



Mather Veterans Village

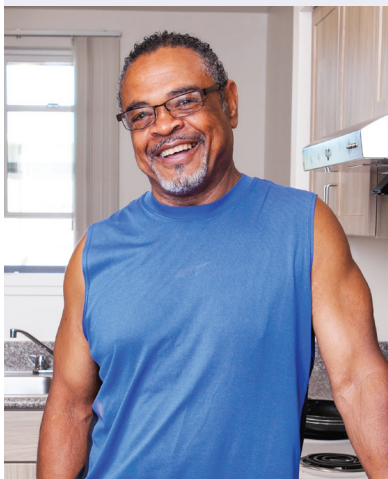
Rancho Cordova, California

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Four Veterans Find a Healing Home in the City of Rancho Cordova, CA

Disabled and homeless veterans have a place to call home in the City of Rancho Cordova, CA. Welcome to Mather Veterans Village. Fifty veterans and their families live in Phase I of the project, which includes 50 permanent supportive homes and a rich menu of supportive services, including counseling, job training, medical assistance, group and individual therapy, and a healing environment. Now Phases II and III are breaking ground and will include a 46-bed transitional housing program for veterans not yet ready to live independently, an additional 50 permanent supportive homes, as well as additional supportive services. This village is dedicated to the care and housing of our nation’s veterans, and we invite you for an insider’s look into the lives and homes of four of them – and the journey that led them to Mather Veterans Village, a place they now call home.

Edward Hill (Ed), U.S. Army, Served 1976-82: Ed served all over the world during his time in the U.S. Army as a mechanic. When he returned, he worked at clubs as a back door bouncer, yet he struggled with the effects of his service and abused drugs. In 1989, Ed made a change and to this day is 29 years clean and sober. Another helping hand came from the VOW to Hire Heroes Act that paid for one year of schooling for Ed. Life was going well until he was admitted to the hospital with congestive heart failure. Ed’s life changed for the worse: he lost his house, his wife left him and he lived in his car. Ed called a national hotline for help and was connected with the Veterans Resource Centers of America. He was put on the waitlist for Mather Veterans Village, and one day his wish came true. Ed can now get care at the nearby VA Hospital, has a woman who loves him, and other veterans who support him. Mather Veterans Village is Ed’s place to call home.



George Thomas, U.S. Army, Served 1979-86: George served as a field radio repairman and earned the rank of E5 Sergeant in the U.S. Army. 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. One day, he reached out to the Veterans Resource Centers of America and was placed on the waiting list for Mather Veterans Village. George will tell you that he was praying in his car one weekend for the village to open and that Monday, he got the phone call. He has since moved into his new home and enrolled in a drug recovery program. He has hope for the future and believes he can set a good example for his 11 grandchildren. Mather Veterans Village is George’s place to call home.





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Robert St. Clair, U.S. Army, Served 1980-83: Robert had struggled with a Methamphetamine addiction since he was 12 years old as a result of a difficult upbringing. He joined the military at 17 ½ years old and the structure provided the positive environment he needed. Robert felt like he fit in and enjoyed serving alongside his comrades. Yet he began to have problems with authority at the very end of his tour and decided not to re-enlist. When Robert returned home, the economy was in a downturn and his ongoing drug use precluded him from getting a job. In the one job he did hold for years, he worked alongside others with similar addictions, worsening his own. Robert was homeless for 18 years and called himself a professional squatter. He attended Stand Down Sacramento events to get help each year. It wasn't until 2014 when Robert sought support from the Mather VA Hospital and Veterans Resource Centers of America. He checked into rehab and got help for his mental health disorder, and it was then he learned about Mather Veterans Village. On June 1, 2016, Robert became the first resident to move into Mather Veterans Village and is now the honorary mayor there. He is now clean and sober, has regular mental health appointments, volunteers at Stand Down Sacramento events, and says he feels blessed by God. Robert now has his own family at the village and enjoys the comradery. Mather Veterans Village is Robert's place to call home.

Michael Vercelli, U.S. Navy, Served 1978-81: Michael joined the U.S. Navy as a mechanic at 18 years old. He graduated as the most outstanding recruit and the youngest lower level man. Michael loved serving and enjoyed the structure, traveling through Asia and the comradery. Everything changed when he was in a car accident during his leave. Michael's injuries prevented his continued service, and he was honorably discharged. He became a carpenter for the next 28 years, but he turned to alcohol, an addiction he'd suffered from since his teens. In 2009, he started attending AA meetings and built a life with a house, car and a job. But he still struggled with addiction and eventually lost everything he had to it. One day, Michael checked into a rehabilitation program, started to use veteran benefits and learned of Mather Veterans Village. He lived homeless for five weeks waiting for his home and even ate lunch near the construction site, watching his dream come to life. Mather Veterans Village is Michael's place to call home.

