Homeless Veterans Assisted Through Inmates’ Donation

The Jerry Ambrose Veterans Council is proud to partner with The GEO Group at Arizona State Prison Complex in Kingman, Arizona. Recently, the inmates from the prison’s CTE Construction program have built a full-size wooden, rocking motorcycle donated to the council in a fundraising effort to benefit our Veterans.

Pat Farrell, President of the Jerry Ambrose Veterans Council of Mohave County, Inc., is the leader of this non-profit organization which has a mission of assisting homeless and at-risk military veterans and their families. For four years the Bullhead City Veterans’ Stand Down has included 78 service providers and 138 volunteers to provide over 380 families assistance at no cost to the veteran. Fundraisers for this have collected over $750,000 in cash donations, In-kind and volunteer donations as well.

JAVC President Farrell has worked in conjunction with the Golden Valley prison on prior occasions. Prison officials have been honored to have him speak at several inmate GED graduations, and the prison’s work-based program graduates over 1,500 inmates annually to prepare them for employment upon release. This is not the first charitable community donation. Inmates within the construction-based program are honored and encouraged giving back to our local community through their newly-acquired job skills. In fact, these inmates take much more pride in their work through these projects. This contributes greatly to inmates’ rehabilitation and success upon release. Just this last year inmates’ donations alone have raised over $135,000 in fundraisers. This benefits charities such as Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics, KAAP – Kingman Aid to Abused People, Relay for Life Cancer Walk, National Crime Victim’s Rights Week, and Angel Tree.

Carpentry Instructor David Gellings knows his inmate students take special projects like this one to heart. “The pride and effort that the inmates put into the finished product is one that they hopefully can look back on and reflect on all they have learned in the program.” Instructor Gellings also states, “The inmates come to us with limited experience and a wide variety of skills. I have witnessed and worked with students who have made great gains, and hopefully, it will be reflected in the rest of their lives.” The inmates deserve all the credit for designing and creating the full-size, rocking motorcycle and other wood donations which support our local charities.

The proceeds realized from this motorcycle donated by the GEO Group will be directed to the refurbishment of the Arnold Plaza in Kingman. This 1.4-million-dollar project will provide a hand-up, success-based, safe haven housing for those homeless and at-risk veterans. The GEO Group's ongoing support of this effort is greatly appreciated and demonstrates a caring position for our local community.

By Lisa Black,

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