

Membership 2019:

The numbers are in and for the 2018 Membership year, the Department of New York finished in 44th place out of 55 reaching only 93.96% of our goal and finishing the year below 100,000 members for the first time ending at 96,782. To put that further into numbers, it means that we lost over 6,200 members this year alone. Yes, part of that is that we average 3,700 members transferring to post everlasting annually but we average over 3,000 new recruits even though we have 246 posts that did not recruit even one new member last year and almost 5,500 DMS acquisitions annually. Of those 5,500 DMS acquisitions, only 15% or about 800 renew and stay in Post 1 the second year. On a positive note, if these DMS members transfer to a post, the renewal rate for the second year improves to 75%.

Where can we have the biggest positive impact?

All Posts, Counties and Districts need to engage the Post 1 and DMS members aggressively via MYLEGION.org to get them to transfer into posts where the retention rate dramatically improves. We need to start NOW and continue through the year.

Target First those Post 1 members who have NOT renewed their membership and get them to transfer to a post and renew in the post where they will count as a new member.

Target Second those DMS members who just joined and get them to transfer into a post where their renewal rate will improve to the 75% level.

Target Third those Post 1 members who have renewed their memberships but remain in post 1 and get them to transfer into a post.

The best way is phone contact or email and many of these veterans have phone numbers or emails listed. Sample scripts are available on the state web site if needed.

The second-best method is by letter contact and sample letters are available on the state and national web-sites. Remember, all transfers must have a signature on a member data form or National letter format and posts are responsible for verifying the veteran's eligibility status. To that end when sending mailings, it is recommended that a copy of a member data form marked with an X for signature as well as a post addressed and stamped envelope be included. Completed transfer forms may be emailed to Charlie@nylegion.org to speed processing.

Engage with our current members

All posts need to be in contact with their members, often and especially for special events such as veteran's day, Memorial Day, post events, community outreach or events and unfortunately final honors to those members

who have transferred to post everlasting. Newsletters, web-sites, email updates, post robot-call systems and personal phone calls are some of the more common methods. While all officers of the post should be involved in this engagement with our members, the membership chairman must be aware and involved in these activities.

Recruitment of New Members

Every officer and every member of a post **MUST** be a recruiter and be involved in bringing new members into and welcoming them into the post family. This includes recruiting for the Auxiliary, Sons or Riders chapters if there are any. Members should be encouraged to bring non-member veterans to post meetings to see what we are about and to work to sign them up. Members who do recruit new members should be rewarded at post meetings with any of the awards available at both the state and national level that they are eligible. All public events such as Veterans Day, Memorial Day, parades or similar should have an avenue for veterans be recognized and asked if they need assistance and if they would like to join. In this 100th year of our Organization, recruiters should emphasis the history of service or our organization and our dedication to helping all veterans including the history of writing of the GI bill and ongoing support of veteran issues with our Government.

Our Goal is modest for this year with a target of 97,619 members. If we are to attain this goal and stop the decline of our programs and activities, we must bring every DMS and Post 1 member that we can into our posts, stop the loss of our current members by engaging them and welcoming them in our posts and seek out and welcome new veterans to join us.

For the Good Of the Legion

Paul Dietrich