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VA Office of Inspector General Leader Receives 2023 Presidential Rank Award—Meritorious Executive

WASHINGTON – Brent Arronte, a Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audits and Evaluations within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of Inspector General (OIG), was awarded the 2023 Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Executive. This prestigious honor, given by the President of the United States, recognizes a select few Senior Executive Service (SES) leaders for a sustained record of exceptional professional, technical, or scientific achievement. Only 5 percent of career SES in the federal government receive a nomination.

As the Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audits and Evaluations' Headquarters Operations, Mr. Arronte oversees the work of auditors, inspectors, and management analysts across 10 divisions to report on the performance and accountability of the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and National Cemetery Administration. VBA had an annual budget of over \$167 billion in fiscal year 2023 alone and provides critical compensation and services to veterans, their families, and caregivers in the areas of disability and pension benefits, fiduciary management, education and vocational rehabilitation, home loan guaranty, and insurance.

“Mr. Arronte’s unwavering focus on the accuracy and timeliness of VBA’s decisions on claims for VA benefits alone has significantly improved the lives of veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors,” said VA Inspector General Michael J. Missal. “His work has yielded remarkable results, with his directed efforts fundamentally changing VBA’s stewardship of taxpayer-funded resources, benefits programs, and services that should consistently put veterans first.”

Between 2016 and 2022, Mr. Arronte frequently testified at congressional hearings and was instrumental in making recommendations to VBA that carried \$1.5 billion in monetary benefits. His dedicated work bolstered the passage of legislation that expanded benefits to about five million veterans impacted by toxic exposure to burn pits and contaminated water. He also led teams that revealed the mishandling of benefit claims to vulnerable veterans, such as those with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and posttraumatic stress disorder related to military sexual trauma. Under Mr. Arronte’s leadership, the VA OIG identified the remains of more than 400 veterans who had not received burials. His work continues to drive meaningful advances within the National Cemetery Administration to ensure veterans’ remains are treated with dignity.

A first-generation college graduate from rural Arizona and a United States Army veteran, Mr. Arronte went on to complete a master's degree in public administration and multiple leadership certificate programs. He was appointed to his current position at the VA OIG in August 2015. He has more than 18 years of inspection and audit experience.

The mission of the Office of the Inspector General is to serve veterans and the public by conducting meaningful independent oversight of the Department of Veterans Affairs. The VA OIG performs audits, inspections, investigations, and reviews that improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity of the Department of Veterans Affairs' programs and services. To report potential crimes, waste, gross mismanagement, or abuse of authority involving VA, contact the OIG hotline at www.va.gov/oig/hotline/default.asp.

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