

'I Never Forgot About the VFW'

Since 2015, the handcrafted footwear company Twisted X has Donated Nearly \$720,000 to the VFW

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Prasad Reddy can easily recall the first encounter he had with VFW. After his naturalization ceremony in 1980, in which he became a U.S. citizen, the first people who welcomed him to his new country were VFW Auxiliary members.

Reddy, a native of southern India, said that the Auxiliary members congratulated him, as well as gave him a small U.S. flag and a copy of the U.S. Constitution.

He said that he knew at that point he was “100 percent” an American.

“It was a very nice and special feeling,” said Reddy, who with his wife, Sobha, moved to the United States in 1970. “I never forgot about the VFW being there for us, and I thought that if I could ever give back to the VFW, I would do so.”

And he did.

Reddy, as president and CEO of Twisted X, presented a check for \$100,000 to VFW in 2019 during the 120th National Convention in Orlando, Florida. Since 2015, Twisted X has donated nearly \$720,000 to VFW programs, including the Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen scholarship contests.

Reddy said that it is not necessary for VFW or its members to thank Twisted X for its generosity and donations.

“Every day, service members write a blank check for us,” Reddy said. “For us to write a check with a few zeros on it doesn’t compare to what veterans have done for us.”

‘WE WANTED TO SUPPORT THE PROGRAMS’

In 2020, Twisted X backed up that sentiment and became the title sponsor of VFW’s Voice of Democracy and Patriot’s Pen youth essay contests. The Decatur, Texas-based company is committed to

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donating \$130,000 each year to the contests. This year's sponsorship kicks off a new three-year agreement between Twisted X and the VFW.

"There was no question about it — we wanted to support the programs," said Reddy, who has been with Twisted X since 2009. "We are in full support of those children because they are our future."

Every year, VFW provides U.S. and some overseas high school and junior high school students with an opportunity to express themselves through democratic- and patriotic-themed essays.

The national winners of the competition in total receive more than \$200,000 in scholarships and prizes for their winning essays. Learn more about the scholarship programs at vfw.org.

SHOES FOR A CAUSE

Founded in 2005, Twisted X handcrafts footwear inspired by the American West for adults, children and infants. The company also features a Patriotic Collection, which is footwear inspired by VFW.

Each pair sold predominantly features a U.S. flag and raises funds for VFW.

"Without sharing, I feel that life has no meaning," Reddy said. "All businesses have this responsibility. That's why we give at least 10 percent of our profits to the causes we believe in."

Handcrafted footwear from Twisted X's Patriotic Collection can be purchased through the VFW Store at vfwstore.org and other retailers found at www.twistedx.com.

This article is featured in the 2022 January issue of [VFW magazine](#), and was written by [Dave Spiva](#), associate editor for VFW magazine.