

AMERICAN LEGION

JOHN E. JACOBS LEGION POST 68 LELAND
MEDIA RELEASE

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Submitted by:

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Educating Business Owners on Suicide Awareness



L-R Tom Powers, Marc Arrington, John Hacker

Most veterans value the skills gained through military service: discipline, dedication, teamwork, and camaraderie. The Wilmington Veterans Business Collective and John E. Jacobs American Legion Post 68 in Leland embrace these values by fostering collaboration, promoting networking, mutual support, and maintaining a visible presence in their communities.

On Thursday, April 9, several members of Post 68 in Leland briefed the Wilmington Veterans Business Collective on the Legion's *Be The One* suicide awareness program. They

also answered questions. Attending from Post 68 were John Hacker (Past Commander and Chair, Department of North Carolina *Be The One* Program), Tom Powers (*Be The One* Co-Chair and Post 68 Website Developer), and Eric Mens (Public Affairs Officer). Post 68 understands suicide respects no boundaries of geography, profession, economic status, gender, or age. Since its inception several years ago, *Be The One* has proven to be effective at destigmatizing issues surrounding veteran suicides and educating the public on available resources.

Marc Arrington (Msgt. USMC Ret.), President of the Veterans Business Collective, opened Thursday's meeting with a reminder to those present that their service to country did not stop the day they were discharged, hung up their uniforms, and left service. Now, as a civilian and business owner, he encourages members to continue helping one another succeed in business by networking

and sharing ideas and resources. Through his leadership, Arrington ensures that the organization continues to embrace the values members learned during their time in service—loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and courage—and that those values endure long after individuals transition from military service to civilian life.

Business owners and community members can support *Be The One* by attending information sessions, sharing materials, or inviting representatives to business events. By engaging directly, providing resources, or simply spreading the message, everyone can help make a positive impact and strengthen support systems for veterans in our community. For more information on how to participate, please visit the American Legion Post 68 website or contact the program coordinators.

Current membership in the Wilmington Chapter of the Veterans Business Collective, a tax-exempt 501(c)(3), includes 175 veterans, spouses, and supporters. The organization is funded solely through member dues and donations. Meetings are at 6 pm on the second Thursday of each month at The Eagles Dare, 420 N 3rd St, Wilmington, NC 28401. They also have a Jacksonville, NC chapter that meets on the third Thursday of the month at the Carolina Ale House, 1649 Western Blvd, Jacksonville, NC 28546, from 5-7 pm. To learn more, donate, or join, visit veteransbusinesscollective.org.

To learn more about American Legion Post 68, visit our recently revamped website: <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.