



**American Legion Auxiliary  
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I hope you have been looking for servicemembers to nominate for the Salute to Servicemembers Award. Remember submissions are due to me by May 15<sup>th</sup>.

Through the ALA National Security Committee, members have the opportunity to provide as much support as we can to make life a little easier for a military family. We need to welcome military families into our local communities, tell them how much we appreciate them, and let them know The American Legion Family is available to help them. Whether it's babysitting so a parent can go to the store, or helping with projects around the house, we can be there when a military family needs help.

We hear so many times that a military spouse is in a new and strange community and is overwhelmed when the furnace breaks down or the plumbing is leaking, and they have no one to turn to for help. *We* can be there to help! Our unit members can work together to find local businesses and contractors willing to work with military families and create a list of local resources. If there is a Family Readiness Group nearby, they can distribute the list to them or have copies available at the community center or library.

When we help a service family, they truly become a part of our community and our lives. But as is typical of military life, they soon may be reassigned to another duty station. Although we are sad to see the family leave our community, we can help them one last time by contacting a Legion post and Auxiliary unit in the area where they will be stationed next. This could help make the transition to a new home easier for them.

### **Troop Welcome Home/Send-Off Events**

Many Auxiliary units and Legion posts are actively involved in their communities welcoming our troops home. Here are some ideas on how you can help:

- Seek out servicemembers returning to your community, and make it a major event
- Organize community-wide ceremonies on holidays such as Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Veterans Day
- Host activities in the local Legion Family post (dinner or an awards ceremony)
- Organize "Support Our Troops Night" at local sporting events
- Line the streets with U.S. flags, Blue Star Banners, yellow ribbons, and yard signs
- Develop a public relations plan to get the event publicized in newspapers, radio, or TV
- Arrange speaking engagements for servicemembers at schools
- Present returning troops with certificates of recognition

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