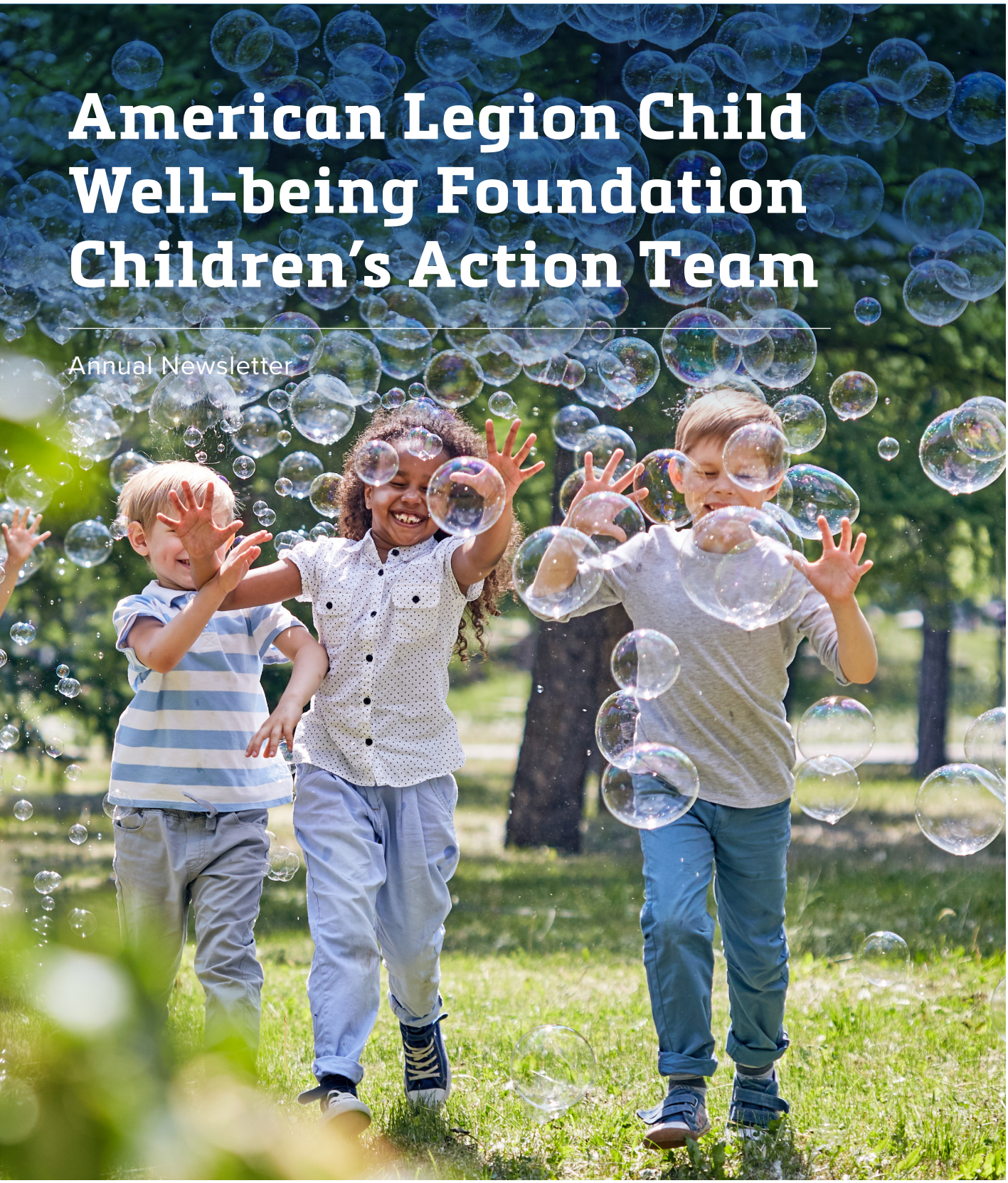
AMERICAN LEGION



American Legion Child Well-being Foundation Children's Action Team

Annual Newsletter

legion.org/cwf

President's Message

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation (CWF), now doing business as the American Legion Child Well-being Foundation, thank you for your interest in learning more about the Foundation. This newsletter will provide you with important CWF information.

Your commitment to help raise awareness and funds on behalf of the American Legion Child Well-being Foundation is vital to its success. Donations raised each year directly impact the amount of money and grants the Foundation may award. Those grants help youth-serving nonprofit organizations in their mission of providing information, assistance and opportunities that support the health and well-being of children, including life-saving services. Your CWF awareness and donations can give them knowledge and hope!

One way you can help CWF's mission is by becoming part of our Children's Action Team (CAT) family. The high-value impact you can have as a CAT member for the Foundation cannot be overstated. The mission of the American Legion Child Well-being Foundation cannot be accomplished without the proactive efforts of our Children's Action Team members across the country.

Intrigued to learn more? The enclosed newsletter contains details about the CAT program, its mission, requirements for becoming a certified CAT member and much more.

Remember … this is not just another worthy cause … this is **YOUR CAUSE**. I thank you for all that you have done, and will continue to do, on behalf of our nation's children.

Dennis R. Boland (FL)
President, American Legion Child Well-being Foundation

"A volunteer is a person who believes that people can make a difference … and is willing to prove it." *– author unknown*

What is the Children's Action Team (CAT)?

CAT is an acronym for the Children's Action Team of the American Legion Child Well-being Foundation. As CATs, you and your associates are representatives of, and advocates for, the American Legion Child Well-being Foundation within your department or detachment.

What can you do as a CAT? Many things! One way is by helping promote awareness about the CWF and its mission within your respective organization. If your organization has a newsletter that goes out to your members, put an article in it about the CWF and what you are doing to support it. Do the same thing with your department, detachment and district publications. Or enlist the support of your leadership to make announcements or short presentations at conferences, conventions and workshops. Another idea is to set up a small display at post, district and department meetings.

While attending various functions around your state, be on the lookout for opportunities to educate youth-serving nonprofit organizations about the CWF and its mission. Tell them about us, point them toward our website (cwf-inc.org) and encourage them to look into applying for a grant.

Another way to help as a CAT member is to generate donations. The vast majority of CWF donations come from members of The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion, American Legion Riders, and the Eight & Forty. As a CAT member we ask you to encourage individuals, posts, units, squadrons, salons, districts, detachments and departments to make contributions on an annual basis. Think of the impact the Foundation can have on youth-serving nonprofits if all our local level chapters would commit to issuing a $25 check annually to the American Legion Child Well-being Foundation. This would generate well over $700,000 in contributions each year, ensuring steady growth in our principal and greatly enhancing our grant-giving capabilities.

Other ways to help generate donations is by organizing a fundraising dinner, golf outing or sports tournament with the proceeds going to benefit CWF; create a fun, competitive donation challenge among posts, districts or departments; or find local merchants willing to donate merchandise and hold a raffle or silent auction. In raising funds, the only limitation you have is your imagination!

If you do receive corporate or merchant contributions, please send a note to American Legion Child Well-being Foundation, Inc., PO Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206. Or email us at CWFadministrator@legion.org with the name of the company or business, the name of the individual that made the contribution, the amount, and their mailing address. You will receive credit for the donation, and we will be happy to make sure the company also receives an appropriate thank you and/or certificate from the CWF Board.

Ready to become a CAT member? If you are a member in good standing with The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion or Eight & Forty First, you may request a CAT membership application by contacting the CWF office at The American Legion National Headquarters by phone at (317) 630-1203, by email at CWFadministrator@legion.org, or by visiting the CWF website, www.cwf-inc.org. Those returning an application to the CWF office will then receive a short quiz covering basic CWF information found in this newsletter to commplete and return to the CWF office. The exam reinforces your understanding of how and why the American Legion Child Well-being Foundation was created, as well as its purpose.

To demonstrate commitment in becoming a certified CAT member, the CWF Board asks if each applicant would remit a $25 donation to the Child Well-being Foundation along with their completed exam. Successfully passing the exam and giving a voluntary donation gives one pride in being a duly certified CAT member. Newly certified CAT members will receive a welcome aboard letter, a CAT certificate and card, and a lapel pin.

To keep your CAT membership current, simply request a renewal form each year from the CWF administrator and return it with a $25 donation. Renewing members will receive a letter, certificate, card and pin acknowledging another year of commitment.

With the dedicated support of our CAT members, the CWF has been able to award over $21 million in grants since 1954. It is our sincere wish that through your dedication and efforts that the American Legion Child Well-being Foundation will become a familiar name within your department or detachment and will be supported by your members on an annual basis.

The American Legion Child Well-being Foundation – Celebrating 70 Years of Service

In 1952, then American Legion Department of Arkansas Commander Dr. Garland D. Murphy Jr., came forward with an offer to provide a valuable contribution to The American Legion, if there was some way his gift could be used solely for children. After much study and discussion, the idea of a foundation was adopted.

On Oct. 15, 1953, the National Executive Committee of The American Legion approved the establishment of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. And on July 9, 1954, the CWF was duly incorporated under the laws of the State of Indiana.

The CWF was developed as a repository of funds from individuals who wished to contribute to the betterment of children in this country. When founded, the CWF was the only national organization of its kind devoted exclusively to programs involving young people. Its philosophy:

"Dedicated to the Betterment of All Children"

Fast Facts about the American Legion Child Well-being Foundation

- The CWF was duly incorporated on July 9, 1954.
- Although a separate corporation from The American Legion, the CWF Board of Directors are all Legionnaires comprised of members from the National Executive Committee, the Finance Commission, and the Americanism Commission's Committee on Children & Youth.
- The CWF was formed to provide assistance to youth-serving nonprofit organizations who educate about the need for the care and welfare of our nation's children.
- In 1955, the CWF awarded its first three grants totaling $22,500 to the Delinquency Control Institute, the National Association for Retarded Children, and the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness.
- To date the CWF has awarded over $21 million dollars to assist the children of this country.
- Tax-deductible contributions may be made directly to the CWF, with both the individual contributor and the department or detachment also receiving credit.
- The American Legion generously takes care of CWF's overhead costs, so all donations are directed into the principal of Trust Fund.

Memorials & Tributes

A gift to the American Legion Child Well-being Foundation is a wonderful way to honor the memory of a departed loved one or recognize someone who has made a difference in your life. It may also be a way to celebrate someone on special occasions, such as birthdays, retirements, anniversaries or holidays. What a gratifying way for individuals, organizations, businesses and groups to honor someone while supporting the mission of the American Legion Child Well-being Foundation.

When a memorial or tribute is received, the CWF then sends a memorial or tribute card to the next of kin or the honoree as designated by the donor. Every gift is tax deductible and the donor also receives a letter of acknowledgment and appreciation for their gift.

When $100 in contributions have accumulated in the name of a deceased individual, their next of kin will receive a beautiful gold-bordered certificate indicating that contributions had been made to the Foundation in the name of their loved one. When $300 or more has been received in the name of the deceased, the family will be presented with a memorial plaque.

CWF Fundraising Tools

- Contribution envelopes
- Grant guidelines
- Donation canisters
- Brochures
- Award information

All of the above items are available to you at no cost. Just let us know what you need and when, and we will do our best to accommodate your request.

The CWF Board of Directors and the staff deeply appreciate your efforts. Please contact us anytime by email at CWFadministrator@legion.org, by phone at (317) 630-1203, or by mail at American Legion Child Well-being Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206. We will do our utmost to provide timely assistance and advice, as required.

Foundation Awards

U.S. “Udie” Grant Legacy Award

The top department nationally, based on combined total contributions of The American Legion, Sons of The American Legion, Auxiliary, American Legion Riders and Eight & Forty during a contribution year (June 1 – May 31).

Garland D. Murphy, Jr. Award

The most active department in the nation (based on actual contributions received during a contribution year). One department from The American Legion, Sons of The American Legion, Auxiliary, American Legion Riders and Eight & Forty is recognized annually.

Excellence Award

One of 10 departments with the highest per capita contribution average for the contribution year within your organization.

Meritorious Achievement Award

The top department nationally in each organization (American Legion, Auxiliary, Eight & Forty and SAL) experiencing the highest increase in per capita giving in a contribution year.

"Heritage Circle" Gift Club

Awarded to departments (American Legion, Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion, American Legion Riders and Eight & Forty) for their cumulative donations made during the contribution year.

"Children First" Gift Club

Awarded to organization (post, unit, squadron, chapter and salon) for their cumulative donations made during the contribution year.

> **"A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove ... but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child."**
>
> **Forest E. Witcraft (1894-1967)**
> **Teacher, Scholar**

American Legion Child Well-being Foundation Grant Recipients for 2025

In its 71st year, the CWF awarded 13 grants totaling $852,593 to youth-serving nonprofit organizations. The recipients were selected during the annual meeting of the CWF board of directors that met in Indianapolis in October 2024. These grants have been awarded to support youth-serving projects that seek to enhance the lives of children by addressing their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs.

The following is a brief summary of the grants awarded for 2025.

American Kidney Fund of Rockville, Md., was awarded $25,000 for its project "American Kidney Fund Virtual Camp: National Camp for Pediatric Kidney Patients." This grant will fund themed virtual camps for youth suffering from kidney disease. The camps provide an environment for youth to interact with others who suffer from kidney diseases, thereby reducing the isolation and loneliness felt. The American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion support this grant.

ASXL Rare Research Endowment Foundation of Portland, ME, was awarded $10,550 for its project "Care Management Educational Materials." This grant will produce educational materials that empower parent caregivers to advocate for the best care for their children suffering from the ASXL-related disorders. The American Legion Auxiliary supports this grant.

Briggs & Barrett Project of Norfolk, NE, was awarded $15,000 for its project "Every Baby Initiative." This grant seeks to provide families of newborns with an Owlet sock that monitors breathing and heart rate when sleeping to help reduce sudden infant death (SIDs). The American Legion Auxiliary and the Eight & Forty support this grant.

Camp Corral of Raleigh, N.C., was awarded $25,000 for its project "Camp Corral-summer Camp for Children of Military Heroes-2025." This project will allow children of wounded, ill and fallen military

heroes to attend camp where they can connect with their peers, foster new connections and learn new skills. The American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion support this grant.

Children's Hospital & Medical Center Foundation of Omaha, NE, was awarded $20,000 for its project "Children's Nebraska's Child Passenger Safety Program." This grant will provide car seats to families in need, ensuring child safety and educating parents about car seat safety.

Cleveland County ALWS Baseball, Inc. of Shelby, N.C., was awarded $125,000 for its project "2025 American Legion World Series." This grant will help provide youth-centric activities during the week-long event. The American Legion Auxiliary supports this grant.

Father Flanagan's Boys' Home of Boys Town, NE, was awarded $25,000 for its project "Boys Town National Hotline." This grant will raise youth awareness of the mental health services provided by the Boys Town National Hotline.

Gift of Adoption of Northbrook, IL, was awarded $20,919 for its project "Adoption Assistance for U.S. Born Children." This project will fund the final needs to complete the adoption of vulnerable children in the United States, giving them permanent families and the chance to thrive. The American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion support this grant.

LifeCamp USA of Delafield, WI, was awarded $25,358 for its project "LifeCamp USA 2025." This grant will cover the cost of camp for those children who have lost a parent in the line of duty, military, police, fire and first responder. The American Legion Auxiliary supports this grant.

Southeast Missouri Network Against Sexual Violence of Jackson, Mo., was awarded $5,000 for its project "The Green Bear Project." This project will cover the printing costs for sexual abuse prevention education materials for elementary-aged youth.

Spectrum Sailing of Mt. Pleasant, S.C., was awarded $3,500 for its project "Spectrum Sailing National Autism Sailing Camp." This grant will provide camp opportunities for autistic youth to help foster social development, confidence and teamwork. The American Legion Auxiliary supports this grant.

The American Legion National Headquarters of Indianapolis was awarded $525,000 for its project "The American Legion Children and Youth National Programs-2025." This grant will cover youth programs related to the national capstone events: American Legion National Oratorical Contest, Boys Nation, Junior Shooting Sports Program national championship and American Legion Baseball. The American Legion Auxiliary supports this grant.

The National Children's Cancer Society of Belleville, IL, was awarded $27,266 for its project "Journey of Hope: The Transportation Assistance Fund." This project will create promotional materials for the Transportation Assistance Fund, ensuring children with cancer have access to life-saving treatment. The American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion support this grant.