered by Congress in 1936, the VFW is the nation's largest organization of war veterans and is one of its oldest veterans' organizations. With 2.1 million members located in 7,700 VFW Posts worldwide, the VFW and its Auxiliaries are dedicated to "honor the dead by helping the living" through veterans service, legislative initiatives, youth scholarships, Buddy Poppy and national military service programs. Annually, the VFW and its Auxiliaries contribute more than 11 million hours of community service to the nation.*