



## Best Defense Foundation announces 2023 Program to bring WWII Veterans back to Normandy for the 79th Anniversary in partnership with Delta Air Lines and the support of Michelin

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The Best Defense Foundation will again bring WWII veterans to Normandy, France this year to commemorate the 79th anniversary of D-Day in partnership with Delta Air Lines and the support of Michelin North America, Inc. As part of Delta's partnership, the airline will provide a special charter flight directly to Normandy, France, where they will be recognized and celebrated. The WWII veterans from across the country will depart from Atlanta, Georgia on May 31, 2023, and land in Deauville, Normandy, France to participate in a weeklong program that will include the official D-Day Commemoration on June 6. All expenses are covered by the Best Defense Foundation and their corporate sponsors so that these veterans can return to their battlefields at no cost.

"The mission of the Best Defense Foundation is 'taking care of the ones who took care of us.' We are excited to renew our partnership with our presenting sponsor Delta, the airline that 'better connects the world,' and the globally renowned French company Michelin—two companies that truly show their passion for our veteran community. As time passes quickly for our WWII generation, it is our duty and honor to provide this opportunity of closure and camaraderie for those who gave so much."  
Donnie Edwards, Founder, Best Defense Foundation.

Founded by Edwards as a 501c3 non-profit foundation, the Best Defense Foundation's mission is to help veterans and their families. Its efforts are funded exclusively through sponsorships, private donations, fundraising events and Edwards' own philanthropy and generosity. A cornerstone of the Foundation is a commitment to bring WWII veterans back to their battlefields to help them find closure and camaraderie with their brothers-in-arms and celebrate their acts of heroism and sacrifice all those years ago. Since 2018, the Foundation has provided 'Battlefield Return' programs to Iwo Jima, Belgium, the Eagle's Nest, Guam, Tinian and Saipan, Normandy, and Germany.

### **Delta Air Lines – Presenting Sponsor and Transportation**



Through the warmth and service of the Delta Air Lines (NYSE: DAL) people and the power of innovation, Delta never stops looking for ways to make every trip feel personalized. More than 90,000 Delta people lead the way in delivering a world-class customer experience on over 4,000 daily flights to more than 275 destinations on six continents, connecting people to places and each other. As the leading global airline, Delta's mission to connect the world creates opportunities, fosters understanding and expands horizons by connecting people and communities to each other and their potential. Delta's mission to connect the world starts with our commitment to being a strong partner to the communities where our employees live, work and serve. Focused on the pillars of Environment, Equity and Education, as well as Veterans and Human Trafficking, Delta invests its time and resources

to care for the planet and the people within it. As a company driven by purpose, giving back to our communities has been core to Delta and our culture for nearly 100 years. Delta has been recognized as one of the 50 most community-minded companies in the U.S. as an honoree of The Civic 50 by Points of Light for the past five years in a row.

“Delta has a long and proud history of supporting armed service members and veterans, and we are excited to partner with the Best Defense Foundation to bring veterans back to Normandy again this year. With 10 percent of Delta’s employees being veterans and many of them continuing to serve in the Guard or Reserves, it is important that we support these heroes.” said Tad Hutcheson, Delta’s Managing Director of Community Engagement. “We are indebted to these heroes of yesterday, today and tomorrow for the sacrifices they’ve made on behalf of our country and the world. It is our privilege to participate in this meaningful program which celebrates and honors these veterans.”

### **Michelin – Diamond Sponsor**



Michelin, the leading mobility company, is working with tires, around tires and beyond tires to enable Motion for Life. Michelin designs and distributes the most suitable tires, services and solutions for its customers’ needs. Michelin provides digital services, maps and guides to help enrich travel and make them unique experiences.

The company has a long history of supporting Veterans and their families. Michelin has been recognized by Forbes as one of the best employers for Veterans, and in 2023 as the top automotive employer among best large employers for the second consecutive year. Across their organization, they attract and develop top talent in an environment focused on growth and development.

“Michelin North America has a strong relationship with current and former military members to share and leverage experience, knowledge, and leadership collaboratively throughout our Michelin community. It is an honor for us to partner again with the Best Defense Foundation on such a unique experience and to help support those ‘who took care of us,’” said Col(ret) David Chapman, Vice President of Public Affairs for Michelin North America.

Sponsors interested in partnering on this return to battlefield program this year (79<sup>th</sup> anniversary) and/or next year (80<sup>th</sup> anniversary) and media queries can be directed to Amanda Thompson, Executive Director, Best Defense Foundation, via email at [amanda@bdf.org](mailto:amanda@bdf.org).