

Research paper on profile of an interest group

[Sociology](#), [Community](#)



The American Legion Veterans association is an interest group with interest on the military veterans. It was founded in the year 1919 after the first world war by the war veterans after returning from Europe. It was later chartered as an official patriotic American society under the Title 36 of the United States Code (Kaplan, 2005). Its membership includes soldiers and war veterans of the United States armed forces. Its headquarters are located in Indianapolis, Indiana in the USA and has offices in various states such as Washington, DC. With 3 million members worldwide in over 14, 000 posts, the group is widely spread and has many members and influences all over the country.

The organization seeks to ensure the rights and wellbeing of each and every war veteran and of the service members who is their member is well taken care of by the government. This includes ensuring of war veterans benefits such as the veterans welfare, pensions and the hospital services to be offered to the veterans who need them. The members also take part in various charitable events such volunteering activities and organizing commemorative events. The group actively participates in the US-politics taking various stands on various issues as they have the desired man power to effect a situation hence considered in major issues of politics.

Its headquarters in Indianapolis, located in Indiana World War Memorial Plaza is the main office of the national commander and also it houses the archives pertaining to the historical archives, membership, public relations, the magazine editorial offices, library and internal affairs. It also has a building in Washington D. C. that is the operation center as matters relating to Legislative, Foreign Affairs, Media Relations, Economics, Veteran Affairs and National Security matters concerning the country are discussed here

(Rumer, 1990).

Departments are created to act as the administrative venues of the organization, there are various departments involved for each of the 50 states. There are 55 departments in total, the extra 5 departments include 3 departments which were created overseas to allow those veteran who are active on duty overseas to also participate actively in the affairs of American Legion. The next level is the districts lead by a district commander and leads several divisions which are later divided into posts. This smaller division of the entities is for efficient administration and to allow organization of conventions, other gatherings and conferences where if organized nationally, large number of legions will not be in a position to attend. The various counties are head by a county commander. These commanders are distinguished by the different color caps. County commander being navy blue with white lining, district commander with navy blue with white and gold lining, department office with white cap and gold lining and finally the national officer with red cap and gold lining (American Legion, 1981).

The organization uses his power and influences to affect decisions and command authority within its presence. This gives the organization desirable power to promote the wellbeing of their members as well as their interests. This tool of power and influence is of outmost importance.

In 1993, a bridge in the city of Chicopee was renamed as “ American Legion Memorial Bridge” by the commonwealth of Massachusetts as honor to the American legions for their contributions and achievements. In 1993, two members of the Michigan American Legion post came up with an idea that will bring together bike riders in the period, creating the American legion

Riders. Its rising popularity lead to its growth and attraction of other members, currently it has 100, 000 bikers in the United States and overseas (Norton, 2002). . This shows the effect the legion has on the greater population. The legion affects many of the political stands made by various bodies.

The organization mostly focuses on giving back to the society through various ways. These include offering of scholarships and various resources to assist young people in the attainment of their education goals and advancement to higher education. The group also organizes activities for the young these include scouting, the American Legion Riders, junior shooting sports and so on.

The American legion has always stood for the best of its members no matter what, in 2005 when president Clinton threatened to remove the annual congressional hearings for Veterans service Organizations, the then National Commander Thomas L. Bock criticized the move greatly pointing out its implications of the cancelling and giving out the mischief behind it. The Legion also greatly stands for defending of the American values to every citizen of the United States of America.

The organization sees its success as helping the needy in the society as well as giving back to the society. This explains its various countless charitable events it has sponsored and organized as well as the various scholarships it has offered. The organization also wants to see fair treatment of its members the veterans in every way possible. It would go to all heights to ensure that each and every right of its members is taken care of by the government in combat as well as back home.

Back in 1989 after a U. S. supreme court decision, the American Legion launched a constitutional amendment against the harming the U. S. flag in anyway, but they unfortunately lost. This was due to the first amendment of the United States constitution hence it would have been against the law to grant the amendment (Del, Lemoine & Strickland, 2001).

The group as seen above has many advantages as compared to its disadvantages. One strong advantage being that the group being on the better side of the public due to its charitable works is in a better position to attain public support no matter what the condition. The public support is of major concern to in the passing of any bill or proposing of a proposal that involves the general public. Secondly, the organization is highly connected to the influential in power, this gives them an advantage concerning an issue that will befall them politically as they are always sure of support from their aides in government. This gives them political support and also social support as they control the masses.

References

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