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The Boot: A New Initiative to Recruit, Retain, and Return Military Service Members to Louisiana

Baton Rouge, Louisiana — August 1, 2024 — The State of Louisiana is proud to announce the launch of The Boot, a pioneering organization dedicated to recruiting, retaining, and returning military service members to the Great State of Louisiana after their term of service. This innovative initiative is a collaborative effort between the Governor's Office, the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs, and key leaders including Founder Andrew Ward and CEO Ben Armstrong.

Governor Jeff Landry expressed his enthusiasm for the initiative, stating, "Our military have given so much for our country, and it is our duty to support them as they transition back to civilian life. The Boot will play a crucial role in providing the necessary support and resources to help these men and women succeed in Louisiana."

Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Charlton Meginley highlighted the significance of The Boot in supporting transitioning servicemen and women. "Louisiana has always been a state that values and honors the service of our military men and women. The Boot will not only help us bring back our heroes but also ensure they have the resources and opportunities they need to thrive in civilian life. We are committed to making Louisiana a welcoming home for our military."

Andrew Ward, Founder of The Boot, emphasized the organization's mission. "The Boot is dedicated to creating a seamless transition for military service members returning to Louisiana. By working closely with state agencies, local businesses, and communities, we aim to provide a comprehensive support system that addresses the unique needs of our transitioning service members as they leave their military career and enter their new civilian "duty station"."

CEO Ben Armstrong shared his vision for the future of The Boot. "Our goal is to make Louisiana the top destination for military service members ending their service career. We are committed to not only recruiting and retaining our transitioning military but also ensuring they have access to quality jobs, education, and healthcare. The Boot will be a beacon of support for those service members and their families."

The Boot will be headquartered in Baton Rouge, at 453 Louisiana Ave., and operating statewide. Leadership and staff will be located in the Barksdale AFB and Fort Johnson communities, Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, Lafayette, and the New Orleans Metro region.

The Boot will offer a range of services, including direct connections to Louisiana communities and employers for transitioning military, linkage to educational opportunities, benefits and healthcare resources, and post service integration programs. By partnering with local businesses and organizations, The Boot aims to create a robust network of support that will help military service members build successful and fulfilling lives in Louisiana.

For more information about The Boot and how you can get involved, please visit [www.theboot.la](http://www.theboot.la) or contact their organization at [connect@theboot.la](mailto:connect@theboot.la).

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