



## The American Legion, Department of Maryland

### WHO WE ARE – WHAT WE DO

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[www.mdlegion.org](http://www.mdlegion.org)

#### WHO WE ARE:

The American Legion is a 501 (c) 19 Not for Profit, Community Based, Non-Partisan, Patriotic, Veterans Service Organization that was founded in March of 1919 and Chartered by the United States Congress in September of 1919.

We are comprised of some 13,000 American Legion Posts located in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, France, Mexico, the Philippines and Puerto Rico; hence, the term “Department”, rather than “State”, is used as a more descriptive term.

In The American Legion, Department of Maryland we have a total of 137 active American Legion Posts located within each of the 23 Counties and in Baltimore City, with a Post presence in virtually every community of the State. In both membership and number of Posts, we are by far the largest veteran’s service organization in Maryland.

For more than 90 years, The American Legion had stood on four great pillars or principles: (1) Taking care of veterans and their families; (2) Supporting a strong national and domestic security posture for America and its Allies, including adequate staffing and funding for the U.S. Departments of Defense, Labor, Homeland Security, State and Veterans Affairs; (3) Educating and caring for our Children and Youth; and (4) Participating in and furthering Americanism and patriotic holidays, such as, but not limited to Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Armed Forces Day and Flag Day. Our advocacy revolves around these four pillars, and we remain non-partisan in the furtherance of our mission.

Our American Legion Family spans more than **100,000 households, the members of which live, work, purchase goods and services, pay taxes and vote** in the State of Maryland...all of **which further contributes to the economic well-being within their respective communities, counties, Baltimore City, and the State of Maryland.**

#### WHAT WE DO:

The American Legion of Maryland (Posts, Squadrons, Auxiliary and Headquarters offices) contributes materially to the economic well-being of the State of Maryland by employing more than 1,300 tax-paying employees living in the state of Maryland. Our employee payroll is estimated to exceed \$30,000,000 annually.

During the past year, our **Charitable Contributions** to needy families, churches, government programs supporting the four pillars, and a host of other State recognized not-for profit charitable organizations **exceeded \$2.3 million, and these donations and grants continue year after year.** In addition, our members make cash and in-kind donations to and contribute tens of thousands of volunteer man-hours each year to many worthy charitable causes, including Special Olympics, VA Medical Centers and Clinics, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Other Maryland Military Treatment Facilities and Out-Patient Clinics, Fisher Houses, Johns Hopkins Hospital’s Children’s Miracle Network, Maryland State Veterans Cemeteries and the Charlotte Hall Maryland State Veterans Home... a few examples worthy of your attention follows:

- The American Legion is the largest identifiable Blood Donor organization in America and in Maryland. For 2015, The American legion Family in Maryland reported 2,395 pints of blood collected by our Legion Family during sponsored blood drives.
- The American Legion, since our founding, has been a strong sponsor and supporter of Boy and Girl Scout Troops in America and in Maryland. Legion Posts sponsor 52 Scout Units and expended over \$100,000 in support of these youth.

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- In Maryland, The American Legion scholarship donations to deserving college and pre-college level students ranks second to none. Total scholarships given in 2015 exceeded \$220,000.
- The Department Service Office annually assists and represents over 1,000 Veterans with VA Benefits paperwork, and is responsible for nearly \$18,000,000 in awards for various VA benefits.
- The Maryland American Legion owns two Youth Camps, one on the Frederick-Washington County line operated by the Frederick County YMCA for the benefit of our community, and the other in Prince George's County which is operated by the Southern Maryland District Council. These camps including all facilities thereat are available for one-day or longer (but not to exceed a period contrary to established rules and regulations of each camp) for use by youth groups, churches, and others on a first come-first served basis, at minimal cost. These youth camps allow over 6,000 Maryland youth and many more Marylanders to enjoy the outdoors and learn values that last a lifetime.
- Many Maryland American Legion Posts are available during emergencies for use as National and Local Civil Defense Shelters, Disaster Relief and Homeland Security Training Facilities and to temporarily shelter, feed and cloth families during natural and/or man-made disasters and riots. Located in every County and in most communities around the State they are an available resource in time of need.
- Maryland American Legion Youth Programs include: (1) Boys and Girls State Programs which consist of a one-week concentrated study of the U. S. Constitution and an intense interactive learning experience pertaining to the legislative process and operations of local, state and national governmental entities; (2) American Legion Baseball; (3) American Legion Oratorical Contests, (4) Junior Shooting Sports, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Youth recreation leagues, and college scholarship awards. We are leaders in every aspect of community involvement.
- Under the Legion's Worldwide Family Support Network we provide both labor and financial support to spouses and family members left behind while the military service-member is deployed in harms way. Typical support includes lawn maintenance (shoveling snow, mowing grass, trimming shrubbery), making minor household repairs, providing free transportation and drivers, purchasing needed clothing and food and helping with emergency financial problems.
- The Department of Maryland Heroes to Hometown/Wounded Warrior fund has provided grants totaling over \$200,000 for Veterans of the current conflicts struggling with transition or in need in other areas including adaptive technologies. The goal of this fund is to quickly assess the needs and provide assistance, and we have an impact throughout the State. This program is completely funded by donation from the Legion Family and a few supporters.
- Department of MD, Veteran Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission annually makes donations of nearly \$30,000, mostly to Veteran Affairs facilities to support Veteran needs. The total value of donations and volunteer hours to the VA and Rehabilitation efforts by MD American Legion Family exceeds \$500,000 annually. Annual volunteer service to VA includes thousands of hours in facilities around MD.
- The Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) for needy children of Veterans, operated by The American Legion, provides aid for areas of basic needs to Veteran families with children in the household. Grants in Maryland vary depending upon the level of need and number received. Grants provided in 2015 exceeded \$75,000

**“Get Out The Vote”** has been a major program at all levels (National, Department/State and Post/Community) of The American Legion since our very beginning in 1919. By Congressional Charter we are non-partisan, we do not endorse, raise money for or give preference to any person seeking public office; however, **we do strongly advocate for a wide range of LEGISLATIVE ISSUES germane to the Aims and Purposes for which The American Legion was founded and work to ensure these issues are before the elected officials, at all levels (city, county, state and national), and we ask for their support and votes.**

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## ANALYSIS OF MARYLAND'S VETERAN POPULATION

(Source: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs - as of 9/30/2014)

<b>Total:</b>	<b>437,762</b>	<b>Wartime:</b>	<b>330,283</b>	<b>Peacetime:</b>	<b>107,480</b>
<b>World War II:</b>	<b>19,225</b>	<b>Korean Conflict:</b>	<b>30,846</b>	<b>Vietnam Era:</b>	<b>127,455</b>
<b>Gulf War:</b>	<b>166,645</b>	<b>Male:</b>	<b>380,136</b>	<b>Female:</b>	<b>57,627</b>

### WAR ON TERRORISM

(Source: U.S. Department of Defense as of 1 February 2015)

#### Killed - 11 SEPTEMBER 2001

**World Trade Center**                      **2,977 (excludes 19 hijackers)**

**Pentagon**            **125 + 64 Airline Passengers; Shanksville, PA**            **59**

### OTHER MAJOR ISSUES

**U.S. Homeless Veterans number 39,471 on any given night (as of January 2016); Nearly 1.4 million Veterans are at risk of homelessness due to poverty, lack of support networks, and dismal living conditions in overcrowded or substandard housing.**

**Approximately 12,700 veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation New Dawn (OND) were homeless in 2010. The number of young homeless veterans is increasing, but only constitutes 8.8% of the overall homeless veteran population.**

**Veteran suicide rates are alarmingly high; Stress of the constant deployments and access to quality mental health services are major causes of this tragic toll. With transition difficulties including financial and employment concerns the younger Veterans need our support. However, many do not realize Veterans over the age of 50 make up nearly 70% of Veterans committing suicide (Source: VA study ). The issue is complicated, but with the seriousness of the situation it deserves attention at the local, State, and Federal levels.**

**Continuing to strengthen Maryland benefits for Veterans and Service Members is a key to attracting and retaining this population in Maryland. Retired military personnel are moving out of Maryland and relocating over the border in States that offer Retired pay tax exemption. This causes the loss of Income Tax revenue due to the taxes on the second incomes benefitting the bordering States. It is imperative that the Legislature and the Governor support and continue the Sales Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations, and to support raising the Tax Reductions for all Military Retiree Residents in the coming years until military retired pay is completely exempt for State Income Taxation. Many States offer Veterans greater tuition incentives for attendance at State universities than Maryland. Increasing these incentives for Maryland Resident Veterans is another way to attract and retain the younger Veterans, and those other Veterans that are retiring over the next few years.**

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**Legion Post Contribution (Numbers include Dept and Aux Dept Donations)**

<b>Monetary Aid and Program Costs</b>		<b>Other Highlights</b>	
Scholarship and Educational Costs	\$223,929	Blood Donor Pints Donated	2,395
Contributions to VA Hosp	\$220,048	Number of Donors from Post	1,759
Cash Aid and Goods to C & Y	\$209,754	# Annual community Events	561
Legion Baseball Cost	\$202,788	No. of Funeral Honors	1,282
Cost of Community Service	\$131,077	Scout Units	52
Scouting Costs	\$110,320	# Youths in Scouting	1,340
Emergency Aid to Veterans	\$96,424	# Schools Assisted	59
Non-Legion BB Teams Cost	\$83,950	No. of Scholarships	175
Boys State/Girls State Costs	\$134,675	Education Hours	5,297
Uniformed Group Cost	\$54,197	Local Flag Presentations	180
Legion Legacy Scholarship Amount	\$48,023	Flag Day	77
Service member and Family Support	\$38,124	Get Out the Vote	42
National Emergency Fund	\$30,240	Veterans Day	107
Children's Hospital	\$6,680	Memorial Day	111
Jr. Shooting Club Costs	\$6,405	July 4th	68
All Other Donations ad Aid not above	\$584,599	Legion Birthday	50
Total Other Charities	\$275,507	4 Chaplains Sunday	35
<b>Total Monetary Program Costs/Donations</b>	<b>\$2,456,740.00</b>	# Youths in Jr. Shooting Club	77
		No. C & Y Activities	787
<b>Volunteer Hours</b>		# Children Aided	4390
Post Svc Off/VAVS Volunteer Hours	10,426	# of Families Assisted	144
Education Hours	5,297		
Vol Hours for C & Y	12,811		
Support Our Troops - volunteer hourrs	11,583		
Hours of Community Service not reported above	114,808		
<b>Total Hours Volunteered</b>	<b>154,925</b>		
<b>Value of Volunteer Labor</b>	<b>\$3,563,275</b>		

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