

Kay's Story

In 1961, I was born an "Army Brat" to a 20-year military career man who served in both Korea and Vietnam. One can rightly say that the seed to serve my country was sown in the cradle.

After spending 15 years in the corporate world I chose to leave so I could work more fully with Veterans and their families. At that time, I started the Yellow Ribbon Program in Alabama for National Guard Members who were deploying and returning from deployments. The Program was designed to help with transitioning to and from Active Duty, and to assist family members while their service member was deployed.

As a daughter, sister, wife, and mother to a service member and being a service member myself, I realized that I could relate to, and offer my experiences to a wide variety of veterans and military members and families. When my husband Scott retired from the Army, and we moved back to Arab, I needed to find another way to help Veterans and their families. Right away I started working to get a VFW Auxiliary in Arab. It took a little while, but finally in February of 2016 it happened.

Five months later I attended my first National Convention. The leadership in Alabama saw my passion for Veterans and immediately started mentoring me for the journey to become Department President. Along the way I have been blessed with some of the best mentorship in the nation, made a lot of friends, helped thousands of veterans and their families, had some missteps and a ton of successes! So, now is the time to fully realize the passion I have, and how it can be used at the National level.

I want to focus on ensuring that the VFW Auxiliary lasts for another 100+ years. Some of the priorities I would like to focus on are:

- Recruiting and retention of family members to Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans
- Making our Auxiliaries more family oriented
- Educate communities and children on how our Veterans have given us the freedoms we enjoy
- Making sure our Children know what scholarship opportunities are available both locally and nationally

Honor the Traditions
While
Evolving
with the
Generations

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES®

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Kay Gedling
Candidate for
National Guard
2024-2025

Department of Alabama

VFW Auxiliary Story

Department Level

Conductress 2017-2018
Chaplain 2018-2019
Jr Vice President 2019-2020
Sr Vice President 2020-2022
President 2021-2022

District Level

District President 2016-2017
District Chaplain 2017-2019
District Secretary 2019-Present

Auxiliary Level

President 2016-Present

Chairmanships

Americanism 2017-2018, 2022-2023
Scholarship 2021-2022
Membership 2018-2019
Guarantee Program 2019-2020
Ways and Means 2020-2021

Department Awards

Circle of Excellence 2021, 2022
Outstanding President of the Year 2023

National Awards

Recruiting Awards 2017-2023
Chairmanship Award 2017-2018
Circle of Excellence 2021-2022



Department of Alabama
President 2021-2022

Committees

Audit Committee
Budget Committee

Appointments

Department Web Site
Administrator
Department IRS Liaison
Department IT Operator

Memberships

VFW Auxiliary
American Legion
DAV Auxiliary
National Guard
Association of AL

Employment

-Yellow Ribbon Support Specialist, 2008-2012
Montgomery, AL
-Verizon Wireless, 1993-2003
Receptionist, Huntsville, AL
Accounts Payable, Huntsville, AL
Installer, Huntsville, AL
Systems Trainer, Huntsville, AL
Assistant Store Manager Decatur, AL
Store Manager, Opelika, AL
South Area Indirect Sales Manager,
Montgomery, AL

Civilian Education

Bachelor of Business Administration, 2000
Faulkner University, Huntsville, AL
High School Diploma, 1979
Puckett High School, Puckett, MS

Military Education

Basic Training
Administrative Specialist Training
Legal Clerk/Court Reporter Training
Primary Leadership Development Training
Non-Commission Officer Training
Recruiter/Retention Training



Family Story

Married to Scott Gedling in 1997

Children:

Jason Roberts

Melissa Houston

Amber Bentley married to John
Grandchildren:

Jackson Houston - 16

Jace Roberts - 5

Walter John Bertley V - 3 months

Military Service

Enlisted in April 1979 - Retired April 2004

Staff Sergeant

Administrative Specialist

Personnel Supervisor

Recruiter

Legal Clerk

Court Reporter



10 years Active Service
15 years National Guard



Kay Gedling

Candidate for National Guard 2024-2025

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Why I am Running:

The Department of Alabama (my home department) was truly split when it came to endorsing a candidate. The difference was between the comfortable “always done it that way” traditionalists and the members who see the need for our organization to evolve to meet the fast-paced changes affecting our ability to recruit and meet the needs of a post 9/11 military/veteran population. The 40% are

The Vision of Our Future:

The next 100+ years.

Our organization faces the very real possibility of dying simply due to attrition. The average age of our members is approximately 65+ years of age. We need to start making changes to our organization which will ensure that we are a viable and powerful advocate for our Veterans for the next 100+ years. The ONLY way to do this is to make our organization appealing to younger generations, to meet them where THEY are, and show them that there is a need and desire for their unique skill set(s) and abilities. We can show them that through membership in the VFW Auxiliary, they can be the change they are hoping for, for veterans and families just like theirs.

Encouraging Patriotism.

We ALL can see that the ideals this country was founded on, and the love of our great land and her people (patriotism) is diminishing before our eyes. The task falls to us to make sure that our children learn; love of country and teach them how to show the type of true patriotism that we have grown up knowing. Americans need to come together like we did after 9/11.

Transparency.

Our organization needs to be more transparent when it comes to how we run our organization. When budgeting at every level of this organization, there are the "must haves" and the "nice to haves." Making sure that the "must haves" are the priority helps us to avoid having to ask our