



Play #2: Draft Your Team

The Season Is Underway — Who's on Your Roster?

The foundation is built. The kids are back in school. Friday night lights are on, fall activities are underway, and it's officially time to get off the sidelines. **Play #2: Draft Your Team** is about making connections.

Youth Activities doesn't mean we have to create every project ourselves. Some of the best opportunities are already happening in our communities — we just need to find them. Look around your hometown. Who is already working with kids?

Schools. Marching bands. FFA. 4-H. Scouts. Sports teams. JROTC. Church youth groups. Libraries. Homeschool groups. Youth service organizations. Clubs you may not have even heard of yet. At Fall Conference, we had the opportunity to hear directly from several of those community organizations. They gave us a look at what they are doing with Arizona's youth — and, more importantly, helped us see where the VFW and VFW Auxiliary might fit into that picture. Those are your potential draft picks.

This month, challenge your Auxiliary to choose **one youth organization you aren't currently working with** and make contact.

But here's the important part: don't lead with what you want from them. **Ask:**

"What are you working on, and how can we help?" Maybe they need volunteers at an event. Maybe they need judges, mentors or an extra set of hands. Maybe they'd love veterans to speak to students. Maybe there's a project where their youth could work alongside your members. You won't know until you ask.

And remember — a partnership goes both ways. We're not simply looking for youth to participate in *our* programs. We're building relationships where we show up for their programs, too. That's exactly what the VFW Auxiliary Youth Activities Program encourages: working with youth groups and giving young people positive opportunities to serve their communities, veterans and service members.



Remember the Fall Conference Challenge:

ONE TEAM. ONE HOUR.

Your VFW and VFW Auxiliary are **one team**. Choose one youth group in your community and give them **one hour** of your time. Volunteer at their event. Help with a project. Attend something they're doing. Ask what they need and show up.

No money required. No elaborate project. No award waiting at the finish line. **The reward is working with the kids, building the relationship and showing them that our VFW and Auxiliary are part of their community.**

Then snap a picture and share what your team did on social media! Tell us who you partnered with, how you spent your hour and what you learned from working together. Be sure to use **#OneTeamOneHour** on your post so we can follow along and see how Arizona's VFWs and VFW Auxiliaries are getting off the sidelines and into the game with our youth!

Audible Calls from the Sidelines

September & October Youth Opportunities

us Sept. 11 – Patriot Day

Invite youth to participate in a remembrance activity, learn about service and sacrifice, thank first responders or help place flags.

Sept. 13 – Grandparents Day

Bring generations together! Encourage youth to interview a grandparent, veteran or senior and learn a little of their story.

Sept. 17 – Constitution Day & Citizenship Day

Make civics fun. Try Constitution trivia, a Preamble challenge or a kid-friendly conversation about what citizenship means.

Oct. 5 – World Teachers' Day

Recruit the kids to help recognize the people who help them grow. Cards, drawings and simple thank-yous can make someone's day.

Oct. 11 – International Day of the Girl

Celebrate the girls in your community who are leading, serving, learning and making a difference.

Oct. 31 – Halloween

Trunk-or-Treat, costume contests, pumpkin decorating, Halloween books or games — sometimes the best way to connect with youth is simply to show up and have fun with them!

Coach's Reminder

Not every special day needs to become a project. Use these dates as conversation starters, social media ideas and excuses to connect with youth organizations in your community.

Pick the plays that fit your team — and leave the rest on the clipboard.