



# VETERANS TRANSITION CENTER OF CALIFORNIA

March 2024

*Empowering Veterans to move from crises to self-sufficiency*



## TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Meet Leana, our compassionate case manager for the Healthcare for Homeless Veterans emergency housing program. Leana joined our team in July 2023, and her contributions already are making a positive impact on the lives of the residents she assists. Known for her empathy, care, intelligence, and effectiveness, Leana excels in guiding Veterans toward their goals. Fellow HCHV Case Manager Bill praises her ability to help Veterans - who often aren't accustomed to financial savings - work towards building credit scores and savings for permanent housing. Leana's family is connected to the military, and she has previous experience working with Veterans in her hometown of Stockton. Leana expresses a deep affection for her work, finding joy in connecting with Veterans as they transition to new lives and into other VTC housing programs. In her leisure time, Leana tends to her indoor plants, takes beach walks with her dog Lola, and cherishes moments with her family. Thank you, Leana, for your dedicated service! We are excited to celebrate your one-year work anniversary soon!

### FOLLOW US!

Stay up to date on everything VTC and see firsthand how your support makes a difference by following our social media accounts.



@VTCofCalifornia

## LETTER FROM TRANSFORMATIVE RE-ENTRY

Dear VTC Supporters,

As we enter the month of March, I am excited to update you on the significant strides and forthcoming initiatives within our Transformative Reentry programs, spanning Soledad Correctional Training Facility and our Long-Term Offender Reentry and Recovery housing program. The dedication of our team, the resilience exhibited by our residents, and your enthusiastic support continue to catalyze positive transformations for those who have served our Nation, putting their lives on the line for our freedom.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to achieving and maintaining a 0% recidivism rate for Veterans reintegrating into civilian life upon their release. Programs within the Veterans Hub, such as Wiley's Wish Dog Training initiative and VTC's Recalibration Course, are crafted to instill a profound sense of self-worth, purpose, and hope for the future among our Veterans. Upon earning their parole, we eagerly anticipate welcoming them to VTC, providing essential support, and guiding them toward establishing a healthy relationship within the supportive community that your generosity has helped build.

Looking to the coming months, I'm thrilled to share that we actively are exploring opportunities to expand our transformative programs to the Central California Women's Facility at Chowchilla, with a special emphasis on providing essential support for Veterans who are women. Unfortunately, women Veterans often are underserved, and this expansion aligns seamlessly with our unwavering commitment to offer comprehensive support and opportunities for ALL who sacrificed so much for our Nation.

Sincerely,



Jennie Nestler  
Transformative Reentry Program Director



## LIGHTFIGHTER VILLAGE UPDATE

Since VTC and the community gathered to celebrate the Lightfighter Village Wall Raising Ceremony in November, we've made significant progress on construction. Three stories of structural walls are up, bringing us closer to the vision of what the completed village will be. Huff Construction continues to impress with their hard work as they lay out the breezeway between buildings, bring in plumbers and fire sprinkler subcontractors to begin installation, and roll out roof trusses. Marina is quite the idyllic location for our permanent Veteran housing, and each day it's easier and easier to imagine Veterans and their families calling Lightfighter Village home. We will begin to house Veterans in this beautiful apartment complex in early 2025!



We're honored that, during Congress's holiday break, US Representative Jimmy Panetta personally visited the construction site, discussed the progress of the Village, and was briefed on our plans for the future. VTC Board Members, COO Mike Stull, Mayor Bruce Delgado, and many Marina City officials attended this site visit, and we once again are deeply grateful for this supportive community, elevating our efforts to serve Veterans.

Please continue to visit our website for updates at [www.vtcofcalifornia.org/lightfightervillage](http://www.vtcofcalifornia.org/lightfightervillage) as this momentous project gets closer to completion.



## GET INVOLVED

Working on estate planning? Have retirement account revenue you want to invest in a worthy charitable cause?

Discover how you can create a lasting impact on the lives of our Nation's heroes by giving a **Charitable Bequest** to the Veterans Transition Center of California. Planned giving is a powerful way for you to leave a legacy of support for our mission and augment the sustainability of our programming - fundamental to our Veterans' successful integration back into civilian life.

There are various avenues through which you can contribute. Consider including the Veterans Transition Center in your estate, designating us as a beneficiary in retirement accounts or life insurance policies, or establishing a charitable trust.

To learn more about planned giving and its profound impact, reach out to Director of Development Lisa Kincaid by phone at (831) 521-9935 or via email at [lkincaid@vtcmonterey.org](mailto:lkincaid@vtcmonterey.org). She will guide you through the various ways your contribution will strengthen the safety net available to our Veterans as they build resilience, confidence, and community.

## SPECIAL THANKS

November was a busy month for VTC - we were honored to have the Heinrich Team host a fundraiser at the Twisted Roots Winery benefiting our operations. Thanks to their generosity, we gathered to share camaraderie, enjoy delicious local food and drink, and affirm the importance of our cause.

Amidst glasses clinking and delightful hors d'oeuvres, the community came together to raise crucial funds for our Veterans in need. The evening was a testament to the empathy and compassion of our supporters, highlighting the strength of our shared mission.

We cherish these moments when our community assembles to uplift and advocate for our Veterans as they work to stabilize and reintegrate into life after military service. The Heinrich Team's efforts truly have made a difference. If you weren't able to attend, we hope you will join us this coming November.

Thank you, Heinrich Team, for making this event possible and for your contributions to VTC!



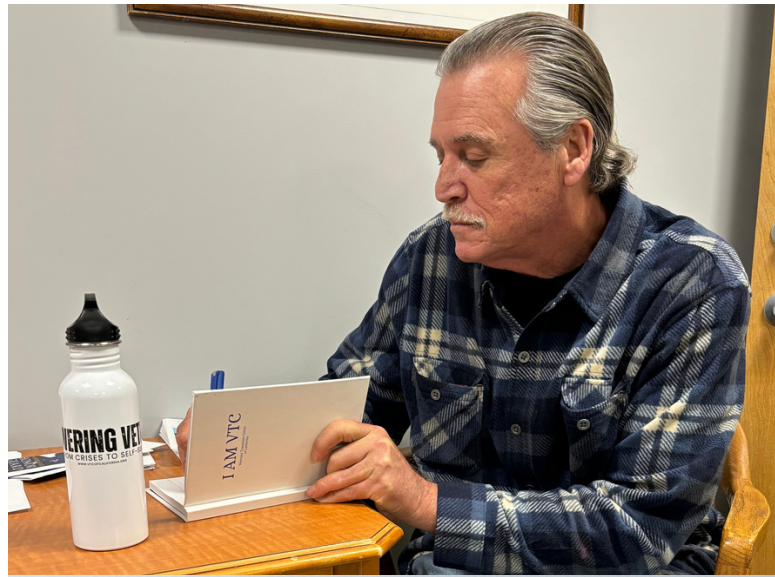
**THE HEINRICH TEAM**  
HOME | FAMILY | COMMUNITY

SIP, SAVOR, SALUTE  
AND SUPPORT



## WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

In honor of Women's History Month, VTC celebrates our women staff members who put their hearts and souls into serving Veterans. Our ladies are so hard at work - it's a challenge to have them all in one photo! Thank you, Women of VTC. Your compassion and creativity are beacons of hope for our residents, many of whom have never had a dedicated ally to help them navigate the barriers they encounter.



## SHOP WITH US!

We're thrilled to announce the grand opening of our **new merchandise store**, full of VTC logo gear and ways to show your commitment to Veterans every day. From classic t-shirts to timeless zip hoodies, our collection offers many ways to show your interest in empowering Veterans to move from crises to self-sufficiency. Explore our range of items - including reusable water bottles, coffee mugs, journals, stickers, and more. There even are some treats for our furry friends - check out the cute pet bandanas!

Show off your enthusiasm for empowering Veterans everywhere you go. Proceeds go directly to support Veterans in VTC programs, and new offerings will be added throughout the year. Join us in making a difference, one stylish statement at a time.

Visit our **online store** today!

<https://vtcofcalifornia.myshopify.com/>





## THANK YOU!

Shout out to these individuals and organizations who have made significant contributions to the Veterans Transition Center of California. You make this work possible.

### INDIVIDUALS

- Lucia Boggiatto
- Lisa & Tom Hoivik
- Kevin & Mary Murphy
- Curtis Myers
- Tom & Lisa Neu
- Craig Painter
- Mary Roberts & Stephen Palumbi
- Ronald Wright
- Marsha Zelus

### ORGANIZATIONS

Central California Women's Facility, Chowchilla  
Alma McHoney, Monterey Elks Lodge 1285 BPOE



## VETERAN TESTIMONY

My name is Ed, and I'm a Vietnam Veteran. I was only 17 when I joined. I had some emotional issues, and I became overwhelmed, which led to my getting out on a medical general discharge. I carried those problems with me as I went in and out of programs with the VA for years. They told me about the Veterans Transition Center, explaining it would be an opportunity for me to work on building up my credit and addressing my issues.

Upon arriving here, I found they had all kinds of resources available for me. I've been here for a little over a year and a half, and I recently bought a house.

I used to have this false fear that I was a bad person. However, they showed me the truth: I wasn't a bad person, I was someone who wasn't well and needed treatment. They provided me with treatment that changed my life. Where I was falling short, they lifted me up.



## DONATE NOW

Like what you read?  
Please consider donating  
- your generosity is  
essential to our work.



The Veterans Transition Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.  
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