



# ★ ANNUAL REPORT ★ 2021



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# $\star$ MISSION $\star$

The mission of Veterans Place is to empower veterans' transition from homeless to home, ending the cycle of homelessness, and to assist all at-risk veterans to become engaged, valuable citizens who contribute to their communities.

# $\star$ VISION $\star$

The vision of Veterans Place is a community where veteran homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring and where veterans are valued, productive, and respected citizens who contribute to their community.







Jewish War Veterans Post 718 purchased a parcel of blighted property with run-down row houses on Washington Boulevard. Over the next ten years, Sidney Singer fought tirelessly to raise over \$2.5 million in government and foundation grants to transform the site into an administration/service building and 13 townhouses that can accommodate up to 48 veterans.



Veterans Resouce Center renovations were completed. With support from Walmart, Kozi Media Design, and many others, Veterans Place Veterans Resource Center incorporated a smart classroom, food pantry, computer lab, laundry, and shower facilities for veterans that seek assistance.



The year 2021 saw much needed infrastructure upgrades on our Washington Blvd. campus. Here workmen are replacing windows and casings in our (transitional housing) townhouses where veterans live while receiving assistance to obtain stable employment and a permanent home.

## $\star$ OUR HISTORY $\star$



The townhouse renovations were completed and Veterans Place became the only single-room occupancy, transitional housing center for homeless vets in the region.



2021

2019

The City of Pittsburgh removed dangerous blighted properties next door to the Veterans Place campus to make room for an expansion of services. Veterans Place, in collaboration with the City and other partners, will be expanding services to prepare for the increasing number of at-risk veterans in the Pittsburgh community in need of life changing support.

# **\*** A WORD FROM OUR LEADERSHIP **\***

While the pandemic and economic challenges of 2021 were significant, Veterans Place was able to fulfill both its mission and vision. In fact, our outreach to Pittsburgh's homeless veteran population actually expanded thanks to the leadership of a focused executive team and a dedicated Board of Directors. In addition to expanding services, the organization also embarked upon a number of critical capital projects that include the renovation of our existing townhouse units as well as preparing for a long-planned major campus expansion that will become a reality this coming year. Our ability to accomplish our mission and to expand to meet projected needs is in no small measure due to our funders, both corporate and private, who hold dear the debt we all owe to those who have served our country.

#### >> I.W. GOLDFARB, MD | BOARD PRESIDENT | U.S. ARMY VETERAN

Resilience and growth defined our day-to-day operations at Veterans Place throughout 2021. Under the steadfast leadership and dedication of our Executive Team, Board of Directors, and staff we made tremendous progress on multiple fronts. In response to the growing needs of our veteran population, we acquired the properties adjacent to our campus from the City of Pittsburgh and spent the year creating our vision for the utilization of that space while also making significant infrastructure updates. For the first time in our organization's history, we were awarded the prestigious three-year CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) accreditation, reinforcing our commitment to continually improve our services to our nation's honorable veterans and the community. I would like to thank our network of community partners and our growing list of committed donors for their generous support.

>> ROBERT HAMILTON, MPPM | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | U.S. ARMY VETERAN





# ★ PROGRAMS AND SERVICES ★

## PROGRAM Entry

Veterans are picked up across southwestern PA from the streets, encampments, under bridges, at shelters, hospitals, and other places not meant for human habitation. Veterans then are transported to the Veterans Resource Center for supportive services.

## TRANSITIONAL Housing

Veterans can be accepted into one (1) of our three (3) transitional housing programs through referrals from the VRC, Veterans Administration (VA), or other community partners.

- ★ Service Intensive Transitional Housing
- ★ Bridge Housing
- ★ Low Demand Housing

## VETERAN ALUMNI Program

Veterans Place continues to work with veterans regardless of program completion and re-engages all veterans through an array of community events. This includes everlasting access to the VRC.

## VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER (VRC)

Veterans go through the initial intake process for a referral to one (1) or more of our CARF Accredited VP programs such as:

- ★ Transitional Housing
- ★ Employment
- ★ Substance Use Support
- ★ Food Bank
- \star Minority Veteran Program
- ★ Female Veteran Program
- ★ Other Supportive Services

## WORKFORCE Development

Veterans can then be referred to our workforce development programs from any of our internal programs or by our community partners:

- ★ Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP)
- ★ Post 9/11 Employment Program
- ★ Transitioning Veteran Employment Program

# **\* VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER \***

**VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER** recently performed a full renovation to provide a broader range of services and to address the changing needs of the veteran community. Our Veterans Resource Center is 1 of 15 drop-in resource centers nationwide and offers veterans access to a computer lab, state-of-the-art Smart Classroom, commercial kitchen, free laundry facilities, shower facilities, and an on-site food pantry.





Richard Andrews III served nine years as a member of the 14th Brigade Engineer Battalion as an Equipment Records and Parts Specialist and a Single Channel Radio Operator. During his tenure, Veteran Andrews was awarded the Army Service Ribbon, Army Lapel Button, Marksman Badge with Rifle Component, Army Good Conduct Ribbon twice, Army Commendation Medal, and the Overseas Service Ribbon.

In October 2020, Veteran Andrews was admitted into the Transitional Housing Program at Veterans Place. For three years prior to entering our program, he lived on the streets and came to Veterans Place for life-saving services.

Today, Veteran Andrews is in a recoverybased program while interviewing for full-time work. He is determined to get his life together with help from our program experts and the tenacity and drive that made him such a highly decorated veteran of the United States Army.



Veteran Wilson participating in services provided by the VRC



provided by Veterans Place



Volunteers preparing to distribute food from our on-site food pantry to veterans

**FEMALE VETERAN PROGRAM** provides resources and services designed specifically for the needs of female veterans. The Female Veteran Program began in 2017, with the assistance of Highmark, and was recently highlighted in their impact report.

**OPIOID RESPONSE PROGRAM**, funded by the Veterans Trust Fund, as part of Governor Wolf's response to the opioid pandemic, is one of the only opioid specific programs in the region designed for veterans with Substance Use Disorder. Veterans Place connects veterans to inpatient, outpatient, and recovery related services.

LOW INCOME VETERANS AND FAMILIES PROGRAM provides assistance to veterans and their families to aid in essential financial support, such as utilities, clothing, and rental assistance. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the dramatic need for this program, due to the loss of employment and income in the community.

**COMMUNITY CASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM** is a VA-funded Grant and Per Diem program, which offers veterans followup case management for up to 6 months after moving into permanent housing.

Veterans Place was awarded funding from the Pittsburgh Foundation to assist us in creating a more advanced **MINORITY VETERANS PROGRAM** on our campus. The funding will give us the opportunity to offer minority veterans (African Americans, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Native American/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian) resources such as what federal benefits they may qualify for, assistance with applying for those benefits, and referrals to other organizations and resources that will help meet the growing needs in these underserved communities.

# $\star$ TRANSITIONAL HOUSING $\star$

**VETERANS PLACE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING** is one of the only VA funded campus-style transitional housing programs in the region, offering temporary on-site housing to 48 male and female veterans. This setting creates a continuum of care, in which veterans can receive individualized services, in addition to access to all of the resources offered, such as an on-site food pantry, employment services, financial literacy classes, art therapy, and much more.



CARF Accredited for Community Housing



Andreous Bush served four years in the United States Marine Corps, from which he was Honorably discharged. He was referred to our program by a friend who knew that Veterans Place provides transitional housing for veterans who are in need. While living on campus Veteran Bush found it very helpful to participate in mental health centered group therapy. His individualized case management focused on finding permanent housing and stable employment.

Veteran Bush moved from the transitional housing program into permanent housing and is now employed with the Pittsburgh Salvation Army. He is currently enrolled in our community case management program where he receives follow up supportive services to ensure he remains in stable housing. He is grateful to be an active participant in the lives of his two children, making time every day to reach out to them.



<mark>6 MONTHS</mark> Average Length of Stay



80% OF VETERANS SERVED THROUGH THE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM MOVED INTO PERMANENT HOUSING AND HAD A SUSTAINABLE INCOME AT THE TIME OF DISCHARGE FROM PROGRAM





# **\* WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT \***

**HOMELESS VETERAN REINTEGRATION PROGRAM (HVRP)**, funded by the Department of Labor, provides all-inclusive services for unemployed and underemployed veterans. This program assists veterans in resume building, mock interviews, connection to competitive employment, and access to job-related education and materials needed for employment. Veterans Place HVRP consistently meets and exceeds goals set by the Department of Labor and takes great pride in helping veterans secure their chosen career path.



Timothy Jones received an Honorable discharge from the Marines after serving eight years as a Personnel Specialist. Upon discharge he found it difficult to find employment in his native Detroit. Following a divorce, he fell into a substance abuse cycle as he relocated several times in search of employment. He was living out of his car, sitting in a Pittsburgh park when a stranger handed him a flier that would change his life. The stranger talked to him about Veterans Place.

He stopped by Veterans Place and was assigned a room in Transitional Housing on campus where he began to work with a case manager and participate in the Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program. He was actively involved in his treatment, and was rewarded a year and a half later with the keys to his own apartment and a job as a machine operator. Veteran Timothy Jones was awarded the distinguished "Veteran of the Month" in December 2021.



93 VETERANS Placed in Sustainable Employment



CARF Accredited for Community Employment Services: Employment Supports & Job Development



100% OF VETERANS ENROLLED IN THE PROGRAM ATTAINED SOUND EMPLOYMENT



\$16.64/HOUR Average Placement wage





# ★ IMPACT & FINANCIALS ★

**MALE VETERANS: 82% BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERANS: 37% FEMALE VETERANS: 18%** WHITE VETERANS: 40% **MIXED ETHNICITY VETERANS: 21% NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS: 1% ASIAN VETERANS: 1%** 



**OVER 800 VETERANS SERVED IN 2021** 



7.399 **VETERANS AND FAMILIES FED IN 2021** 

**INCOME** Federal: 72% State: 7% **Fundraising: 21% TOTAL INCOME:** \$2,374,718

#### **EXPENSES**

Program: 83% Administrative: 9% **Fundraising: 8% TOTAL EXPENSE:** \$2,397,228

**FUNDRAISING EVENTS** 



7th Annual Cornhole Classic



# $\star$ A YEAR OF GROWTH $\star$



## **CARF: COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION OF REHABILITATION FACILITIES**

This year, Veterans Place received the prestigious 3 year CARF - Aspire to Excellence Accreditation. This accreditation makes Veterans Place one of the only nonprofits in southwestern Pennsylvania to have all program offerings CARF accredited. Veterans Place was recognized by the surveyors as, "committed to its mission," and referred to as "saving lives" during stakeholder interviews. The CARF seal certifies the organization as a whole, as well as the services offered through each program at Veterans Place.



# THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH

In December of 2021 the City of Pittsburgh and Mayor Peduto provided clear title to 5 parcels of land adjacent to our Washington Blvd. campus. Plans are to construct a multipurpose building to provide handicapped accessible and additional transitional housing for at-risk and homeless veterans in our community. The building will provide supportive services for veterans who bravely served our country.



## ACCESSIBLE **VETERAN TRANSPORTATION**

Our first ever crowd-funding initiative and the tremendous generosity of the CBB Foundation with a matching grant, enabled Veterans Place to purchase a new accessible van in 2021. The van is crucial to our mission of transporting veterans from the streets and homeless shelters of Pittsburgh to our campus on Washington Blvd. On our campus, vets receive food, counseling, job training and other essential services that make is possible for them to transition to a stable and productive life.



### **CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

Veterans Place is much more than the sum of its parts. We recognize that it takes a village to give Pittsburgh's at-risk veterans the support they deserve. In 2021 our veterans received an extraordinary amount of that support from Pittsburgh's corporate community. A mere thank you is not enough to convey our gratitude to the generous volunteer hours, much needed supplies, funding and in-kind support we received. A special thanks to our friends at PPG, The Pittsburgh Foundation, the Steelers organization and many more. Pittsburgh truly does GIVE.

# ★ A YEAR OF GROWTH ★



## DUQUESNE LIGHT CO.

### DUQUESNE LIGHT COMPANY Veterans' workforce development center

With the continued support of community partner, Duquesne Light Company, Veterans Place is excited to announce the future Duquesne Light Company Veterans' Workforce Development Center. The Center will be located on campus at Veterans Place, providing a hub for all workforce development needs of the veterans. Duquesne Light's generous support allows Veterans Place to continue to support our veterans through the expansion of our services. The Center will house the DOL HVRP program, Post 9/11 employment program, recently transitioning veterans employment program, and the job development program.



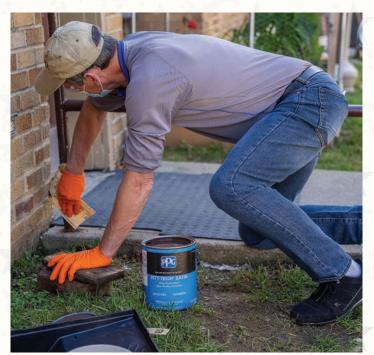
#### HOMELESS VETERANS REINTEGRATION PROGRAM INSPECTION

Veterans Place has been recognized by the Department of Labor as the only grantee to meet all 4 of their critical performance indicators during the 2021 inspection. This includes: the number of veterans enrolled, the average hourly wage of the veterans placed into employment, placement rate, and placement rate for episodically homeless participants. Veterans Place was referred to as the top grantee in the state of PA. Veterans Place was asked to present their electronic documentation system, Best Notes, to the entire region, demonstrating best practices for other grantees.



## INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

A priority of our long-range strategic plan in 2021 was to make necessary upgrades to the Veterans Place campus infrastructure, both administrative and living facilities. We replaced roofs, gutters, windows, doors, townhouse floors, client bedroom floors, and installed new appliances in our transitional housing complex. We also upgraded security in the main building and added administrative offices for program growth. All phases of the infrastructure upgrade are scheduled to be completed first quarter of 2022. These upgrades were made possible thanks to the investments made by our community partners and donors including the Hillman Foundation, Colcom, and the Buncher Foundation. Along with local foundations, we received generous government support from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), the Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund (CITF), and the Gaming Economic Development Tourism Fund (GEDTF).



## $\star$ VETERANS PLACE TEAM $\star$



At Veterans Place, our unshakable commitment to veterans starts with our team. Our employees are dedicated to our mission, willing to face adversity, and pull together to accomplish our goal to provide lifesaving and life changing services to veterans. We invest in professional development and team building initiatives to create a hard-working and dedicated unit.

Throughout 2021, Veterans Place expanded our team, implemented a Human Resources Department and created a Development Department.





TOTAL STAFF: 28 Staff members who are veterans: 35%



# ★ 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ★



#### I. WILLIAM GOLDFARB, MD President

Dr. Goldfarb, the President of the Board of Veterans Place, is a graduate of The Chicago Medical School and completed a surgical residency at The Western Pennsylvania Hospital in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He has served as the Director of the hospital's Burn Center and as the Vice-Chair of the Department of Surgery. He has held numerous administrative positions including serving as the Chief Medical Officer at both The Western Pennsylvania Hospital and Allegheny General Hospital. Dr. Goldfarb served in the U.S. Army at the rank of Major. He is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public Health.



#### MARK WECHSLER Vice President

Mark Wechsler graduated from Duke University with a B.S. in Computer Science. He has worked for major technology vendors and consulting organizations such as Hewlett Packard, Ernst & Young, and KPMG. He is currently Vice President of Advisory Services and Vertical Industries at ConvergeOne (formerly Arrow Electronics). Mark has a clear understanding of the practical contribution technology can make to successful business solutions. In his current role at ConvergeOne, he provides guidance that bridges the gap between IT/Telecom and business founded on deep industry knowledge acquired over his 40 years of experience.

#### MARVA L. BROWN, CPA, CC, ALB Treasurer

Marva L. Brown, CPA, is a native Pittsburgher, having graduated from Duquesne University with a degree in accounting. Prior to attending university, Marva was a Sergeant in the US Marine Corps for six years. She currently works at PNC Bank, as a Risk and Control Advisor and prior to that spent 18 years in Corporate Risk and Compliance at BNY Mellon. Marva has served on several boards in Pittsburgh, including the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank and is a past President of the National Association of Black Accountants. She is currently a mentor in the Reading is Fundamental program.



#### BRADLEY HARRISON, MS Secretary

Bradley D. Harrison graduated from the United States Naval Academy with a Bachelor of Science degree and received a Masters degree from Washington, D.C. based Catholic University of America in Engineering Management. Bradley served in a variety of positions in the U.S. Navy following graduation, including as the Officer of the Deck/Ship's Duty Officer on the USS Oklahoma City and as a Department Head at Strategic Systems Programs. He briefly served in the United States Congress as the District Director for Representative Timothy F. Murphy and as the Military Legislative Assistant for Representative Robert J. Wittman. Bradley is currently the President and Managing Partner of the boutique real estate and investment firm Creekside Capital as well as the Vice President of Procurement and New Business at E. H. Schwab Company.

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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BOARD MEMBERS WHO ARE VETERANS: 67%

## ★ COMMUNITY PARTNERS ★

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# ★ 5-STAR GENERAL ★ GIVING SOCIETY

In 2020, Veterans Place introduced the Giving Society, recognizing donors at a commitment level of \$500 or greater annually. We sincerely thank the following members.

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