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Submitted by:

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EDUCATING VETERAN BUSINESS OWNERS ON BE THE ONE

The mission of the John E. Jacobs American Legion Post 68 in Leland is: “To enhance the well-being of America’s veterans, their families, our military, and our communities through our devotion to mutual helpfulness.” As a nonprofit veterans’ organization under 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code, Post 68’s mission, which aims to connect and collaborate with veterans and other service organizations, aligns closely with Wilmington’s Veterans Business Collective (VBC). The VBC, with Chapters in North Carolina, Florida, and Tennessee, is a Guidestar Gold-Rated 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is “To connect, equip, and support veterans, military families, and patriotic business leaders through authentic relationships, business collaboration, leadership development, and community impact.”

Several Post 68 members had the opportunity to witness the palpable fellowship and camaraderie among VBC members as they networked and shared success stories at the VBC membership meeting on September 10, 2026. VBC President Chayse Roth, a former Marine and co-owner of Wilmington’s Air Support Heating and Air, opened the meeting by reminding members of the organization’s mission to connect and support one another as they conduct business in the community. During the meeting, Post 68 Commander and VBC member Tom Powers and John Hacker, Post 68 and State-level Chair for the American Legion Be The One Suicide Awareness program, shared details about the highly successful Post-developed resource card, which area First Responders and local officials have used for the past two years. The card provides immediate access to a wide range of resources to help veterans and their families in need, as well as others in crisis. These include numerous Veterans Administration resources, as well as food, medical,

housing, and substance abuse counseling resources. The card is an invaluable tool available to the community to help anyone in need, not just veterans.

Pictured below: Chayse Roth, Pres. VBC and L-R John Hacker and Tom Powers, Legion Post 68



VBC member John White, an Army veteran and owner of The Pit Barbecue in Leland, spoke to attendees about his desire to feed area veterans on Veterans Day, November 11. As a local small business that has operated for only 10 months, The Pit lacks the financial resources to provide an undetermined amount of food and drink to veterans on their special day of recognition, so John asked attendees to help make his dream a reality. His comments were well received.

Membership in the Veterans Business Collective, funded solely by dues and donations, includes veterans, spouses, and supporters. The next Wilmington VBC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 8, 2026, at 6 PM at The Pit Barbecue in Leland (503 Olde Waterford Way, Ste 100, Leland, NC 28451). To learn more about VBC and how membership can help veteran-owned small businesses succeed, visit veteransbusinesscollective.org.

To learn more about the John E. Jacobs American Legion Post 68, visit <https://www.ncpost68.org>. Membership meetings are held in the banquet room at Blossoms Restaurant (1800 Tommie Jacobs Drive, Leland) on the 3rd Thursday of each month. Dinner is an informal gathering for members, starting between 4:30 pm and 5:00 pm; the official meeting begins at 6:00 pm. After the meeting, members socialize over drinks at the Blossoms bar area. Everyone is welcome: members, visitors, guests, and spouses. Visit the website (link above) for meeting dates.