



NEWS RELEASE

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Mercy Housing California

MATHER VETERANS VILLAGE DEDICATION EVENT

Celebrating the Completion of Additional Housing for Homeless and Disabled Veterans in Rancho Cordova, CA

Rancho Cordova, CA (October 12, 2021) – Today, Mercy Housing California, Nation’s Finest, the City of Rancho Cordova and the County of Sacramento celebrated the completion of all three phases of Mather Veterans Village, the first permanent supportive housing development for homeless and disabled veterans in the Sacramento region.

Mather Veterans Village provides 100 permanent supportive homes and 47 units of transitional housing, as well as amenities, such as vehicle and bicycle parking, outdoor recreation facilities with a basketball court, a community garden and dog run. Perhaps most important are the wrap-around services provided to residents by Nation’s Finest, including case management, counseling, resource navigation support and organized social opportunities.

“It is an honor and sacred responsibility for Nation’s Finest to be the service provider to Mather Veterans Village. We see the rewards of our work every day in the progress, healing, and recovery of our military veterans,” said Chris Johnson, President & CEO of Nation’s Finest.

The first 50 permanent supportive housing units in Phase I were completed in 2016 and are fully occupied by formerly homeless and disabled veterans and their families.

Now complete are Phases II and III. Phase II provides a 47-bed transitional housing program for veterans not yet ready to live independently, as well as a rich menu of

supportive services from Nation's Finest including comprehensive case management, behavioral health treatment, employment, and a commercial kitchen. Phase III consists 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 147.

"On behalf of Sacramento County, I want to extend sincere appreciation and a hearty congratulations to all those organizations and individuals whose hard work, dedication and commitment contributed to the creation of this welcoming and supportive community serving our homeless veterans, Mather Veterans Village. Undoubtedly, Mather Veterans Village will be a place of respite and restoration for all those men and women who will come to know it as their home," said Sacramento County Supervisor Don Nottoli.

"The City of Rancho Cordova is a community with a rich military history, and we value our veterans greatly," said Mayor Garrett Gatewood, City of Rancho Cordova. "We are proud to celebrate the completion of this village and would like to thank our partners for 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."

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.

"It's a thrill to see what we can do together to end homelessness when we put aside political differences and act as if our neighbors' lives depend on our actions—because they do," said Doug Shoemaker, President of Mercy Housing California.

Over 75,000 veterans live in Sacramento County, and the area has the second highest percentage of unsheltered 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.

"Here, I feel like I've got a chance," said William "Cowboy" Huneke Sr., a Mather Veterans Village resident.

William Huneke Sr., better known as Cowboy, joined the U.S. Army as a mechanic when he was 21 years old. As a child, Cowboy was responsible for taking care of his two younger brothers after their father left, and while growing up, the three boys experienced abuse and neglect. As an adult, during and after his time in the military, Cowboy struggled with addiction to drugs and alcohol. In 2018, he suffered a major heart attack and had quadruple bypass surgery, which failed. Over the years, in between doctor's visits and various medical procedures, Cowboy stayed with his

daughter, but never had a place to call his own. Nation's Finest (formally known as SVRC) helped Cowboy find transitional housing, where he had help to overcome his addiction to drugs and alcohol. After completing the transitional program, in February 2020, Cowboy became a resident at Mather Veterans Village.

The City of Rancho Cordova is the perfect location for Mather Veterans Village and for its residents, like Cowboy. 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 to support from Mercy Housing California, Nation's Finest, City of Rancho Cordova and County of Sacramento, the following organizations provided funding to make Mather Veterans Village a reality: 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; Local Initiatives Support Corporation; and Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency.

For additional information, please access our online press kit at CityofRanchoCordova.org/PressRoom with the password MVV2021.

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