

NEWS RELEASE

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MATHER VETERANS VILLAGE PHASES II AND III BREAK GROUND *Additional Homeless and Disabled Veterans Housing Underway in Rancho Cordova, CA*

Rancho Cordova, CA (April 10, 2018) – Today, Mercy Housing, Veterans Resource Centers of America (VRC), the City of Rancho Cordova and the County of Sacramento broke ground on the final two phases of Mather Veterans Village, the first permanent supportive housing development for homeless and disabled veterans in the Sacramento region.

Phase II will provide a 46-bed transitional housing program for veterans not yet ready to live independently, as well as a rich menu of supportive services including comprehensive case management, behavioral health treatment, employment, and a commercial kitchen and chef to provide healthy, delicious meals to residents.

Phase III will consist of an additional 50 permanent supportive homes on the site, including 44 one-bedroom and 6 two-bedroom homes. Phases II and III bring the total housing capacity to 146.

“The City of Rancho Cordova is a vibrant community with a strong military heritage that values its veterans,” said Mayor Linda Budge, City of Rancho Cordova, one of the project drivers. “We are proud to celebrate another milestone in bringing our vision of Mather Veterans Village to life. The village has become a place for our nation’s homeless and disabled veterans to live and heal, and we look forward to welcoming even more veterans home to Rancho Cordova once the project is completed.”

Mather Veterans Village includes three phases of critically needed veterans housing and supportive services. Phase I of the project was completed in August 2016 and all 50 homes are occupied by now formerly homeless and disabled veterans and their families.

The garden-style community – designed by Mogavero Architects, a local Sacramento firm – exceeds California’s energy and water usage standards. The site includes landscaping irrigated by 100% onsite gray water, solar electric generation for tenant net metering, and a solar hot water system.

“The dedication of Mather Veterans Village Phase I was a very memorable and special day; a day to be proud of the work this incredible team of partners has accomplished and proud of the important services we are able to provide,” said President Doug Shoemaker, Mercy Housing California, the master developer. “To be here, 18 months later, to begin work on the final two phases of this remarkable project is truly something to celebrate. The Mather Veterans Village staff and our project partners look forward to welcoming many more homeless and disabled veterans to their new homes next year when Phases II and III are completed. The completed village will not only be a place to call home but a place for all the veteran residents to live in hope!”

“The County of Sacramento is pleased to be a partner in helping to advance the Mather Veterans Village project,” said Sacramento County Supervisor Don Nottoli, District 5. “Veterans in our community will benefit from this outstanding and much needed project, which will provide a safe and welcoming home and supportive services for many local veterans.”

George Thomas, a resident at Mather Veterans Village, served in the U.S. Army from 1979-86 as a field radio repairman and earned the rank of E5 Sergeant. In 2010, he lost his father who was his best friend. George became addicted to drugs to try and stop the pain, which led to him becoming homeless. He didn’t know if he’d be alive the next day or where his next meal was coming from. George had a family that loved him and 11 grandchildren he wanted to see grow up, so one day he decided to make a change.

George reached out to VRC, the co-developer and master service provider for Mather Veterans Village, to ask for help. VRC provides a rich menu of supportive services at the village, including counseling, job training, medical assistance, group and individual therapy, and a healing environment.

“We as Americans made a promise to these brave veterans,” said Burt McChesney, Executive Director of Veterans Housing Development Corporation and Board Member of VRC. “We said ‘fight our wars, keep the wolves at bay, stand the wall, and when your watch is done, we will take care of you.’ Often times we have not kept our part of the bargain. With Mather Veterans Village and this collaboration, we are. This is the finest example of not only keeping a promise but giving the best gift you can give a veteran: hope.”

Thanks to VRC, George was placed on the waiting list for Mather Veterans Village.

“I was living in my car and praying to God for the village to open one weekend. That Monday, I got the phone call that I could move in,” said George. “I am now living in my new home and enrolled in a drug recovery program. I have hope for the future and believe I can set a good example for my grandchildren.”

Over 92,000 veterans live in the Sacramento, CA region, and the area has the 10th highest number of homeless veterans in California counties. Despite this need, housing to support the unique needs of homeless and disabled veterans was virtually non-existent - until Mather Veterans Village went from idea to reality.

The Mather Veterans Village location couldn't have been more perfect than the City of Rancho Cordova, CA. It is on the site of the former Mather Air Force Base, providing a familiar setting to veterans with access to the nearby VA Hospital, located just two blocks away.

In addition, the following organizations provided funding to make this program possible: California Tax Credit Allocation Committee; Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention Program, a partnership with California Department of Housing and Community Development, California Department of Veterans Affairs, and California Housing Finance Agency; California Department of Finance; US Department of Veterans Affairs; VA Northern California Health Care System; The Home Depot Foundation; Exchange Bank; Wells Fargo Community Lending and Investment; Local Initiatives Support Corporation; and Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency.

For additional information, please access our online press kit at www.CityofRanchoCordova.org/MVV.

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