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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## World War II Exhibit to Open on Veterans Day

— 'Boot Camp in Paradise' in Miami Beach —

**Miami Beach, FL** – The City of Miami Beach is proud to present “**Boot Camp in Paradise: World War II in Miami Beach**,” a special exhibit opening on Veterans Day, to commemorate the hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops who trained in Miami Beach from 1942 to 1945.

The three-month outdoor exhibit, running through the end of January, will be held in **Galería Ocean Drive**, a new display space located in Lummus Park along Ocean Drive between 11 and 12 streets. The exhibit will **officially open on Veterans Day, Nov. 11 at 1 p.m.** as part of the city’s annual Veterans Day parade and celebration. Attendees will explore more than 150 photographs and WWII memorabilia displayed across more than 30 weatherproof panels.

"Miami Beach played a crucial role in preparing these brave heroes to face the atrocities of war," said Mayor Steven Meiner. "Let us always remember the debt of gratitude we owe to those who were instrumental in helping America and the Allies to victory."

Exhibitgoers will step back in time to when Miami Beach served as a vital training ground for the U.S. Army Air Forces Technical Training Command, known today as the U.S. Air Force Air Education and Training Command. Throughout the City, hotels and apartment buildings were converted into barracks, and lobbies, ballrooms, theaters and retail spaces became classrooms. Even fine-dining restaurants were repurposed into mess halls. City parks and golf courses turned into parade grounds, while the lively beachfront was filled with troops in training. Gen. Henry “Hap” Arnold estimated in 1944 that without Miami Beach’s accommodations, the war effort would have been delayed by six to eight months.

Curated by the Office of the Mayor and Commission, in cooperation with The Wolfsonian-FIU and supported by the Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority, the free exhibition will also feature family-friendly activities such as guided tours, social media activations, and a photo prop designed to look like the iconic WWII-era Willys Jeep.

**Galería Ocean Drive** will continue to serve as a year-round exhibit space. With rotating exhibits expected to open every three months, the space aims to celebrate Miami Beach’s rich history. For more details, please visit: [www.miamibeachfl.gov/galeria](http://www.miamibeachfl.gov/galeria).

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