



July 2026

BRIDGING THE GAP

Behind the Scenes at the
Florida ESGR BossLift



Left Katherine DeBeer (VetJobs), middle MG (Ret.) Rita Broadway (Florida ESGR Chair), right Regina LeValley (VetJobs). Photo taken during morning networking before the welcome.

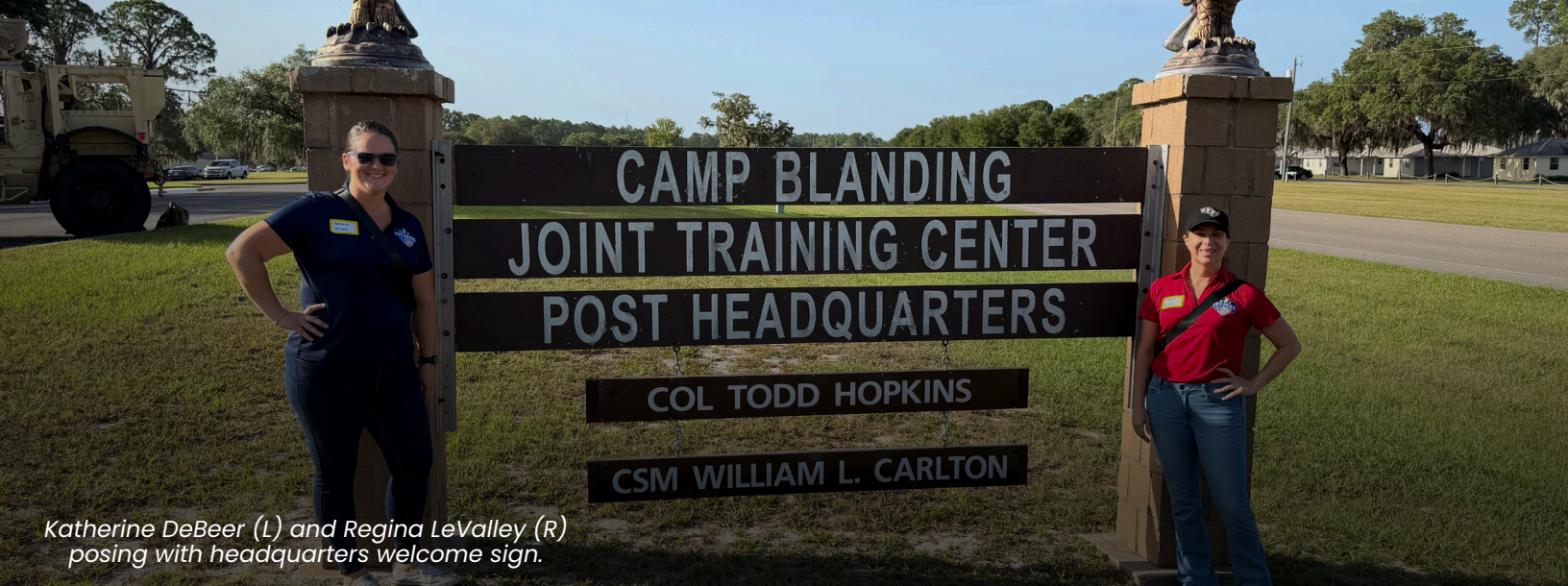
A Lasting Impression

By General David May (Ret.)

What happens when civilian employers step out of the office and straight into a high-octane military training environment for a day?

They don't just see the dedication of our service members—they experience it. That immersion is exactly what drives the VetJobs Guard and Reserve Program's close partnership with the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) program. Together, we share a vital mission: championing the employment needs of our nation's part-time military forces by giving civilian employers a front-row seat to what their employees do while on official military orders. There is simply no substitute for experiencing this operational environment firsthand.

Some of my favorite memories from my time as Assistant Adjutant General (Air) and Adjutant General in Wisconsin are from ESGR BossLift events. Seeing the reactions of civilian employers when they witness Guard members in action is absolutely priceless.



Katherine DeBeer (L) and Regina LeValley (R) posing with headquarters welcome sign.

We are incredibly fortunate to have the continued friendship and support of Major General (Ret.) Rita Broadway, the Florida ESGR Chair, who recently invited VetJobs to send representatives to a BossLift in the Sunshine State. Regina LeValley and Katherine DeBeer attended as outstanding ambassadors for VetJobs and Military Spouse Jobs.

Reflecting on the event, they noted how powerful it was to connect with local employers right there on the tarmac and in the field, witnessing firsthand the immediate mutual respect that forms when corporate leaders see the immense capability, discipline, and leadership skills our Guard and Reserve members bring to the civilian workforce.

"The incredible FL ESGR Boss Lift at the Camp Blanding Joint Training Center was one of the biggest highlights of my professional career," Katherine DeBeer said about the event. "The hands-on experiences and first-hand view of FL National Guard was a truly unforgettable experience. I walk away from the event with a completely new perspective on the tremendous impact of the FL National Guard. As the third largest and most active National Guard state FL National Guard soldiers and airmen see 106 days of service per year on average. Close to double of what is considered sustainable for guard members juggling full-time employment. This is a true testament to how dedicated and supportive FL employers are to their guard member employees. Truly an impactful, educational, and exciting day!"



Regina LeValley (R) and Katherine DeBeer (L) preparing to takeoff for aerial helicopter tour of Camp Blanding Joint Training Center



Soldiers discussing MRAP vehicle functionality, and capabilities with employers.



Soldier showing employers how to use the standard issue SIG Sauer M17 weapon. How to remove & replace the magazine and how to prepare to fire.

The demonstration was in preparation for the training exercise where employers and guests were given the opportunity to use the digital trainer to practice firing the weapon.

Inside the Florida National Guard 2026 BossLift Mission

By MG (Ret.) Rita Broadway, Florida ESGR Chair

On Saturday, July 11, 2026, civilian employers from across Florida gathered at the Camp Blanding Joint Training Center for a full-day program designed to showcase the service, sacrifice, and professionalism of Florida National Guard Service Members. Hosted jointly by the Florida National Guard and the Florida Committee for ESGR, the event introduced employers to the Guard's mission, capabilities, and critical role in state and national defense.

Leadership Briefings & Strategic Insights

The day kicked off with networking and briefings at Camp Blanding headquarters, where employers explored available ESGR resources before hearing from top military leadership:

- Major General John D. Haas, Adjutant General of Florida, provided a comprehensive overview of the Florida National Guard's current domestic and international missions.
- General Thomas M. Carden Jr., Vice Chief of the National Guard Bureau, personally thanked the attendees for the corporate sacrifices they make to support Guard and Reserve members.
- Rita M. Broadway, ESGR Florida Committee State Chair, emphasized the vital link between the workplace and the frontline:

"This nation's employers are critical to the success of the National Guard and Reserve. Without supportive employers, National Guard and Reserve Component Service Members would be challenged to pursue a civilian and military career simultaneously. The ESGR Bosslift program allows employers to see and experience how our Service Members train in preparation for their missions."

Regina LeValley, VetJobs

Front-Row Seats to Guard Excellence

Throughout the day, employers were immersed in real-world military training activities, including:

- Aviation: A helicopter orientation flight around the Camp Blanding complex.
- Tactical Training: Hands-on weapons simulator operations using the Engagement Skills Trainer (EST).
- Static Displays: Up-close inspections of modern military vehicles, individual weapons, and personal protective gear.

The BossLift also uniquely coincided with the 2026 National Guard Best Warrior Competition. Hosted by the Florida National Guard at Camp Blanding, this elite event brings together top Soldiers and NCOs from across the country to test their physical endurance, tactical proficiency, and marksmanship. Employers received an exclusive status update on the competition directly from the FLNG Joint Operations Center Training Facility.



Florida state flag being presented at the deployment ceremony. Florida National Guard deployment ceremonies are locally hosted send-off events held before a unit deploys, featuring speeches, ceremonial flag presentations, and family farewells.

A Powerful Reminder

The day concluded on a deeply resonant note with a departure ceremony for the 146th Expeditionary Signal Battalion. It served as a powerful, real-world reminder to every employer in attendance of the profound commitments carried out daily by our Guard members and their families—and why the work we do at VetJobs to support them is so vital.



WRITTEN BY MAJ. GEN. (RET.) DAVID MAY

Vice President of Military Partnerships, VetJobs

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