

Membership Promotion #1 | July 2026
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“Ignite Our Passion”

Hello, National Officers, Past National Presidents, Department Presidents and Department Chairmen. My name is Kristin DiGiacomo, or “DiGi” for short, and I have honor of being your National Membership Ambassador for the 2026-2027 Program Year. Many thanks to Donna K. Mills for having the belief in me to take on this challenge. For those who may not know me, I have been involved with the VFW Auxiliary for as long as I can remember, under the eligibility of my grandfather, Cpl. James Banze, United States Army, 7th Infantry Division. I was fortunate enough to even move up the ranks and am proud to say that I’m a past Junior Girls State President for the Department of Pennsylvania. Currently, I serve as the Senior Vice-President of my home Auxiliary, West View Post 2754, where I’ve been a member for the past 20-plus years. I am currently serving my second term as District Treasurer/Secretary for District 29 Auxiliary, where I previously served as District President for four consecutive terms. I have also served as last year’s National Historian & Media Relations Ambassador, Department of Pennsylvania Historian & Media Relations Chairman and Department Chairman for Auxiliary Outreach.

NOW – ARE YOU READY?



Strong organizations are built on teamwork, collaboration and shared commitment to common goals. Just as every member of a football team contributes to its overall success, each Auxiliary member plays an important role in achieving our organizational objectives. Building trust, understanding each other’s strengths and maintaining open communication are essential

for effective collaboration. When Auxiliary members are engaged and invested in the mission of our organization, we create a stronger, more productive Auxiliary to serve our veterans, their families and our communities. Like any successful team, organizations experience both challenges and achievements, making it important to rely on one another for support, motivation and continued growth along the way.

SO – HOW DO WE ENGAGE OUR MEMBERS?

Make sure to ask questions! This is such a simple step, but oftentimes it gets completely overlooked. As established members, we often forget what it felt like when we first join the Auxiliary. That first meeting that we attended, where we may not have known much about the organization, may not have even known any other members, we came in with bright eyes full of confusion. Don't let that be the case. Host a "happy hour" of sorts to welcome any new members before your monthly meetings. Give them a chance to ask questions about the Auxiliary, what we do, why we follow the Bylaws & Rituals, what our Programs are and how they can get involved if they want to. Encourage members to take an active role in the Auxiliary by volunteering for committees, organizing events or contributing to newsletters. Involvement in activities fosters a deeper connection and commitment to the organization.



And for the love of all things – please DO NOT shut down an idea that an individual may have by saying “No” or “We have never done it that way.”

That is the single biggest turnoff to newcomers who may want to get involved! Keep an open mind. There are always new ways/methods/ideas that may be really great and just need some help getting fleshed out. Don't shut them down before they even have a chance to be discussed. If we want to continue to grow as an organization, then we must make an effort to hear out other ideas.

Let's continue to ***“Ignite Our Passion”*** this year while ***“Serving America's Heroes!”***