



Leadership
East Palo Alto Unit 472
American Legion Auxiliary
Department of California

Lou Thompson, Chairman
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Program Chairmen Part One

The strength of the American Legion Auxiliary lies within its membership and the work accomplished at the Unit level.

Yes, the District, Department, and National organizations are important. If you're in business then you know that CEOs, directors, managers and supervisors are only able to do their jobs if the employees are doing their jobs.

The program chairman is much like a supervisor in any corporation – she works directly with the members. She gives them their responsibilities, assists with whatever is needed to get the job done, and reports the accomplishments to the person up-line (the District chairman in the case of the ALA).

There are several places to get this information. The most important document is called the National Plan of Work. It clearly describes for every ALA program the goals and tactics for every component of a particular program. The Plan of Work can be found at the Unit Web site on each program page. The link takes you to a PDF of the National Plan. You are encouraged to print it out, read it, and adapt it to the Unit needs.

As a program chairman, your job is to understand what direction you need to give to the members so the work of your program gets accomplished.

Unit Chairmen are encouraged to choose one or two of the program components as the focus for the Unit's work.

What you'll quickly discover is that there is too much information. The Plan is a guideline. It represents all the components of the National program. The other components should be reported to the members, but only for informational purposes. You never know, a member might already be doing work described in the Plan and could be counted as Unit activity.

Once you've chosen one or two components, devise your own Plan of Work to deliver to the Unit members. Your delivery will be in the form of a report or bulletin. Describe the goal and outline the tactics you recommend to reach the goal. Tell the members how you want them to report the work they accomplish.

If you plan to use a document for reporting, make sure to make that form available in a Word format so every member will easily be able to fill in statistics and information into the form and return it to you as an attachment via email. If you decide to provide materials for the members to use, make sure they are easy to print out. (Remember that we can all see color on our monitors, but we don't all have color printers.)

Coming soon - Part Two – "How to set goals and create meaningful tactics"