

Video Directive for PP/VOD Volunteers – Written Version

Introduction

Team, thank you for everything you do for our students and for the Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy programs. As we move into the 2026–2027 cycle, this directive outlines what's changing, what's required, and how we will support one another throughout the process.

Important Update for 2026–2027

Posts can no longer receive credit simply by making a donation. **Every post must advance at least one student entry to District judging** to receive credit.

Why We Are Using Scholars App

The National VFW has partnered with Scholars App to modernize the application, judging, and reporting process. While last year brought challenges, most issues have been resolved, and this year we are offering full flexibility.

Posts may use:

- Scholars App
- Traditional paper
- A combination of both

However, **all post winners must be promoted to District through Scholars App.**

Advantages of Scholars App

- Ready-made flyers with QR codes unique to each post
- Remote judging with automatic scoring
- One-step advancement of winners
- Improved record-keeping

Challenges

- Basic computer access necessary
- Willingness to utilize the training that has been prepared

Both challenges are manageable, and support is available.

Three Options for Running the Contests

1. Scholars App Method

Students submit digitally. Judges score digitally. Winners are promoted digitally.

2. Traditional Paper Method

Posts collect paper applications and essays. **Winners must still be uploaded and promoted through Scholars App.**

3. Combination Method

Posts may mix digital and paper entries. Judging can be done digitally or traditionally.

Required Steps for Every Post

Step 1 — Appoint a chairperson

Post commander appoints a chair and provides their name, phone number, and email to the district commander/chairperson.

Step 2 — Chair Logs In

District chair creates the account in Scholars App; the post chair logs in.

Step 3 — Download Flyers

Each post strongly encouraged to download its unique flyers with QR codes.

Step 4 — Contact Schools

Posts are encouraged to reach out to local schools. A Teacher Resource document is available.

Step 5 — Conduct the Contest

Use whatever works best for your post, Scholars App, paper, or both. Judge entries as you choose.

Step 6 — Promote Winners

All post winners must be promoted to District through Scholars App

Training Will be Available:

For All Posts:

- Logging in to Scholars App for the first time
- Downloading your post's contest flyers
- An overview of the four parts of the Scholars App platform: Dashboard, Scholarships, Suborganizations, and Help Center
- Communicating with schools and teachers who wish to include the PP/VOD contests

For Posts Using Scholars App:

- Viewing student entries submitted through Scholars App
- Adding judges and viewing their scoring
- Promoting post winners directly to District

For Posts Using Paper Entries:

- Uploading paper applications, essays, and MP3 audio files to Scholars App
- Promoting paper winners to District through the platform

For Posts Using Both Methods:

- Combining paper and digital entries for judging through Scholars App.
Combining Paper and digital entries for conventional judging.

For Posts Who Have Schools Participating:

- Communicating effectively with schools on the benefits of sponsoring the PP/VOD contests.
- Presenting the choices available to teachers to conduct the contests.
- Providing materials to assist participating teachers.

In addition to the videos, Scholars App Coordinators will be available to assist you if you run into not hesitate to reach out.

Closing Message

You have flexibility in how you conduct the contests, but **every post must have an account in Scholars App and must promote its winner(s) through Scholars App.** With the tools, training, and support available, we are positioned for our strongest contest cycle yet.

As Commander Rob Bailey reminds us: **All In, All the Time.**

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to our students and our mission.