

THE AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL AMERICANISM COMMISSION

THE AMERICAN LEGION

COURAGE

HONOR

LEADERSHIP

SERVICE

SCHOLARSHIP

PATRIOTISM



SCHOOL AWARD MEDAL PROGRAM

OBJECTIVES

The American Legion School Award Medal is designed to:

- I. Place emphasis on the development of the qualities of COURAGE, HONOR, LEADERSHIP, PATRIOTISM, SCHOLARSHIP and SERVICE.
- II. Develop those ideals of Americanism among young people which will make them citizens of the highest type.
- III. Give recognition through the award of American Legion School Award Medals to the boy and to the girl who are deemed most worthy of the high qualities of citizenship and of true Americanism.

THE SCHOOL MEDAL AWARD

PLAN OF THE AMERICAN LEGION SCHOOL AWARD

The Award Medal represents the educational symbolism of the School Award Medal Program and associates it with The American Legion and its purposes. The medal is applicable for award to either boys or girls in the graduating class of elementary, junior and senior high schools, and colleges.

The American Legion School Award Medal Plan is a project of the National Americanism Commission, and is put in effect by Legion Departments, Districts and Posts according to the instructions in this leaflet.

This plan has now been in effect for a number

of years, and most Posts have worked out a program which fits their individual situation. For those Posts that are new, or that have not participated in previous years, here are some suggestions.

Qualities to Be Developed

COURAGE — Bravery in the face of opposition and danger; determination and force to do right without public applause and regardless of personal advantage. A quality of the intellect.

HONOR — Highly-developed moral character; moral excellence; strength and stability of character; high standards of conduct; devotion to duty; adherence to truth; keen sense of what is right; practice of clean speech and thoughts.

LEADERSHIP — Ability to lead and to accomplish through group action; ability to work in harmony and in unison with other leaders in accomplishing group results; desire and ability to fill the voids in the lives of others caused by timidity, illness and other handicaps.

PATRIOTISM — An ideal of loyal Americanism, religious tolerance, righteous freedom and the willingness to defend our Flag against all enemies — foreign and domestic. Perhaps best defined in the American's Creed.

SCHOLARSHIP — Attainments in school studies; quality of school work reflecting the fine traits of industry; perseverance; efficiency and intelligence.

SERVICE — Kindliness; unselfishness; fellowship; protection of the weak; promotion of the interests and the welfare of associates; and, constructive aid for the upbuilding of schools and of community.

Method of Award

First, the Post Commander will appoint a committee of not more than three members to contact local school authorities. Through them a basis of friendly cooperation, on the part of the faculty and students, should be established. When this had been done, it will be possible to design and activate a smooth, coordinated program.

Such a program would almost of necessity include the following:

1. A series of talks to the students, and faculty, on the six traits which are the basis of the program. These talks should be delivered by Legionnaires, tuned to the students' level of understanding, of good grammatical structure, and short. The customary weekly assembly period would be an excellent opportunity for such presentations.

2. Arrangements on how the recipients are to be selected should be made well in advance of the elections. Members of the graduating class and the faculty are to cast secret ballots to determine the boy awardee and the girl awardee. Traits underlying the selection of the boy and the girl will be Courage, Honor, Leadership, Patriotism, Scholarship and Service. Make

sure that the voters understand the meaning of the qualities and their weights in the selection. Final selection should be made by the Post Committee upon the good advice of faculty members and school administrative heads.

3. Students, patrons and the entire community should know and understand the entire program. Suitable publicity should be arranged to handle this. The sole purpose of the undertaking by The American Legion is the cultivation of high character and wholesome ideals in youth approaching active citizenship. No trace of politics, sectarianism or favoritism should be allowed to attach itself to the School Award Program.

4. At the medal presentation ceremony, it is only fitting and proper that the local American Legion Post take the major role. The awards should be presented by a member of The American Legion. The school principal is to be consulted before any speaker is named in order to be certain that the speaker is acceptable to the local school authorities. All speakers should be cautioned not to take up too much time on the commencement program. World War II, Korean and Viet Nam veterans can serve admirably in presenting awards.

Awards

Awards shall be made to the boy and to the girl of the graduating class* in elementary, junior and senior high schools and colleges. Awards are limited to the graduating classes because of the candidates' positions on the threshold of entrance upon a more extensive period of education, or upon entrance into the wage-earning world.

Illustrations of the awards, with the exception of the certificates, and information on how they may be obtained will be found on page 4 of this leaflet. The certificates, one for each of the medal winners as indicated under the illustrations and others for the runners-up, are handsomely engraved on heavy paper suitable for framing.

The Ralph T. O'Neil Education Trophy

Through the generosity of Past National Commander Ralph T. O'Neil, a beautiful plaque, known as "The Ralph T. O'Neil Education Trophy," will be awarded annually to that Department showing the greatest Americanism activity in the use of the American Legion School Award Medals. The conditions governing the award of this trophy are as follows:

1. Title to this trophy is to remain in The American Legion. A plaque replica is awarded permanently to the winning Department annually.

2. The Ralph T. O'Neil Education Trophy will be awarded annually to that Department of the United States showing the greatest Americanism activity in the use of The American Legion School Award Medals. The winning Department will

*In schools where there are many graduates, and where there are several classrooms or homerooms making up the graduating class, an award for each group may be given. Special arrangements to cover this situation are left to the discretion of the Post Committee working with the school authorities.