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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 25, 2023

Miami Beach Mayor to Return World War II Rent Money from Uncle Sam

*— The symbolic gesture comes ahead of this weekend's Hyundai Air & Sea Show
along the oceanfront —*

Miami Beach, FL – To mark the start of the 2023 Hyundai Air & Sea Show over Memorial Day weekend, the City of Miami Beach plans to return the U.S. government's rent money — including inflationary adjustments — that was paid out during the World War II war effort when the glamorous coastal city served as one of the largest military training grounds in America.

"Couldn't be prouder to return \$420 in the inflated-adjusted rent that Miami Beach charged for housing and training thousands of troops in WWII," said Mayor Dan Gelber. "It was our greatest honor to do our part for so many that served and sacrificed to protect our freedoms."

Gelber's late father and former Miami Beach Mayor Seymour Gelber, was one of those who trained during the war in Miami Beach when he served in the Army Air Corps.

"The reality is that many of these service members who experienced our City, later returned to start families, buy houses and open businesses, which led to one of the largest expansions in our community's history," added Mayor Gelber.

The city's check will be payable to the U.S. Treasury to honor the thousands of service members who passed through what some later referred to as the "most beautiful boot camp in America" on their way to far-flung corners of the world to fight for freedom between 1942 and 1945. **Mayor Gelber will present the check during a press conference between 2 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. on Friday, May 26 at the United States Coast Guard Air Station Miami.** The station is located at the Miami Opa-locka Executive Airport, 14750 NW 44th Court, Opa-locka, Florida.

Miami Beach served as a base for training headquarters of the then Army Air Forces Technical Training Command, with many municipal properties and hotels repurposed for the war effort.

"Our records show that Uncle Sam paid out a total of about \$6 per year between 1942 and 1945," Gelber said. "Fortunately, our room rates are considerably higher today."

When the U.S. Air Corps Training School in Miami Beach opened in February of 1942, it was one of the largest training centers and officer candidate schools anywhere in the U.S. Up to a quarter of the officers and a fifth of all enlisted men of the entire Army Air Forces were trained in Miami Beach.

After the war, some 2,000 service members who were released from Japan's prison camps, spent two weeks of their 90-day furloughs resting and relaxing on the city's beaches.

The roar of military aircraft returns this weekend to honor the sacrifice of America's military personnel. The Hyundai Air & Sea Show begins on Saturday, May 27 and continues through Sunday, May 28 with sea demonstrations by professional jet skiers, ThunderCats boat racing exhibition and the Cigarette Offshore Powerboat Racing Demonstration. After the sea portion, residents and visitors can look to the sky for our country's state-of-the-art military technology, including parachute teams, jet demonstrations, air and sea search and rescue exercises followed by evening activities that include concerts and fireworks.

For more information on the Hyundai Air and Sea Show, [click here](#).





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