



## 2012 Washington DC Conference General Information

The American Legion Auxiliary Washington DC Conference (formally known as Awareness Assembly) will be held February 26-29, 2012, at the Hilton Washington Hotel.

Enclosed you will find the following information:

- Program Overview
- Tentative Schedule
- Registration and Housing Information
- Hill Visit Request Information

There are several exciting changes to the program this year detailed below and in the Program Overview:

### Washington DC Conference Registration

Everyone planning to attend must complete and return the registration form for the conference (this includes all national officers, Past National Presidents and national chairmen). Please submit one registration form per participant; it may be duplicated as needed. Registration is \$45. All registration forms are due to National Headquarters by **FEBRUARY 3, 2012**.

### Opening Session, Sunday, February 26

National President Kris Nelson invites all members of The American Legion Family to attend the Washington, D.C. Conference opening event. This event will be free of charge and will feature performers from the Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

### Public Spirit Award Luncheon, Monday, February 27

The Public Spirit Award Luncheon will be held on Monday, February 27. Tickets are \$38.00 and anyone in The American Legion Family is welcome to attend. Seating will be grouped by Department. We are unable to grant special requests for different seating.

More information regarding Dietary Restrictions is located on the Registration Form.

### Wreath Laying at Arlington National Cemetery and National Cathedral Tour, Wednesday, February 29

The national president will participate in a wreath laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery on Wednesday, February 29, 2012. Attendees will then travel to the National Cathedral for a guided tour. Tickets, which include a box continental breakfast, transportation and tours are \$35.

### Housing and Hotel Information

Room reservations should be made directly with the hotel using either the website address or phone number provided on the registration and housing information document. An **advance deposit** of one night's room and 14.5% occupancy tax is **REQUIRED FOR ALL RESERVATIONS**. The advance deposit may be in the form of a credit card or check/money order.

The cut-off date for housing reservations is **January 20, 2012**. However, since the hotel is likely to sell out before January 20, we encourage you to make your housing reservations as soon as possible in order to secure a room.

### Online:

All materials may be found on the website at:

[http://www.alaforveterans.org/members/conventions\\_meetings/Pages/AwarenessAssembly.aspx](http://www.alaforveterans.org/members/conventions_meetings/Pages/AwarenessAssembly.aspx)

If you have any questions, please contact Event Planning at [meetings@alaforveterans.org](mailto:meetings@alaforveterans.org)

### DISTRIBUTION:

National Officers  
Past National Presidents  
National Executive Committeewomen  
National Chairmen

National Committee Members  
Department Presidents  
Department Secretaries  
Authorized Call-ins



## 2012 WASHINGTON D.C. CONFERENCE: FACES OF FREEDOM

### *Program Overview*

Hilton Washington Hotel – Washington, D.C.

#### **Sunday, February 26**

**Registration and Ticket Pickup:** - 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
5:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

#### **Skill Building Workshops – NEW EVENT FOR 2012**

**Sunday, February 26**

**1:30 – 4:00 p.m.**

Benefit from three workshops designed to build your skills in leading your units and departments, collaborating with your Auxiliary peers, and advocating for our veterans and their families. Workshop topics include the following:

#### *Improving Organizational Effectiveness through role clarification. Governance or Management?*

Whether heads of units, departments, or the national organization, ALA volunteer leaders at all levels are facing unprecedented challenges in critical areas such as member recruitment and retention, organization governance, and fiscal health. ALA is far from alone in this regard. This session will explore contemporary challenges facing nonprofit membership organizations today, discuss role clarification and uncover strategies for all of us to manage the change in our midst.

#### *Listening to Each Other – Creating a Positive Member Experience for All the Generations*

The American Legion Auxiliary has a multi-generational membership. People from different generations vary in their experiences, ways of thinking, and communication styles. Yet, ALA members, whatever our generation, also share a common bond. This session offers participants a structured opportunity to listen to ALA members of various generations as they share their experiences in the Auxiliary and uncover what motivates (and de-motivates) them to serve.

#### *Advocacy Fundamentals*

Public policy advocacy is an uneasy assignment for many... mostly because we don't do it frequently enough to feel confident. Yet, advocacy on behalf of veterans and their families is one of the Legion Family's key strategies and strengths. This session will introduce the fundamentals of engagement with public policy makers to ALA members who are new to advocacy. ALA members who are advocacy experts will be welcomed to share their advice with peers. It's also an opportunity for our advocacy pros to refresh their own knowledge as they train others to be effective advocates.

*Workshops will run concurrently and will repeat two times, allowing participants to attend all three workshops. Workshops run 45 minutes long and will rotate at the following time intervals: 1:30 pm – 2:15 pm; 2:20 pm – 3:05 pm; 3:10 pm – 3:55 pm*

### **Session I - Opening Session**

**Sunday, February 26**

**7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.**

National President Kris Nelson invites all members of The American Legion Family to attend the Opening Session of the 2012 Washington DC Conference.

The program for the evening will begin with a Joint Armed Forces Color Guard and include performers from the national Veterans Creative Arts Festival who will provide inspirational entertainment for the evening.

*Individuals do not need to register for Washington D.C. Conference to attend this FREE of CHARGE event.*

### **Session II – Military and Veteran Support**

**Monday, February 27**

**8:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.**

Benefit from a variety of speakers discussing current national security and veterans affairs matters. Session segments to include the following:

#### *Exploring the Military-Civilian Gap in the Post -9/11 Era*

The highly-regarded Pew Research Center released a seminal report in late 2011 that compared and contrasted the attitudes and experiences of Post-9/11 veterans to the general population. Among the findings, some 84 percent of post-9/11 veterans say the public does not understand the problems faced by those in the military or their families. This presentation will bridge this military-civilian gap in understanding through a review of, and conclusions from, the Pew study.

#### *Looking After our Deployed Troops – A Service Provider Perspective*

U.S. armed forces are deployed in 150 countries. The American Red Cross and United Service Organizations (USO) enjoy privileged status among nonprofit organizations in having the greatest access to our deployed troops. Representatives of these organizations will share their insight on the current morale and welfare tempo of our overseas servicemembers, and their families back home and abroad. Representatives will offer suggestions to ALA departments, units, and members seeking to enhance their support for servicemembers abroad.

#### *Joining Forces to Support Military Families*

Joining Forces is a national initiative organized by the Obama Administration, and supported by ALA, that mobilizes all sectors of society to give our servicemembers and their families the opportunities and support they have earned. The Executive Director of Joining Forces will report on the initiative's progress and highlight opportunities for ALA members and units to post service opportunities, find service opportunities, and pledge service hours.

#### *We Need You ... to Support the VA*

A representative of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will share the agency's current vision and strategies for engaging volunteer and community-based organizations in supporting the Department's mission to serve veterans and their families.

#### *Community Blueprint Network – A Tool to Organize Communities to Support Veterans, Servicemembers, and Families*

The Community Blueprint Network is a new initiative organized by a group of national organizations, including ALA, to assist communities in improving their response to the challenges and needs of veterans, servicemembers, and families in their areas. Blueprint leaders will introduce participants to the initiative's purpose, action plan and online tools. ALA members will receive suggestions for initiating or engaging in Blueprint activities in their communities.

#### *Indianapolis: Raising the Game*

Experience the sights and sounds of Indianapolis, Indiana, the 2012 National Convention city. An informative presentation will be made detailing the exciting things to do in Indianapolis.

## **Public Spirit Award Luncheon**

**Monday, February 27**

**Noon – 1:40 p.m.**

During this special luncheon, the Public Spirit Award will be presented to the 2012 recipients Michael Peterson and COL Jill Chambers, Retired. Michael is more than a Grammy and CMA award nominee. His passion for our military and veterans has been demonstrated in numerous ways including nine tours to Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition to his work with military and veterans, he works with schools across this country presenting a program that focuses on the discovery of personal responsibility and social-emotional learning that many educators use to improve test scores and graduation rates. In 2011, Michael donated his time for a Public Service Announcement for the Auxiliary and more recently was the Master of Ceremonies for the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

His work with Ms. Chambers includes helping servicemembers, veterans and their families understand resources available to them and guide them in successfully using those resources. The Chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff selected Ms. Chambers to serve as the first Special Assistant for Returning Warrior Issues where she was tasked with finding the truth about transitional challenges facing wounded service members. The results of her work brought her to founding This Able Vet, LLC, an organization dedicated to work with transitional challenges. Both recipients have a huge heart and genuine compassion for the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Established in 1983, the Public Spirit Award was created by the Auxiliary to recognize and honor an outstanding individual or organization for Auxiliary mission-related contributions that positively impact our communities.

## **Session III – Honoring their Service**

**Monday, February 27**

**1:45 p.m.– 3:45 p.m.**

### *Just Listen – An Effective Strategy to Engage Veterans Who Are Returning Home*

Paula Caplan, a clinical and research psychologist, is the author of *When Johnny and Jane Come Marching Home: How All of Us Can Help Veterans*. Dr. Caplan will share her perspective on the treatment of war-related trauma. Dr. Caplan proposes an alternative to intensive mental health services: rather than we “normalize” the war experience by welcoming veterans back into our communities and listening to their stories. ALA members are poised to do just that, and Dr. Caplan will offer recommendations how we can do so in a manner that leads to a transformation in veterans’ and civilians’ understanding of war.

### *Michael Peterson’s Veterans Education Curriculum*

#### *Col Jill Chambers, Retired on This Able Vet: Empowering Veterans’ Futures*

Michael has been supporting schools and communities in reaching their missions since 1983. TAG YOU’RE IT! is a blend of inspiration and entertainment designed to give the audience “jaw-dropping moments” of personal responsibility and growth.

As a survivor of the 9-11 Pentagon attack Ms. Chambers has first hand experience with the devastating impact of combat related stress. She created This Able Vet, an organization dedicated to helping service members, veterans and their families find and successfully use all resources available to them in their communities, after realizing post-traumatic stress has affected veterans of all wars.

## **Session IV**

**Monday, February 27**

**4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

### *Know Before You Go – Preparing for the Hill Walk*

The Hill Walk is a significant component of the Washington D.C. Conference. As a family of organizations representing nearly three million members, The American Legion Family has a strong voice on Capitol Hill. At this joint session with Legion and Sons members, learn about the Legion’s public policy positions in advance of the Hill Walk and build your confidence to articulate our legislative priorities to your elected officials.

**Commander's Call & Legislative Rally**

**Tuesday, February 28**

**8:30 a.m.**

– Joint Session with The American Legion

**Afternoon**

Hill Walk – Meet with your Congressional Leaders

(See appointment suggestions included in this mailing.)

**Arlington National Cemetery Wreath Laying and National Cathedral Tour**

**Wednesday, February 29**

**7:30 a.m. – 12:10 p.m. – NEW DAY AND TIME FOR 2012 EVENT**

Buses will leave promptly at 7:30 a.m.

While at Arlington National Cemetery, attendees will visit The Tomb of the Unknowns and witness a changing of the Guard.

The Tomb of the Unknowns (also known as the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier) is guarded 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and in any weather by Tomb Guard sentinels. Sentinels, all volunteers, are considered to be the best of the elite 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard), headquartered at Fort Myer, Va.

After the changing of the Guard, National President Kris Nelson will lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns. The gift of flowers at a memorial site is a ritual that occurs around the world, understood in every culture. The floral tributes at funerals bespeak both the beauty and the brevity of life and evoke memories of other days.

After a short bus ride to the National Cathedral, an hour-long guided tour will be provided, examining iconography in Cathedral sculpture, stained glass, and needlework that pays tribute to many significant events in our nation's history, honoring those who have served and sacrificed for their country. The Cathedral is a spiritual resource for our nation: a great and beautiful edifice in the city of Washington, an indispensable ministry for people of all faiths and perspectives, and a sacred place for our country in times of celebration, crisis, and sorrow.

Ticket cost includes all tours, busing and a continental box breakfast, which includes fresh fruit, yogurt with granola, a bakery item, and juice. The breakfast will be delivered on the bus.

*Note: Every effort is being made to coordinate the arrival back to the Hilton for the start of The American Legion PR Luncheon.*

**2012 WASHINGTON DC CONFERENCE**  
**WASHINGTON DC CONFERENCE: FACES OF FREEDOM**

*Housing and Registration Information*  
Hilton Washington – Washington, D.C.

Attached please find the Registration and Ticket Order Form for the 2012 Washington DC Conference.

**HOTEL & HOUSING INFORMATION**

- Hotel:** Hilton Washington  
1919 Connecticut Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
(202) 483-3000
- Reservations:** New this year, housing reservations for the American Legion Family will all be made with one group code. Reservations must be made directly with the Hilton Washington in one of two ways (housing forms will not be distributed):
- Online:** [http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/D/DCAWHHH-AMLE-20120221/index.jhtml?WT.mc\\_id=POG](http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/D/DCAWHHH-AMLE-20120221/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG)
- Via telephone:** (202) 483-3000  
*Please reference group code "AMLE" or "The American Legion Washington Conference" when making your reservation to receive the group rate.*
- Rate:** \$205.00 per night plus 14.5% tax (1 person per room)  
\$215.00 per night plus 14.5% tax (2 people per room)  
\$235.00 per night plus 14.5% tax (3 people per room)  
\$265.00 per night plus 14.5% tax (4 people per room)
- Housing Deadline:** **January 20, 2012**  
We anticipate this year's program to be well attended. You are encouraged to make your hotel reservations **NOW** as we anticipate the hotel to sell out before January 20, 2012.  
  
Reservations received after January 20, 2012, are subject to availability and prevailing rates.
- Deposit:** An advance deposit of one night's room and 14.5% occupancy tax is **REQUIRED FOR ALL RESERVATIONS**. The advance deposit may be in the form of a credit card or check/money/order.

**REGISTRATION**

Those planning to attend any of the Washington DC Conference events must complete and return the registration form for the conference (this includes all national officers, Past National Presidents and national chairmen). *Group payments will not be accepted; each person must submit a separate payment for her registration.*

Please submit one registration form per participant. The form may be duplicated as needed.

Online forms may be found:

[http://www.alaforveterans.org/members/conventions\\_meetings/Pages/AwarenessAssembly.aspx](http://www.alaforveterans.org/members/conventions_meetings/Pages/AwarenessAssembly.aspx)

**Event Information and Fees**

Washington DC Conference Attendee Registration Fee:	\$45.00
Arlington Wreath Laying & National Cathedral Tour:	\$35.00 (includes box Continental Breakfast)
Public Spirit Award Luncheon:	\$38.00

**Deadlines**

January 20, 2012:	Deadline for Housing Reservations
February 3, 2012:	Deadline for Event Registration
February 10, 2012:	Deadline for Refunds

**Ticket and Packet Pickup Registration Hours**

Saturday, February 25:	5:00 – 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, February 26:	10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Washington DC Conference

# REGISTRATION AND TICKET ORDER FORM

Washington, D.C. February 26 - 29, 2012



## Step One – Registrant Information

Please use only one registration form per person.

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Name for Badge \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Do you plan on participating in the Hill Walk? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

## Step Two – Washington DC Conference Registration

	Cost	Amount
<input type="checkbox"/> General Attendee Registration	\$45.00	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Skill Building Workshops – Sunday, February 26	No Charge	<u>No Charge</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Spirit Award Luncheon – Monday, February 27		
_____ Number of Reception tickets	\$38.00	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Arlington Wreath Laying & National Cathedral Tour – Wednesday, February 29		
_____ Number of Arlington tickets	\$35.00	\$ _____
	<b>Total Amount Due</b>	\$ _____

## Step Three - Payment

Full payment must accompany your registration form. Your signature below authorizes the American Legion Auxiliary to charge your credit card for the total amount due and acknowledges that there will be no refunds after February 10, 2012

- Check (payable to National Treasurer, American Legion Auxiliary)
- Credit Card (Circle One):   MasterCard    Visa

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

*Last three numbers in the panel on the back of the card*

Print Cardholder Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Billing Address \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

## Step Four – Emergency Contact Information

Emergency Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Evening Phone \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (Relationship)



## 2012 MID-YEAR NEC MEETING & WASHINGTON DC CONFERENCE

### *Tentative Schedule of Events*

Hilton Washington – Washington, D.C.

#### **Saturday, February 25, 2012:**

5:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Awareness Assembly Registration  
*Concourse Level*

7:00 p.m.

National Executive Committee Meeting  
*International Ballroom West (Concourse Level)*

#### **Sunday, February 26, 2012:**

8:30 a.m.

National Executive Committee Meeting  
*International Ballroom West (Concourse Level)*

10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Washington DC Conference Registration  
*Concourse Level*

1:30 – 4:00 p.m.

Concurrent Breakouts  
*See Program Information for more details*

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Washington DC Conference Registration  
*Congressional Registration (Ballroom Level)*

7:30 p.m.

Opening Session –  
*International Ballroom (Concourse Level) – Event is free of charge  
and open to all members of The American Legion Family*

#### **Monday, February 27, 2012:**

8:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Washington DC Conference Session  
*International Ballroom (Ballroom Level)*

Noon – 1:40 p.m.

Public Spirit Award Luncheon  
*Lincoln/Monroe (Concourse Level)*

1:45 – 3:45 p.m.

Washington DC Conference Session Continues  
*Grand Ballroom South/Central (Ballroom Level)*

4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Know Before You Go – Preparing for Hill Walk  
*Joint Session with The American Legion*

#### **Tuesday, February 28, 2012:**

8:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Commander's Call  
*Joint Legislative Rally – The American Legion Family  
Followed by visits to members of Congress (on own)*

#### **Wednesday, February 29, 2012:**

7:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Arlington National Cemetery & National Cathedral Tour

#### **American Legion Auxiliary Offices:**

February 24 - 29, 2012  
*Albright (Terrace Level)*

#### **DISTRIBUTION:**

National Officers  
Past National Presidents  
National Chairmen  
National Executive Committeewomen  
National Committee Members  
Department Presidents  
Department Secretaries  
Authorized Call-Ins to Washington, DC

[http://www.alaforveterans.org/members/conventions\\_meetings/Pages/AwarenessAssembly.aspx](http://www.alaforveterans.org/members/conventions_meetings/Pages/AwarenessAssembly.aspx)

*Subject to Change*