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NFL AND USAA ANNOUNCE ATLANTA FALCONS GUARD BEN GARLAND AS RECIPIENT OF 2018 SALUTE TO SERVICE AWARD

Garland's commitment to supporting U.S. military members, veterans and their families to be recognized at NFL Honors in Atlanta

The NFL and USAA, an Official NFL Salute to Service Partner, named Atlanta Falcons offensive guard **BEN GARLAND** as the recipient of the 2018 **Salute to Service Award presented by USAA**. The award was created to acknowledge the exceptional efforts by members of the NFL community to honor and support members of the military community.

Garland will be recognized at *NFL Honors*, a two-hour primetime awards special to air nationally on Feb. 2, the eve of Super Bowl LIII, at 9 PM (ET and PT) on CBS. *NFL Honors* will be taped earlier that evening at the Fox Theater in Atlanta. [USAA, a leading provider of insurance](#) and other services to U.S. military members, veterans and their families, will contribute \$25,000 in Garland's honor to the official aid societies representing all five military branches. The NFL will match USAA's donation of \$25,000, which will be donated to the Garland's military charity of choice.

"From his time at the Air Force Academy and continuing throughout his NFL playing career, Ben Garland has embodied and demonstrated the understanding and appreciation for the service and sacrifice of the U.S. military and their families for which this award stands," said Vice Admiral (Ret.) **JOHN BIRD**, USAA Senior Vice President of Military Affairs. "In the true spirit of the 'Salute to Service Award presented by USAA', we salute Ben for his tireless effort to support our military, veterans, and their families, as well as his own service to our country as a member of the Colorado Air National Guard."

"I am honored to win the award, but, honestly, I am just honored to be part of an organization that puts military first from the top down, from Arthur Blank to our Head Coach," said Atlanta Falcons offensive guard and 2018 Salute to Service award recipient **BEN GARLAND**. "They do so much for our military and I am proud to be with an organization that is the spear in the NFL of showing how to do it right and how to truly give back and say thank you to the military members that absolutely deserve it."

In 2018 alone, Ben traveled on two USO tours; the first to Italy and Germany and the second to Iraq and Kuwait. Ben seeks out any opportunity that he can to visit with military, shake their hands and say thank you.

When Ben is back stateside, he is extremely involved and focused on helping veterans get back on their feet after their service and helping to raise awareness for PTSD. In 2018, he participated in the Armed Forces Mission's Georgia LOSS Walk at Patriot Park in Fayetteville, Georgia. Ben walked alongside veterans, service members and their families in honor of "Turning the Tide on Veteran Suicide". Each year that Ben has been with the Atlanta Falcons he has participated in the annual Fishing with the Falcons event. This year, Ben traveled to Orange Beach, Alabama to go on a chartered fishing trip with wounded veterans.

As a current member of the Colorado Air National Guard, Ben also finds time to support his fellow active duty service members. He donates game tickets each week to service members, visits the Air Force Academy at least once a year to speak to the current students, works with Georgia Tech ROTC to inspire young officers and meets with local young officers to mentor them.

In October 2018, all 32 NFL clubs nominated coaches, active and retired players, and team executives and personnel, who best demonstrated support for the military community. The nominees were publicly announced in November and the submissions were evaluated by a panel of judges. Nominees' credentials are evaluated based on the positive effect of the individual's efforts on the military community, the type of service conducted, the thoroughness of the program and level of commitment.

The panel of judges, consisting of representatives from the U.S. military, the NFL and USAA, includes:

- **ANDRE ROBERTS**, 2017 Salute to Service Award recipient
- **VICE ADMIRAL JOHN BIRD (Ret.)**, U.S. Navy veteran and USAA Senior Vice President of Military Affairs
- **CHAD HENNINGS**, Air Force Academy graduate and three-time Super Bowl champion
- **VINCENT JACKSON**, Former NFL player & 2015 Salute to Service Award recipient
- **JIM MORA, SR.**, Marine Corps veteran and former NFL head coach
- **LENNY BANDY**, U.S. Marine Corps Veteran and NFL Vice President of Security

Below is the list of previous *Salute to Service Award* recipients.

YEAR	RECIPIENT	TEAM
2017	Andre Roberts	Atlanta Falcons
2016	Dan Quinn (Head Coach)	Atlanta Falcons
2015	Vincent Jackson	Tampa Bay Buccaneers
2014	Jared Allen	Chicago Bears
2013	John Harbaugh (Head Coach)	Baltimore Ravens
2012	Charles Tillman	Chicago Bears
2011	K.S. "Bud" Adams Jr. (Late Owner)	Tennessee Titans

The *Salute to Service Award* presented by USAA is part of the NFL and USAA's year-round commitment to recognize and honor the military community. To read about all 32 nominees, visit www.nfl.com/salute.

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About USAA

The USAA family of companies provides insurance, banking, investments, retirement products and advice to more than 12.8 million current and former members of the U.S. military and their families. Known for its legendary commitment to its members, USAA is consistently recognized for outstanding service, employee well-being and financial strength. USAA membership is open to all who are serving our nation in the U.S. military or have received a discharge type of Honorable - and their eligible family members. Founded in 1922, USAA is headquartered in San Antonio. For more information about USAA, follow us on Facebook or Twitter (@USAA), or visit usaa.com.

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