

## Student Veterans at Estrella Mountain Community College Help Homeless Vets

The Veterans Club at Estrella Mountain Community College (EMCC) wanted to find a way to make a positive impact in their community and decided to look outside the walls of the campus to touch lives of other veterans, and discovered the programs and services of U.S. Vets, the nation's largest provider of comprehensive services and at-risk veterans.

Avondale, AZ (PRWEB) May 30, 2014



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During academic year 2013-2014, \$2,000 was raised by the EMCC Vets Club and donated to one of U.S. Vets-Phoenix initiatives, Garfield Commons, to help create living spaces for homeless veterans. The \$2,000 donation to the Transition in Place (TIP) program was able to furnish three apartments giving three homeless veterans a clean, new apartment while on their way to building a brand new start in life.

EMCC fundraising efforts included selling hand-painted bowls, created by EMCC vets, students and staff, plus hand-crafted bowls by the Dysart High School Art Club. Other community supporters provided generous assistance including the VFW Pat Tillman Memorial Post 40, VFW Auxiliary 40, the Hispanic Leadership Forum Del Oeste, Inc., and Azteca of Nomadic Arte.

EMCC Vets Club sells bowls on campus

In February 2014, what was once a retirement center for Catholic priests and nuns, located on 16th Street and Garfield in downtown Phoenix, was transformed into TIP housing that could serve/house 50 veterans.

These small, one-bedroom apartments are completely but humbly furnished so residents have a place to call home while they get back on their feet through the services provided by on-site U.S. Vets staff. Other facilities include the former chapel, which is now a large multi-purpose room, and a kitchen and dining hall that are still unused until more funds can be raised.

U.S. Vets' Garfield Commons

U.S. Vets help the homeless vets gain residential stability, increase their skill levels and income, and achieve a greater level of self-determination through employment. Each new resident is provided with food, clothing, linens, cleaning supplies, and the ability to live rent-free until they are able to assume the lease after finding employment, and ultimately moving out to create their own lives. They have access to services including assigned case managers, weekly skill classes, supportive services such as counseling, and resources such as free bus passes and on-site computer lab to promote their job search process.

"We are currently at capacity, but we realize that it's going to take our vets six-to-nine months to find a job and save enough money to move out on their own," said John Scott, U.S. Vets-Phoenix Executive Director. "But the beginning of this success story starts with 50 homeless vets getting off of the streets and building a new life."

U.S. VETS-Phoenix has been saving homeless veterans since 2002, and this past year helped more than 840 homeless veterans find jobs, housing, financial resources, and clinical support. For more information about donations and assistance for U.S. Vets-Phoenix TIP program, contact John Scott at [jscott@usvetsinc.org](mailto:jscott@usvetsinc.org).

Estrella Mountain Community College offers transfer-ready academic courses and job-specific occupational training to approximately 13,000 students annually. The flagship campus is located on Thomas and Dysart Roads in Avondale and is home to the SouthWest Skill Center. The satellite campus, EMCC's Buckeye Educational Center, is located in downtown Buckeye. Estrella Mountain is one of ten colleges in the [Maricopa County Community College District](#), one of the largest community college districts in the nation.



(left to right front) Michael Hernandez, Nancy Fisher, Michael Kenneth, Maryhelen Rosales, Tom Koch; (left to right top) John Bradley, John Scott, Isaac Estrada

“ The beginning of this success story starts with 50 homeless vets getting off of the streets and building a new life. --John Scott, U.S. Vets-Phoenix Executive Director ”

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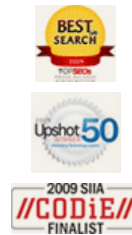
In 1962, the Maricopa County Community College District was created in response to the Valley's explosive growth and the region's need for accessible and affordable higher education.

Over the years, the district has expanded to

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