



INVITATION TO BID

DO NOT SHIP BASED UPON THIS BID

Return this **SIGNED** form to:
Louisiana Tech University
Office of Purchasing
PO Box 3157
208 Keeny Circle, RM 408
Ruston, Louisiana 71272

Bid Number: 50012-622-26 **Bid Title:** Purchase of Fireworks Services for Athletics

Bid Schedule:

Pre-Bid Conference:

N/A

Bid Submission Deadline / Opening:

August 6, 2025 @ 2:00 PM

Bidder agrees to comply with all conditions below and attached to this request.

Prices are to be complete and the FOB point is to be Louisiana Tech University unless otherwise specified.

Bidder Information: (Bidder to provide all required information)

(Full Company Name)

(Full Street or Mailing Address)

(City)

(State)

(Zip)

(Phone)

(Email)

(Fax)

(Company Quote Number if Applicable)

PRICES MUST BE FIRM FOR AT LEAST 30 DAYS FROM BID OPENING DATE

FAILURE TO SIGN BELOW IN INK SHALL DISQUALIFY BID

Typed or Printed Name / Title

Authorized Signature

The Louisiana Tech University Office of Purchasing is seeking SEALED BIDS for the following:

Purchase of Fireworks Services for Athletics

A Bid Bond is not required for this solicitation.

Please take note of the insurance and permitting requirements contained in this Sealed Bid.

See Attached Bid Specifications for additional details

ALL BIDS MUST BE RETURNED TO THE LOUISIANA TECH UNIVERSITY OFFICE OF PURCHASING VIA MAIL OR IN PERSON.

The Bidder is solely responsible for ensuring that its courier service provider makes inside deliveries to our physical location. Louisiana Tech University is not responsible for any delays caused by the bidder's chosen means of delivery.

For questions regarding specifications, please contact the Office of Purchasing at 318-257-4205 or purchasing@latech.edu. Please ensure that the above bid number appears on all communications.

IMPORTANT: If bidding other than requested brand and product number (or style), enclose sufficient literature to determine compliance with specifications. Failure to comply with this request may eliminate your bid from consideration. Any manufacturer's names, trade names, brand names, or catalog numbers used in the specifications are for the purpose of describing and establishing general quality levels. Such references are not intended to be restrictive. Bids will be considered for any brand which meets or exceeds the quality of the specifications listed for any items.

The Louisiana Tech University Office of Purchasing is now accepting SEALED BIDS for the Purchase of Fireworks Services for Athletics (Home Football Games). The University reserves the right to award items separately, in groups, or on an all-or-none basis; based on what is in the best interest of the University. The University also reserves the right to reject any and all bids and or items and to waive any informalities in the bidding process.

2025 Football Schedule (Home Games)

Date	Time	At	Opponent	Location
Aug 30 (Sat)	6:30 p.m.	Home	Southeastern	Ruston, La. (Joe Aillet Stadium)
Sep 13 (Sat)	6:30 p.m.	Home	New Mexico State	Ruston, La. (Joe Aillet Stadium)
Sep 20 (Sat)	6:30 p.m.	Home	Southern Miss	Ruston, La. (Joe Aillet Stadium)
Oct 21 (Tue)	6:30 p.m.	Home	WKU	Ruston, La. (Joe Aillet Stadium)
Oct 31 (Fri)	7:00 p.m.	Home	Sam Houston	Ruston, La. (Joe Aillet Stadium)
Nov 22 (Sat)	2:00 p.m.	Home	Liberty	Ruston, La. (Joe Aillet Stadium)

Number of games is estimated and not guaranteed. Game times are also subject to change. The University will notify the awarded vendor two (2) days prior to a scheduled event of a change in start times.

The Awarded Vendor must furnish complete insurance coverage for workman's comp, public liability insurance, and property damage insurance as required by law. The Awarded Vendor must provide proof of general commercial liability insurance in the amount of \$5 million, as well as transportation insurance coverage of \$5 million prior to the issuance of a purchase order.

Bid Specifications:

Close proximity special effects package for the 2025 Regular Season Home Games.

The bid shall include the following:

Close Proximity Display products, firing equipment, general liability and transportation insurance, labor, transportation, pyro boxes, trusses, and lodging for the crew.

To ensure consistency and efficiency, the same pyrotechnic operators must be assigned to each game. This requirement is intended to maintain familiarity with the game-day setup and eliminate the need for University staff to reorient pyrotechnic operators at each event regarding pre-game procedures and field layout.

The Awarded Vendor is also responsible for providing two (2) 16-foot pyro trusses, each to be installed at the team entrance and fitted with Louisiana Tech University logo banners. In addition, the company must supply two (2) rolling pyro carts measuring 3 feet by 3 feet, which will display University banners and be utilized during pre-game and end zone pyrotechnic displays.

Team Entry thru Tunnel onto Field:

4 – CO2 High Pressure Cyro Jets. 4 Cyro jets mounted above team entrance door to the awning or on a truss. Mounting TBD. Electronically firing CO2 fog cloud for team entrance.

4- 50 lb. liquid CO2 siphon tanks. Full cylinders for every game.

8- 20 second x 20-foot Silver Gerb fountains linin the entry inside of the 16-foot pyro trusses forming a tunnel with University banners attached. 4 Gerbs on each side 4 feet apart.

2- Tripple Head Flame Projectors to be placed inside rolling pyro carts with University banners in the Davison Athletic Complex end zone fired at the same time as the spark fountains and CO2 jets for the team entrance.

Team colored smoke for 2 games during entrance. 8 canisters of professional pyro smoke, blue and red will be used for designated games.

Aerial End Zone Pyro:

Placed at two stations inside rolling pyro carts with University banners attached on the scoreboard side of field on goal line, one station at each hash mark. Fired simultaneously as team enters the field through the pyro trusses.

6- 275 foot 38/8 Red and Blue mines with tails placed at two stations inside rolling pyro carts with University banners attached on the scoreboard side of field at goal line one station at each hash mark.

3- 275-foot 38/8 Red and Blue mines placed in each station. Fired simultaneously as team enters.

Halftime Fireworks:

3 Minute Professional Firework Display show. The halftime performance may not occur at each home game. The University will notify the awarded vendor of the game(s) in which the halftime performance will occur. The University will notify the awarded vendor that a halftime performance will occur no later than seven (7) days prior to the scheduled event.

Homecoming Pep Rally Event:

5-6 minute Professional Fireworks Display show. To be performed on October 30, 2025. Location and time are to be determined and will be communicated to the Awarded Vendor at least 14 calendar days prior to the event.

Event Cancellation:

In the event a football contest is canceled, the University reserves the right to reallocate and utilize the pyrotechnics display at an alternative venue and/or event of its choosing. The University will allow up to a 50% payment of the event total to the awarded vendor for any event which is cancelled and not rescheduled; which allows for payment for vendor travel, setup, teardown, and transportation.

Damages:

The awarded vendor shall be held fully liable for any and all damages, including but not limited to damage to field turf, injuries to staff or players, and any other related harm. This liability also extends to damages resulting from factory or manufacturing defects.

Display Graphics and Branding:

All graphics, University logos, etc shall be approved by University Communications prior to their production, posting, or display.

Licensure and Permitting:

The awarded vendor shall be licensed as a Licensed Pyrotechnic Operating Company with the Louisiana State Fire Marshal's Office. Vendors shall provide proof of a valid Licensed Pyrotechnic Operating Company as a part of their bid. Failure to obtain or provide proof of the above licensure shall cause the vendor's bid to be deemed as non-responsive. The awarded vendor shall obtain, at their expense, all necessary and required permits as required by the Louisiana State Fire Marshal's Office. The awarded vendor shall provide the University with an image or copy of each permit issued no later than five (5) days PRIOR to each scheduled event.

The bid price shall be submitted on a per-game basis and must be all-inclusive of the items and services described above. This includes, but is not limited to, pyrotechnic products, firing equipment, general liability and transportation insurance, labor, transportation, pyro boxes, trusses, lodging, and any applicable fire marshal permit fees.

Awarding:

The award for this solicitation will be based upon the per unit pricing for all events. This solicitation will be awarded to a single vendor.

Please Note: The University reserves the right to award only those items deemed to be in its best interest. Submission of a bid does not guarantee award of all listed items.

Schedule of Items

Bid Number:	50012-622-26	Bid Title:	Purchase of Fireworks Services for Athletics
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IMPORTANT: If bidding other than requested brand and product number (or style), enclose sufficient literature to determine compliance with specifications. Failure to comply with this request may eliminate your bid from consideration. Any manufacturer's names, trade names, brand names, or catalog numbers used in the specifications are for the purpose of describing and establishing general quality levels. Such references are not intended to be restrictive. Bids will be considered for any brand which meets or exceeds the quality of the specifications listed for any items.

[illegible]



Louisiana Tech University

Division of Finance
Office of Purchasing

THIS IS A REQUEST FOR A SEALED BID INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

1. Read the entire bid, including all terms and conditions and specifications.
2. Louisiana Tech University is not liable for any cost incurred by the bidders prior to execution of a contract and the issuance of a purchase order. Any bidder who ships or otherwise expends time or money prior to award as defined does so at the bidder's own risk.
3. All bid prices must be typed or written in ink. Any corrections, erasures or other forms of alteration to unit prices should be initialed by the bidder. If the bidder needs to submit a change, question, exception, or modification to any aspect of the bid specifications, terms, conditions, or bidder instructions, must do so in written form submitted to the Louisiana Tech University Office of Purchasing prior to the bid opening date. All responses and/or addenda will be officially submitted by the Louisiana Tech University Office of Purchasing 72 (seventy-two) business hours before the bid opening date. Business hours is defined as University operating hours while the University is open. Unless received as specified above, all bid information will remain unchanged.
4. This bid is to be manually signed in ink.
5. Bid prices shall include all delivery charges paid by the vendor, F.O.B. Destination, unless otherwise provided in the solicitation. Bids requiring deposits, "payment in advance" or "C.O.D" may be rejected. Payment is to be made within 30 days after receipt of properly executed invoice or delivery, whichever is later.
6. Amount of bid bond required: every bid submitted for in excess of fifty thousand dollars shall be accompanied by a bid bond guaranteed by a surety company qualified to do business in the state of Louisiana. The bid bond shall be for five percent of the official bid amount.
7. To assure consideration of your bid, all bids and addenda should be returned in an envelope or package clearly marked with the bid opening date and the bid number; or submitted in the special envelope, if furnished for that purpose. The Bidder is solely responsible for ensuring that its courier service provider makes inside deliveries to our physical location. The University is not responsible for any delays caused by the bidder's chosen means of delivery. Bidder is solely responsible for the timely delivery of its bid. Bids received after the due date and time will not be considered.
8. Bids submitted are subject to provisions of the laws of the State of Louisiana including but not limited to L.R.S. 39:1551-1736; Purchasing rules and regulations; executive orders; standard terms and conditions; special conditions; and specifications listed in this solicitation.
9. Important: By signing the bid, the bidder certifies compliance with all instructions to bidders, terms conditions and specifications, and further certifies that this bid is made without collusion or fraud. This bid is to be manually signed in ink by a person authorized to bind the vendor (see no. 27). All bid information shall be in ink or typewritten.
10. Address all inquiries and correspondence to the Louisiana Tech University Office of Purchasing at the address and telephone number listed herein.

11. Bid forms: All written bids, unless otherwise provided for, must be submitted on, and in accordance with, forms provided, and properly signed (see no. 27). Bids submitted in the following manner will not be accepted:
 - A. Bid contains no signature indicating intent to be bound;
 - B. Bid sent by facsimile equipment;
 - C. Bid filled out in pencil; and
 - D. Bid not submitted on the designated bid forms.
12. Bids must be received at the address specified in the solicitation prior to bid opening time in order to be considered.
13. Standards of quality – Any product or service bid shall conform to all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and the specifications contained in the solicitation. If bidding other than the requested brand or product number (or style), enclose sufficient literature to determine compliance with specifications. Failure to comply with this request may eliminate your bid from consideration. Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation document, any manufacturer's name, trade name, brand name, or catalog number used in the specification is for the purpose of describing the standard of quality, performance, and characteristics desired; and is not intended to limit or restrict competition. Bidder must specify the brand and model name of the product offered in the bid. Bids not specifying brand and model number shall be considered as offering the exact product specified in the solicitation. See bid document for full requirements.
14. New Products: Unless specifically called for in the solicitation documents, all products for purchase must be new, never previously used, and the current model and/or packaging. No remanufactured, demonstrator, used or irregular product will be considered for purchase unless otherwise specified in the solicitation documents. The manufacturer's standard warranty will apply unless otherwise stated in the solicitation.
15. Louisiana Tech University reserves the right to award items separately, grouped or on an all-or-none basis and to reject any or all bids and waive any informalities.
16. This agreement is non-exclusive and shall not in any way preclude Louisiana Tech University from entering into similar agreements and/or arrangements with other vendors or from acquiring similar, equal, or like goods and/or services from other entities or sources.
17. Bid opening: Bidders may attend the bid opening, but no information or opinions concerning the ultimate contract award will be given at the bid opening or during the evaluation process. Bids may be examined within 72 hours after bid opening. Information pertaining to completed files may be secured by visiting the Louisiana Tech University Purchasing Office during normal working hours. Written bid tabulations will not be furnished prior to 72 hours.
18. Prices: Unless otherwise specified by Louisiana Tech University in the solicitation, bid prices must be complete, including transportation prepaid by bidder to destination and firm for acceptance for a minimum of 30 days. If accepted, prices must be firm for the contractual period.
19. Taxes: Vendor is responsible for including all applicable taxes, fees, and tariffs in the bid price. Louisiana Tech University is exempt from all Louisiana state and local sales and use taxes. By accepting an award, resident and non-resident firms acknowledge their responsibility for the payment of all taxes duly assessed by the State of Louisiana and its political subdivisions for which they are liable, including but not limited to: franchise taxes, privilege taxes, sales taxes, use taxes, ad valorem taxes, etc.
20. Contract renewals: In the event that bid specifications include a renewal option, a term contract may be extended for two additional 12-month periods at the same prices, terms, and conditions upon mutual agreement of the State of Louisiana agency and the contractor. In such cases, the total contract term cannot exceed 36 months.

21. Contract cancellation: Louisiana Tech University has the right to cancel any contract, in accordance with purchasing rules and regulations, including but not limited to: (1) failure to deliver within the time specified in the contract; (2) failure of the product or service to meet specifications, conform to sample quality or to be delivered in good condition; (3) misrepresentation by the vendor; (4) fraud, collusion, conspiracy or other unlawful means of obtaining any contract with the University; (5) conflict of contract provisions with constitutional or statutory provisions of state or federal law; (6) any other breach of contract. Louisiana Tech University has the right to cancel any contract for convenience at any time by giving thirty (30) days written notice to the vendor. In such cases, the vendor shall be entitled to payment for complaint deliverables in progress.
22. Applicable law: All contracts shall be construed in accordance with and governed by the laws of the State of Louisiana.
23. In accordance with Executive Order Number JBE 2018-15, effective May 22, 2018, for any contract for \$100,000 or more and for any contractor with five or more employees, Contractor, or any Subcontractor, shall certify it is not engaging in a boycott of Israel, and shall, for the duration of this contract, refrain from a boycott of Israel. The State reserves the right to terminate this contract if the Contractor, or any Subcontractor, engages in a boycott of Israel during the term of the contract.
24. The bidder agrees to abide by the requirements of the following as applicable: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, Federal Executive Order 11246 as amended, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Vietnam Era Veteran's Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Fair Housing Act of 1968 as amended, and bidder agrees to abide by the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Bidder agrees not to discriminate in its employment practices, and will render services under this contract without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, veteran status, political affiliation, disability, or age in any matter relating to employment. Any act of discrimination committed by bidder, or failure to comply with these statutory obligations when applicable shall be grounds for termination of any contract entered into as a result of this solicitation.
25. Special accommodation: Any "qualified individual with a disability" as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, who has submitted a bid and desires to attend the bid opening, must notify the Louisiana Tech University Office of Purchasing in writing not later than seven days prior to the bid opening date of their need for special accommodations. If the request cannot be reasonably provided, the individual will be informed prior to the bid opening.
26. Indemnity: Contractor agrees, upon receipt of written notice of a claim or action, to defend the claim or action, or take other appropriate measure, to indemnify, and hold harmless, the state, its officers, its agents and its employees from and against all claims and actions for bodily injury, death or property damages caused by the fault of the contractor, its officers, its agents, or its employees. Contractor is obligated to indemnify only to the extent of the fault of the contractor, its officers, its agents, or its employees. However, the contractor shall have no obligation as set forth above with respect to any claim or action from bodily injury, death or property damages arising out of the fault of the state, its officers, its agents or its employees.
27. Signature authority: Attention: R.S. 39:1594(c) (4) requires evidence of authority to sign and submit bids to the State of Louisiana. You shall indicate which of the following apply to the signer of this bid.

Please circle one:

- 1) The signer of this bid is either a corporate officer who is listed on the most current annual report on file with the Secretary of State or a member of a partnership or partnership in commendam as reflected in the most current partnership records on file with the Secretary of State. A copy of the annual report or partnership must be submitted to this office before contract award.
- 2) The signer of this bid is a representative of the bidder authorized to submit this bid as evidenced by documents such as Corporate Resolution, Certification as to Corporate Principal, etc. If this

applies, a copy of the resolution, certification, or other supportive documents must be attached hereto.

- 3) The bidder has filed with the Secretary of State an affidavit or resolution or other acknowledged/authentic document indicating that the signer is authorized to submit bids for public contracts. A copy of the applicable document must be submitted to this office before contract award.
28. In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 39:2182, in awarding contracts after August 15, 2010, any public entity is authorized to reject a proposal or bid form, or not award the contract to, a business in which any individual with an ownership interest of five percent or more, has been convicted of, or has entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to any state felony or equivalent federal felony crime committed in the solicitation or execution of a contract or bid awarded under the laws governing public contracts under the provisions of chapter 10 of Title 38 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950; professional, personal, consulting, and social services procurement under the provisions of Chapter 16 of Title 39, or the Louisiana Procurement Code under the provisions of Chapter 17 of Title 39.
29. It is agreed that the Legislative Auditor of the State of Louisiana and/or the Office of the Governor, Division of Administration auditors shall have the option of auditing all accounts which relate to this contract.
30. The continuation of this contract is contingent upon the appropriation of funds to fulfill the requirements of the contract by the legislature. If the legislature fails to appropriate sufficient monies to provide for the continuation of the contract, or if such appropriation is reduced by the veto of the Governor or by any means provided in the Appropriations Act to prevent the total appropriation for the year from exceeding revenues for that year, or for any other lawful purpose, and the effect of such reduction is to provide insufficient monies for the continuation of the contract.
31. Whenever a public entity enters in to a contract in excess of five-thousand dollars (\$5,000) for the construction, alteration, or repair of any Public Works, the official representative of the public entity shall reduce the contract to writing and have it signed by the parties. When an emergency as provided in R.S. 38:2212(D) is deemed to exist for the construction, alteration, or repair of any Public Works and the contract for such emergency work is less than fifty-thousand dollars (\$50,000), there shall be no requirement to reduce the contract to writing (R.S. 38:2241).
32. For each contract in excess of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) per project, the public entity shall require of the contractor a bond with good, solvent, and sufficient surety in a sum of not less than fifty percent (50%) of the contract price for the payment by the contractor or subcontractor to claimants as defined in R.S. 38:2242. The bond furnished shall be a statutory bond and no modification, omissions, additions in or to the terms of the contract, in the plans or specifications, or in the manner and mode of payment shall in any manner diminish, enlarge, or otherwise modify the obligations of the bond. The bond shall be executed by the contractor with surety or sureties approved by the public entity and shall be recorded with the contract in the office of the recorder of mortgages in the parish where the work is to be done not later than thirty days after the work has begun.
33. For construction projects falling within classifications of 37:2150 the bidder must be fully qualified under any state or local licensing law for contractors in effect at the time and at the location of the work before submitting his bid. In the state of Louisiana, revised statutes 37:2150, et seq. Will be considered, if applicable. The contractor shall be responsible for determining that all of his sub-bidders or prospective subcontractors are duly licensed in accordance with law. On any bid in excess of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000), the Contractor shall certify that he is licensed under R.S. 37:2150-2163 and show his license number on the bid. The bid envelope shall be identified on the outside with the Name of the Project, Bid Number, Bid Time, the Name of the Bidder and the License Number of the Bidder.
34. Prohibited Contractual Arrangements – Per Louisiana R.S. 42:1113.A, no public servant, or member of such a public servant's immediate family, or legal entity in which he has a controlling interest shall bid on or enter into any contract, subcontract, or other transaction that is under the supervision or jurisdiction of the agency of such public servant. See statute for complete law, exclusions, and provisions.

35. Prohibition of Companies That Discriminate Against Firearm and Ammunition Industries - In accordance with La. R.S. 39:1602.2, the following applies to any competitive sealed bids, competitive sealed proposals, or contract(s) with a value of \$100,000 or more involving a for-profit company with at least fifty full-time employees: Unless otherwise exempted by law, by submitting a response to this solicitation or entering into this contract, the Bidder, Proposer or Contractor certifies the following: 1. The company does not have a practice, policy, guidance, or directive that discriminates against a firearm entity or firearm trade association based solely on the entity's or association's status as a firearm entity or firearm trade association; 2. The company will not discriminate against a firearm entity or firearm trade association during the term of the contract based solely on the entity's or association's status as a firearm entity or firearm trade association. The State reserves the right to reject the response of the Bidder, Proposer or Contractor if this certification is subsequently determined to be false, and to terminate any contract awarded based on such a false response or if the certification is no longer true.

TO: Louisiana Veteran-Owned and Service-Connected Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Entrepreneurships

RE: Veteran Initiative – Act 167 of the 2009 Legislative Session

➤ **ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR PARTICIPATION?**

- Are you a veteran-owned small entrepreneurship or a service-connected disabled veteran-owned small entrepreneurship in accordance with documentation from the United States Department of Veteran Affairs or the Louisiana Department of Veteran Affairs?
- Are you a Louisiana domiciled business?
- Do you have less than fifty (50) full-time employees?
- Are your annual gross revenue receipts \$5,000,000 or less (for construction) or \$3,000,000 for (non-construction) for each of the previous three (3) tax years?

If your answers are yes, your company may be eligible for participation in the Louisiana Veteran-Owned and Service-Connected Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Entrepreneurship Program, also known as the Veteran Initiative.

➤ **WHAT IS THE VETERAN INITIATIVE?**

The Veteran Initiative, created by LRS 39:2171 through 2179 and LRS 51:931, provides additional opportunities for certified Louisiana-based small entrepreneurship to participate in contracting and procurement with the State. Key features of the programs are:

- This is a goal-oriented program
- It is race and gender neutral
- Participation is restricted to Louisiana-based certified veteran-owned and service-connected disabled veteran-owned small entrepreneurship

The rules governing the implementation of the program are located at <http://www.doa.louisiana.gov/osp/se/se.htm>.

➤ **WHY IS CERTIFICATION IMPORTANT?**

Certification is required for the participation in the Veteran Initiative. Under this program, you may be given increased opportunity to participate in Louisiana state contracts. Certain contracts may be awarded to your business without competition. And, certification is one of the methods that the State of Louisiana will utilize as a basis for benchmarking for annualized procurement and contracting goals.

➤ **WHAT AGENCY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CERTIFICATION?**

The Louisiana Department of Economic Development (LED) is responsible for certifying Small Entrepreneurships for participation in the program. The (LED) Small Business Certification System may be accessed by <https://smallbiz.louisianaeconomicdevelopment.com/Account/Login>. For additional information regarding certification, please contact the LED at 800.450.8115 or 225.342.3000.

➤ **WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS?**

The Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs is responsible for disseminating information on this program and other veterans' benefits to Louisiana veterans. Information on this program and other veterans' benefits can be accessed at www.vetaffairs.al.gov.

The State of Louisiana is committed to the success of this program and encourages your participation.