

The Triple Nickel

Published Exclusively for the Members of American Leaion & Matthew Blount Post 555

Volume 7-Issue 2 February 2020

"In God We Trust"

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Post 555 Open House









February 1, 2020 Post 555 held an open house at the Pelham Senior Center. The various components of the Post had displays that shared their activities in addition to other communities and veteran support organizations. See photos at https://alpost555.smugmug.com/Open-House-February-1-2020/

Adjutant Area

How time passes when you are having fun. Where has this year gone? We are already into month eight of the 2019 -2020 year. It is time again to begin the election process of our 2020-2021 officers.



The nominating committee is hard at work assembling a slate for Commander, First Vice Commander, Second Vice Commander and a three year Trustee position. If you are interested or would like to recommend someone for any of these positions, contact any member of the nominating Committee which is listed in the Judge Advocate's report within this publication. Nominations will be taken from the floor only at the March meeting.

February will be a busy month for the Post's Oratorical winner of the January local contest. The first place winner will advance to the District 23 competition. The winner of the District will advance to the Division 2 competition.

Membership renewals continue to come in, however we still need another 35 paid members to meet our 100% goal for 2019-2020.

Mail your \$45 payable to "Matthew Blount Post 555" to American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555 50 Racquet Club Parkway Pelham, AL 35124

Our membership continues to grow, thanks to your efforts in recruiting.

Next meeting is February 6, 2020. Guests are welcome. Bring a veteran with you!

For God and Country Ron Koonce, Adjutant



Free online American Legion Training

A new mobile-friendly online training program for members of The American Legion, Sons of The American Legion and Auxiliary is now available free of charge, replacing the former American legion Extension Institute.

"Basic Training" is a five-part lesson housed on the The American Legion Education Institute site at www.legion.org/training. Topics covered are History & Organization, Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth.

A 40-question exam is provided. Graduates can download and print a certificate of completion and order a Basic Training Graduate pin from Emblem Sales.

All officers and members are encouraged to complete the training.



Join the American Legion Family Helping Veterans and Troops Serving the Community and Youth

Matthew Blount Post 555

Auxiliary Unit 555

Sons of The American Legion Legion Riders

visit our website

<u>alpost555.com</u> <u>facebook.com/alpost555</u>

Contact Ron Koonce, Adjutant Ron.Koonce@alpost555.com

Oratorical Scholarship Report

The American Legion Post 555 supported and conducted the High School Oratorical Contest at Pelham High School auditorium on January 10, 2020.

The purpose of this event is for selected Pelham High School students perform presentations on how amendments and Articles of the U.S. Constitutions apply today in competition. The first place winner was Dominic Fanella, Senior and the second place winner was Chidinma Eke, Junior. They were presented medallions and will receive a monetary award at the Pelham Awards programs in May 2020. The winner Dominic Fanella will move on to compete at the 23rd District Oratorical Scholarship Contest on February 8th, 2020 at 10 am, at the Pelham Senior Center.

Post 555 members assisted and supported, coordinated and moderated this event in conjunction with the American Legion protocol and procedures of the Oratorical Program. The following individuals volunteered: Moderator was Frank Lakotich, Usher was Alan Phillips, Escorts were Bill

Blank, Kenneth Paschal, Timekeeper was Tom McDaniel, Scorers were Larry Strayer and Chuck Kiser and finally the Oratorical Chairman Richard Kaster.



Did You Know?

• To date, there are 2,773, veterans who have joined The American Legion under the Other Conflicts war era since the signing of the LEGION Act.

<u>www.alpost555.com</u> Home page- JOIN

Judge Advocate

Greetings Comrades;

While our country prepares for the National elections, this is also the time for Post 555's annual elections for Commander, First Vice-Commander, Second Vice-Commander and the three Year Trustee.



Once again we have an outstanding Nomination Committee, whose members have months of experience. The members are, in alphabetical order:

Wayne Curtis 2054788266 wccurtis39@gmail.com Chuck Kiser 2056786479 cfkiser@aol.com John Zeiss 9086921746 johnjz2@charter.net

If any Post 555 member wishes to be considered for any office, please contact one of the members of the Nomination Committee to present their name. Please give the Nomination Committee enough time to vet the member prior to the March 5, 2020 meeting when the results of the Committee will be presented to the general membership.

Additionally, as per our newly amended Constitution and Bylaws, nominations from the floor for elected offices, shall also be accepted at the regularly scheduled Post meeting on March 5, 2020. Nominations from the floor only require the nominee be present at the meeting and they agree to serve in the position for which they are nominated if elected.

No nominations from the floor will be accepted at the regularly scheduled Post meeting on April 2, 2020, the day of the elections.

Larry Strayer Judge Advocate

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

Please continue to stand with the American Legion in supporting fellow veterans, today's service members, their families, communities and our nation.

American Legion on Partisan Politics

The policy is made crystal clear by 36 US Code §21706 (part of The American Legion Corporate Charter), which states:

"The corporation shall be nonpolitical and may not promote the candidacy of an individual seeking public office."

This is further emphasized by the provisions of Article II, Section 2 of the National Constitution which provides:

"The American Legion shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment."

The American Legion takes positions on issues and lobbies for veteran's benefits and a strong America. This is clearly permitted. What is not permitted is the endorsement of any candidate or the donation of funds by The American Legion to a candidate. The American Legion takes positions on issues and its members being citizens need to be informed on the issues. Hence, American Legion programs such as candidate nights are fully authorized as long as all candidates are invited on the same terms and conditions. It would be illegal to invite the one you support with advance notice, but the one you oppose with no notice at all. When Legionnaires wear their pins and hats to political rallies, the media often try to reach the wrong conclusions. This can be very embarrassing to the Legionnaire. Hence, we normally recommend that Legionnaires do not wear their caps to partisan political rallies. There is no rule against doing this so long as the Legionnaire makes it clear there is no endorsement.

Likewise, we recommend that Legion publications not accept paid political ads. However, if they do, the paid political advertisements must be made on the same terms and conditions for all candidates and should be labeled "Paid Political Advertisement" at both the top and bottom.

As noted above, those who violate the partisan political activities prohibition put the Legion charter of their post at risk as well as its tax exempt status.

According to Article II, Section 2, of the Constitution of The American Legion, "The American Legion shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of

any person seeking public office or preferment." The National Charter, approved by Congress, also stipulates The American Legion as an organization is nonpolitical* which has been interpreted by the National Judge Advocate as "nonpartisan" in modern lingo. Therefore, The American Legion as an organization is prohibited from contributing, helping or endorsing a candidate. However, a member, as a private citizen, and not representing the organization, can employ whatever legal and ethical means to advance his or her candidate.

The Wearing of the Cap and Usage of American Legion Emblem

The Legion cap is considered the official Legion uniform (see p. 42). It is not an individual Legion member's decision on the appropriate usage of the cap and emblem. If attending a political event, The American Legion cap, or any clothing with the emblem visible, should be removed so as not to imply endorsement by The American Legion. The problem is the assumption of endorsement by those who see the emblem or name worn at in improper location, such as a partisan rally.

When using post facilities to host candidates, post should remove emblem and Legion flag to avoid any impression of endorsements. Candidates for all parties must be presented equal opportunity at the same time to use the facilities on the same terms and conditions as other competing candidates.

If financial contributions are offered by candidates for political office, campaigns, political action committees or political parties, The American Legion should politely decline. Accepting these contributions may be perfectly legal, but The American Legion must avoid any perception of supporting any candidate or political party.

The American Legion values its independence and effectiveness on veterans' issues. This stance is best maintained by neutrality on individual candidates or political parties. The American Legion by legal definition is non-partisan and supports only issues which impact your Four Pillars..

* This means "non-partisan" in today's society. The American Legion is allowed by Congress to lobby for veterans benefits and a strong United States of America. (NJA, October 25, 2012)

Coming Events

Saturday, February 8, 2020, Time 10:00 a.m. NOTE: Volunteers report NLT 9:00 a.m.!!!

What: 23rd District High School Oratorical

Scholarship Contest

Where: Pelham Senior Center, 50 Racquet

Club Parkway, Pelham, AL 35124 Chairperson: Richard Kaster Co-Chairperson: Frank Lakotich

Volunteers Needed: Yes! Richard Kaster asked for several Volunteers to fill these positions: 3 each Escorts, 1 each Usher, 1 each Timekeeper, and 2 ea. Scorers. Ron Gofourth volunteered to be the Moderator, and Frank Lakotich will be filling one of these spots, but more Volunteers are needed.

Wednesday, February 19, 2020, Time 8:30 **AL School Award Presentation**

Calera Schools; Family Connection Inc. 2 Walker Run Alabaster, AL

Friday and Saturday, March 27 and 28, 2020, Time: 7:00 pm, Gates open at 5:00 pm

What: Post 555 Southeastern Pro Rodeo Fundraiser Where: 2000 Ball Park Road, Pelham, AL 35124

> Chairperson: Jerry McClain Co-Chairperson: TBD

Volunteers Needed: Yes! Contact Jerry McClain for a lot of Volunteer positions to help before, during, and after the rodeo.

Guest Speakers / Programs at Upcoming General Membership Meetings

Tammie Williams, Volunteer Coordinator. February 6th: Comfort Care Hospice (confirmed)

Tom Long (Post 555 Member), President March 5th:

of Blue Star Salute Foundation (confirmed)

April 2nd: Post 555 Officer Elections (no guest speaker or program)

May 7th: Installation of Newly Elected Officers (no

guest speaker or program)

Triple Nickel Jr. Shooting Report

04 January 2020- Junior Olympic Qualifier for Air Rifle - At the CMP in Anniston - 9 of our shooters shot against over 100 shooters across Alabama to qualify for this year's Junior Olympics to be held in Colorado Springs, CO in May. Winners have not been announced yet, but your Shelby County Shooters represented the Post well and several will be qualifying.

1 January 2020 Junior Olympic Qualifier for Smallbore were at Jacksonville State University - 7 of our shooters competed against over 100 shooters across Alabama to qualify for this year's Junior Olympics to be held in Colorado Springs, CO in May.

7 March 2020 - American Legion Commander's Cup - will be held at the CMP Range in Anniston - 1470 Sentinel Dr, Anniston, AL - Beginning at 0800 and ending at 1800. Great match to come root your Triple Nickel Shooters on!

Chris Vonderau Shooting Program Director





The auxiliary is up and running. Our membership numbers are enough to be called a unit, but we want to add many more. I attended the Mid -Winter conference in Huntsville and I thought my head was going to explode with all the information going in. It was eye opening to see all the Auxiliary can do when you have a very active membership. We have numerous items on our plates to work on. We are in the process of writing our constitution and bylaws, and standing rules. They need to be submitted to State.

At our last meeting, we considered a request to head the post hospitality committee. If you are interested in volunteering or have questions about joining the Auxiliary. contact me at auxiliary@alpost555.com. We all agreed that we would head that up, but that does not mean we will be doing all the work. There will be four forms at the February meeting. The post members are being asked to sign up for set up; picking up the food; cleanup after meal is done; and staying after to help with take down. I will explain in detail at the meeting. If everyone signs up for just one of these we will have it all filled in. None of these requests are hard and with your help we can be successful. Thank you in advance.

We are excited about getting down to business. We want to be active and if you know of any one who might like to join us, please send them our way.

Blessings to You and Your family, Caroline J. Culpepper Unit 555 President

Matthew Blount Post 555 50 Racquet Club Parkway Pelham, AL



Meets first Thursday of the month.

Next Meeting February 6, 2020

Meal served at 6:15pm

Meeting at 7:00 pm

Events at a Glance

Monthly Post Meeting

Pelham Senior Center Pelham, AL 35124 February 6, 2020, Time: 6:15 pm

District 23 Oratorical Scholarship Contest

Pelham Senior Center Pelham, AL 35124 February 8, 2020, Time: TBD

AL School Award Presentation

Calera Schools February 19, 2020 -8:30 am

Alabama American Legion Commander's Cup Shooting Match

3/7/2020 -8:00 am-4:00 pm Anniston CMP Facility 1470 Sentinel Dr, Anniston, AL 36207

State Oratorical Scholarship Competition

3/10/18 Montgomery State House 10:00 am

Post 555 Southeastern Pro Rodeo

Fundraiser 2000 Ball Park Road, Pelham, AL 35124 Saturday, March 27 and 28, 2020, Time 7:00 pm Welcome to Post 555
New Family Member
During January
Melvin Grissett

February 6th Meal provided by



SEAFOOD BURGERS POBOYS WINGS



Post Leadership

Post Commander Kenneth Paschal 1st Vice Commander Jerry McClain 2nd Vice Commander Nancy Waller **Adjutant** Ron Koonce Judge Advocate Larry Strayer Financial Officer Joe Starne Chaplain Tom McMahon Sergeant-At- Arms Derek Winters- Interim Post Service Officer

Derek Winters- Interii
Post Service Office
Jerry McClain
Historian
Shauna Hadley
Public Relations
Officer
Vacant

Post Trustees
Bill Blank

Frank Lakotich Robert Horsley

Auxiliary President Caroline Culpepper

Historian Shaun Hadley

Sons Commander
Jon Freeman

Legion Riders Director

Jeff Monday **Flag Team**

Coordinator Shauna Hadley

Webmaster
Ron Koonce

Triple Nickel Editor

Yolanda Rancher

Photography

Chic Cecchini Ron Koonce

The Triple Nickel

is published monthly for members of Matthew Blount Post 555. 50 Racquet Club Parkway Pelham, AL 35124 205-678-1375

commander@ALpost555.com

Items for publication are accepted on Executive Committee approval and available space.

Submit articles prior to the 10th of the month for publication the following month. We reserve the right to edit any submission for the purpose of publication.

Letters to the Editor must include name, address & telephone number. Names will be withheld upon request.

Send email to: Editor@alpost555.com

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Commander's Corner

For God and Country! January was another month filled with countless volunteer hours and community presence. Thanks for all you do.

Please see the January 2020 newsletter for January areas of interest.

We also had the opportunity to present certificates of appreciations to the Excel and Jr. Excel Exchange Club at Jefferson Christian Academy and Meadow View Elementary School for their support to the BVAMC Christmas Gift Caravan Project. Special thanks to Frank Lakotich, Joyce Franklin, and Auxiliary Unit 555 member Linda Colvard for making this happen. Please read further in the newsletter for upcoming events in February.

Congratulations to the following individuals that were presented the Post 555 Commander's membership Award lapel pin during our January 2nd Post meeting: Clay Smith and Alan Phillips.

Join me in welcoming the Triple Nickel new editor for our newsletter Comrade Yolanda Rancher. Another key position need filling is the SAL Advisor. If interested, please let me know as soon as possible.

Two of the greatest responsibilities as a legionnaire:

1) American Legion Get Out The Vote program - 2020 election season is here. I would like to challenge all legionnaires to be an active participant in the upcoming Post, local, state, and national elections. How to participate in the election season? Visit the Alabama Secretary of State website to learn about public offices elections topics such as voter registration, the dates of the elections, and voting procedures. You'll find information about the Post upcoming elections for the position of Commander, 1st Vice Commander, 2nd Vice Commander and 3 Year Trustee later in the newsletter. Take on more responsibility in the Post: It's important to note, it's okay for multiple Post members to be considered for the aforementioned officer positions.

2) How to set the Post and your Battle Buddy up for success? Why should each committee chairperson and leader create a draft continuity book? Any solider who has taken over a new duty position or additional duty knows the value of a good continuity book. It can provide a wealth of information to him or her including points of contact,

duties and responsibilities, information on how to accomplish common tasks, and personnel and equipment data. Without it, a soldier is often forced to relearn the very same lessons and information that his or her predecessor discovered during his or her time in the position. Everyone can come up with excuses why they cannot produce a good continuity and or policy and procedures book. Remember, working together, we can achieve more!

Please continue to support the Triple Nickel entire family and programs by seeking volunteer opportunities.

For God and Country!

Kenneth Paschal

Commander



Election of officers is coming up soon that include Commander, 1st Vice Commander, 2nd Vice Commander, Adjutant, Finanical Officer, Sgt.-at-Arms and Chaplain. Anyone that is interested in any of these positions, please contact myself.



The Squadron is on a slow pace in obtain the 37 paid members needed by our next goal by March 2020.

If you have not submitted your renewals, I encourage you to do so as soon as possible. If you are sponsoring a member and plan to continue, please follow suit.

We are always seeking new members. If you have a male descendent in your family, they qualify to become a member. Also if your father or grandfather is or was a member of The American Legion or is a deceased veteran, you qualify. Visit the Post website for an application and additional information about The Sons of American Legion.

Ron Koonce Adjutant

First Vice Commander | Post Service Officer Comments

There is PlentyPlenty to do in TwentyTwenty!

MEMBERSHIP 2020

ONew Members are the life blood of today's American LEGION.

Can you please double your efforts to recruit one new member or transfer?

OCan you politely encourage 2019 members to renew their membership with Post 555?

OAdjutant Koonce is working hard to reach our 100% renewal, he can't do by himself. Let's get our Post across the 100% renewal Threshold!



Olt coming fast! We need your help! (206.412.3548) call Jerry

Olndividual and Business Sponsors greatly needed!

OGoal: all sponsorships in by 1 March 2020!

OWe have not because we ask not!

Olf you gave out a packet pls follow-up ASAP!

OCharity Event could add multiple \$\$\$\$ to our programs

OThis Event will have a positive effect on our community!

OWe can do this

SERVICE OFFICER COMMENTS

Ochaplain doing a great job on referrals for help and assistance.

OWhen you are out and about look for Vets and tell them why they should be inside the American Legion and the VA!

Offer your help and the follow up a few days later.

OMany people who call our Post for help are not members. You can change that!

OPIs do a complete 2020 review of your service connected benefits and update your records!

OGo online and print off the latest VA benefits BOOKLET and read it!

OKeep your next of kin updated on changes and location of important papers!

Revitalization

○Volunteers Needed!

Jerry McClain First Vice Commander/

Triple Nickel Riders



The Triple Nickel Riders held their January planning and organization planning for 2020 upcoming events on January 9, 2020 at the Heart of Dixie Harley Davidson HOG Room. TNR meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month. 2 or 4 wheels come out!



SATURDAY 1/25/20 TNR met at Pelham Strabucks for coffee and took a short ride out on a Shelby County back roads ride ending at Walk-ons in Hoover, Al.. The link below is just a snapshot of the ride.

https://www.youtube.com/watch? v=u0W9eWrASbk&fbclid=lwAR3VJBmAV6NLsJRo3Mhp 1ZWwvBH_V6hf67F5llqUNttUnG5Q4TIXPWAM2cM

The Riders participated in the Post 555 Open House with a Triple Nickel Riders display and shared information about the organization and to

The Triple Nickels Riders are in the planning stage for a 3 to 4 day trip for the upcoming riding season to visit motorcycle museum In Maggie Valley, NC. When I have more details I will post them

This is a history lesson you don't want to miss! Dale dives into the history of the rarest motorcycle in the world - the Traub. Believed to be built in 1916, the Traub was years ahead of its time. This motorcycle was hidden for over 50 years and you'll never guess where it was found!

Go to link for more details.

encourage membership.

https://daleschannel.tv/



Jeff Monday Diretor

Second Vice Commander

Nancy Waller

Happy February to all! This month will be a



momentous one for my my husband and I. On February 2, 2020, we will be celebrating our 35th wedding anniversary. Holy cow! It has been a great 35 years for both of us which includes serving our great nation for over 50 years between the two of us and having a wonderful son (as you know is also a member of Post 555) who also served our country. The military provided all three of us with opportunities that could never have been experienced outside of being in the uniformed services, and for that we are all thankful as I am sure you are as well since we are all Veterans sharing a common ground by being members of Post 555.

O.K.; down to business. By the time you receive this newsletter, we may have already had our first Open House, and I am sure that all the hard work Commander Paschal put into the planning and preparations will result in a great event for Post 555 members, family members, and members of the community. I hope you joined us on Sat., February 1, 2020 at the Pelham Senior Center to donate blood with LifeSouth, checked-out the other organizations that were invited, and had a good time with friends and family. All groups within the Post will be represented to share information about what they do for and with the Post, so good time to learn more about our own family; Post 555.

Be sure to work your way through the newsletter to see what everyone has to share with you, and don't forget to look for the "Upcoming Events" page(s) to see what to look forward to (or perhaps to help with) in the next

few months. Also, the guest speakers have been confirmed for the February and March General Membership Meetings so be sure to attend our meetings to get all the information you can about things that could affect our members.

During the General Membership Meetings, please take time to visit the event tables that will be set-up in the middle of the room to sign-up for anything that appeals to you. The next event is scheduled for Sat., February 8, 2020. It is the 23rd District Oratorical Scholarship Contest being held in our very own Pelham Senior Center. The report time for our Volunteers is 9:00 a.m. with the contest beginning at 10:00 a.m. If you have never been to one of the oratorical scholarship contests, come to observe if you do not want volunteer. An audience is what they need, too. The Volunteers that Richard Kaster is asking for are escorts, an usher, a timekeeper, and scorers. If one or more of these positions interest you, please let Richard know now (his phone is listed in the Post 555 Membership Directory) or let him know at the General Membership Meeting on Thurs., February 6, 2020. The sooner you let him know, the better he will feel knowing he has the help he needs; thanks for that.

The 6th Annual Pelham Palooza in the Park is scheduled for Sat., May 16, 2020 in the field behind the Pelham Recreation Center, 300 Ball Park Road and Pelham Park Middle School. Put it on your calendar!!!

As always, thank you ALL for your contribution of time and energy to help keep the Post as alive and vibrant as it is, and let's stay involved and keep it as strong as it can possibly be!!!

Post 555 Store

Drop by at Monthly Meeting

American Legion Souvenir Patriotic Cup





Help Support Matthew Blount Post 555 Veterans and Youth Programs

\$10



CAR WASH Fundraiser

\$5 /COUPONS

Proceeds goes towards Youth Program Scholarships.

Boys State and Oratorical

FLAG & EMBLEM



American Legion

Sons (SAL)

5/6/15, 9:28 PM

Please allow	up to 8 weeks for de	elivery!
For help ordering uniform caps, c For info about cap prices, click he For a list of Departments that reg When you purchase a caj insignia is automatically cap.	re. uire mandatory insignias, cl from a Department that r	equires an insignia, that
TEP ONE		
Please select your Department:	Alabama* 0	
		rtment requires a mandatory
	insignia.	anent requires a managery
TEP TWO		
Please select your style:	○State	INDIANA
	⊙ City	ENID, OK
	County	LUGAS COUNTY, OR
	District	

American Legion Centennial Pins

Limited pins are now avaialbe in the Post Store for \$5.00 each at the March 1st meeting.

Proceeds will go toward the Alabama War Memorial Renovation Project.





Triple Nickel T-Shirts

Matthew Blount Post 555 are selling custom designed Patriotic T-Shirts to provide a way to take pride in our American Legion Post Family and raise funds in support of Wreaths Across America and other Post projects, Military Deployment Support Program, VA Medical Center Christmas Gift Program, Oratorical and Boys State scholarships.

ORDER YOURS TODAY. COST IS ONLY \$20, PRE-PAY OR PAYABLE AT THE TIME THE SHIRT IS DELIVERED. Get one while you can and help support our Active Duty Personnel, Veterans and Youth Programs.

100% Cotton Color: White Graphic on Navy Blue

TRIPLE NICKEL T-SHIRT ORDER FORM

NAME		PHONE		
EMAIL		SIZE: [] Small Qty	[]Med Qty	
[] Lrg Qty[] X	Lrg QTY	_ @ \$20 each		
[] XXLrg Qty[] ?	XXXLrg Qty	@ \$22 each		
Standard Sizes Qty	@ \$20 To	tal		
Extra Large Sizes Qty	@ \$22 To	otal		
Date:	Amount Due	Amount Po	uid	





Front Pocket

Post 555 Youth Programs

Congratulations to our American Legion Oratorical contest winners! First place is Dominic Fanella and second place went to Chidinma Eke. January 10, 2020



The American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555 recognized five students from Chelsea school "Character In Action" award recipients with an additional recognition offered by the American Legion through The American Legion School Award Medal Program.

January 15, 2020







Post 555 Oratorical Team

Certificate of appreciations presented to Excel and Jr. Excel Exchange Club at Jefferson Christian Academy. January 8, 2020



Post 555 Recognizes Organizations that Participate in Post 555 Youth Programs