



Thank a Veteran for Their Service

A recent Facebook social media campaign encouraged 22 push-ups a day to draw attention to veteran suicides. But, is that number true, and more importantly, is it beneficial to promote?

At one point, 22 veteran suicides per day (when averaged over time) were reported. However, in recent years, that number has been dropping. Now down to 20, still far too many as more resources were devoted to services and more veterans received help. Part of what drove that change was that the Veterans Administration (VA) began to change how it messaged. They learned that focusing on how many veterans were not getting help, or who encountered barriers to help, or felt desperate, had the unintended consequences of creating new barriers. A stereotype was being formed that all veterans suffer from post-traumatic stress or other mental health disorders. Employers were reluctant to hire veterans, creating even larger problems. Something needed to change!

The veterans component of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline was re-branded as the “Veterans Crisis Line” which has led to a significantly increased call volume. Military spokespeople began emphasizing that help was available, confidential, and effective rather than focusing on long wait times and other problems. More stories were told that informed the public that most veterans are reliable, hard-working, and skilled—assets to any employer.

More than 2.3 million calls have been answered by the Veterans Crisis Line, almost 300,000 chat sessions conducted, and nearly 376,000 referrals made to local VA Suicide Prevention Coordinators. And, the number of veteran suicides has declined.

So, thank a veteran today for their service. They served strong; they’re still strong.

For a “one-stop” website for answers to military life questions including information on deployment and transition from the military; family and relationships; education; employment; on and off base living; financial; legal; health and wellness visit: <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/>.



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Visit <http://hr.lacounty.gov> for information on employment opportunities with the County of Los Angeles

Calendar of Events

Center Theatre Group

(213) 628-2772

www.centertheatregroup.org

Ahmanson Theatre

Through December 31 – Something Rotten!

Kirk Douglas Theatre

Through December 31 – Spamilton

January 27 through February 25 – Elliot, A Soldier’s Fuge

Mark Taper Forum

January 31 through March 11 – Water By The Spoonful

Grand Park

(213) 972-8080

www.grandparkla.org

November 26 through December 26 – Lights Up the Holiday

November 27 – Los Angeles County Tree Lighting

Every Tuesday through Thursday – Lunchtime! Food Trucks

Every Wednesday and Friday – Lunchtime! Yoga reTREAT

Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

(213) 972-7211

www.musiccenter.org

December 2 – Malpasos Dance Company

Walt Disney Concert Hall

(323) 850-2000

www.laphil.com

December 2 through December 18 – Christmas at Walt Disney Concert Hall

December 2 and December 9 – Festival of Carols with Eric Whitacre

December 10 – Bach The Six Motets

December 17 and December 18 – Handel’s Messiah



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Check out the DIGEST at
<http://hr.lacounty.gov/about-the-county/>

Creating Greater Communities

Charitable Giving Campaign

The “Creating Greater Communities” annual Charitable Giving Campaign is in full swing. The Charitable Giving Campaign (CGC) is a Board-approved fundraising effort that raises much needed funds to serve the County of Los Angeles disadvantaged residents. All funds raised through the CGC are spent in L.A. County. Employee donations through payroll deduction are the heart and soul of this campaign as they allow the non-profit agencies to plan and sustain critical programs throughout the year which provide vital services to those most in need.

County employees contributed approximately \$1 million to the 2016 CGC and provided funds for health, human services, education, environmental sustainability, and pathways out of poverty to our County communities. *You can give as little as \$2.50 per paycheck – less than the cost of a cup of coffee.* And it is so easy to make a difference this way. Just log onto your account at <http://mylacounty.gov/> and get started today. Your donations really do make a difference, no matter how large or small. Imagine the difference we could make if all 110,000 County employees contributed. That’s nearly **\$6.5 million**. We ask that you join us and exhibit the true spirit of philanthropy and compassion by supporting our County’s mission to enrich lives through effective and caring service.

The CGC theme for the 2017-18 campaign period, “Creating Greater Communities,” reflects the campaign’s intent to provide County employees with increased opportunities to give back to local charities which continuously strive to increase services to County residents. Our campaign partners are Asian Pacific Community Fund, Brotherhood Crusade, Community Health Charities, EarthShare California, United Latino Fund, United Way of Greater Los Angeles, and Variety the Children’s Charity.



Share Your Heart Share Your Home

Become a Foster/Adoptive Parent Dept. of Children and Family Services

November is National Adoption Awareness month. Los Angeles County has close to 400 waiting children, who through no fault of their own, are unable to return to their family of origin. They are all ages and many are sibling sets. All have one thing in common: they want to find a forever family that can guide them and love them unconditionally. Using the skills

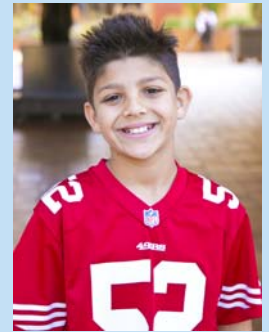


Photo: Luwin Kwan

of great volunteer photographers, we take pictures that are sure to capture your heart. We feature these photos on our <http://heartgalleryla.org> website and in community displays all over the County to find families for our waiting kids. Further, we want families to know that we offer financial assistance to parents who adopt and provide our kids with medical insurance and post adoption services. We do all of this so kids like Mario do not have to grow up in foster care.

Meet 10-year-old Mario. His sweet smile can light up any room in a big way. He was able to explore the Play! exhibition at the Autry Museum of the West and it was clear that he was having a total blast. After all, the love and art of playing are universal truths about kids in general, and Mario is no exception. His favorite display was the old school toys. He couldn’t believe kids didn’t have video games back then.

Mario loves to play football and he dreams of playing high school football someday. He follows his dream players’ stats and has set big goals for himself. He is also proud to write his own lyrics and actually rap them. He loves to express himself through his music and is not shy in this area at all. Mario also identifies as a Christian and would love to have a family who can support him in this area. Mario just needs a family in his corner to cheer him on, because a **“family that plays together, stays together.”**

County Library Celebrates Native American Heritage Month

Throughout November, Native American Heritage Month commemorates the historical contributions that Native Americans have made in the United States, and helps raise awareness about the unique challenges Native people face. L.A. County Library is celebrating Native American Heritage Month with a variety of special events and activities at several community library locations throughout L.A. County, to recognize Native American traditions and culture. Events include art workshops, storytelling, book readings, film viewings, dance performances, and more.

L.A. County Library Director Skye Patrick says that opportunities to spotlight and share information about Native American heritage gives library customers a chance to learn about a culture they may not be familiar with.

“Libraries are a trusted source of information; we have the potential to educate, spark dialogue, and generate interest and support for Native Americans and Native American issues,” said Patrick. “Celebrating Native American Heritage Month supports the Library’s inclusivity of all cultures, while offering an opportunity to show our appreciation and respect to Native people.”

Some scheduled Native American Heritage Month library events include a documentary, *Incident at Oglala*, at West Hollywood Library; a storytelling program, *When Animals Were People*, at Malibu Library; and a music appreciation event, *Ancient Homeland*, at Sunkist Library.

In addition to special programs and events, L.A. County Library also helps preserve Native American culture with its American Indian Resource Center (AIRC) at its Huntington Park Library location.

“Because Los Angeles County has one of the largest Native American populations – more than 100,000 according to the 2010 Census – the AIRC was established to meet the needs of Native Americans in Los Angeles County, and to make information available to the larger community,” said Patrick.

The AIRC houses unique archives including books, journals, periodicals, multimedia and other formats. It is the largest public library collection of its kind in the U.S.

For a complete list of Native American Heritage Month events and more information on the American Indian Resource Center, please visit colapublib.org/native.

VETERANS

Assessor Prang Provides Property Tax Exemptions



Veterans' Exemption
Filing Date: February 15 for 100% exemption; partial thereafter
Unmarried veterans with assets of less than \$5,000; married veterans with assets with less than \$10,000; or an unmarried surviving spouse of a veteran may apply for the Veterans' Exemption of \$4,000 applied to the assessed property value of their home. This exemption claim must be filed every year.



Disabled Veterans' Exemption
Filing Date: February 15 for 100% exemption; partial thereafter
Disabled veterans may be eligible for a Disabled Veterans' Property Tax Exemption under certain conditions: when blind in both eyes; with the loss of use of two or more limbs; or when totally disabled as a result of injury or disease incurred in military service. Unmarried surviving spouses of certain deceased veterans may also qualify.

Call 213.974.3399 for forms and additional information.

County's Productivity and Quality Awards

Health Services/Harbor-UCLA Medical Center Takes Gold Eagle Award for "Team Triage in the E.R...Why Wait?"

Supervisor Mark Ridley Thomas, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, and Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, Chair Pro Tem, commended County employees for projects that improve the quality of County public services and employee productivity during the 31st Annual Productivity and Quality Awards (PQA) on October 18.

"Celebrating Quality Service" was the theme of the County's version of the Academy Awards, which were presented before a capacity audience in the Grand Hall, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion of the Music Center. Julio Cesar Ortiz, reporter, Univision 34 Los Angeles, was the master of ceremonies.

The Board of Supervisors, Chief Executive Office, and the Quality and Productivity Commission jointly sponsor the PQA ceremony. Projects honored this year could result in estimated annual benefits to the County in excess of \$388 million.



Heading the list of Eagle Award winners was Health Services/Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Department of Emergency Medicine for "Team Triage in the ER...Why Wait?" The Public Defender, in partnership with the District Attorney, Mental Health, and the Sheriff, received the Silver Eagle Award for its "Jail Mental Health Liaison Program," and Animal Care and Control, in collaboration with the ASPCA, took home the Bronze Eagle Award for "Fur Ever Families: Pets, People and Partnerships." The latter is a Safety Net Program, which offers resources to pet owners who otherwise may have to surrender their pets.

"The projects honored today bring the County's strategic plan goals to life," said CEO Sachi Hamai. "They represent investments that transform lives, they foster vibrant and resilient communities, and they are at the forefront of realizing tomorrow's government today," she added. The Commission publishes the PQA projects in its annual "Best and Shared Practices Report," which is distributed to County Departments and Related Agencies." See the report at <http://qpc.lacounty.gov>.

2017 Top 10 Productivity and Quality Award Winners:

1. **Fur Ever Families: Pets, People, and Partnerships** (Animal Care and Control)
2. **A Movement Begins: LA County's Homeless Initiative** (Chief Executive Office with County Counsel, Community Development Commission/Housing Authority, Children and Family Services, Health Services, Mental Health, Public Social Services, Public Health, Probation, Regional Planning, Sheriff, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, Alternate Public Defender, Animal Care and Control, Arts Commission, Beaches and Harbors, Child Support Services, Consumer and Business Affairs, District Attorney, Fire, Human Resources, Military and Veterans Affairs, Parks and Recreation, Public Library, Public Works, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, LA Superior Court, and Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services) (**Outstanding Teamwork Awardee**)
3. **Housing Without Borders** (Community Development Commission/Housing Authority)
4. **SOLAR: Bridging Healthcare and Housing** (Community Development Commission/Housing Authority with Health Services)
5. **Employees Secure Records & Achieve Huge Savings!** (Health Services – Divisions of Health Information Management and Facilities Management – with County Counsel)
6. **Team Triage in the ER...Why Wait?** (Health Services) (**Mega Million Dollar Awardee**)

Adopting a Pet

Department of Animal Care and Control



Have you ever considered adopting a pet from the Los Angeles County Animal Care Centers?

Did you know that the L.A. County Department of Animal Care and Control (DACC) is one of the largest and most progressive animal care and control agencies in the United States? Our seven Animal Care Centers (ACCs) offer a wide variety of loving pets for you to choose. DACC care centers are open seven days a week.

Pets can make a wonderful addition to your home and family, providing unconditional love, companionship and joy. Did you know that the Animal Care Centers have cats, dogs, rabbits, small exotics, horses and even livestock for adoption? Whether you are looking for a mellow couch potato to watch TV with or an active partner for your outdoor activities, DACC Animal Care Center staff and volunteers can help you find your

perfect match. In addition to the happiness and love a pet will bring to your life, you'll also have the satisfaction of saving the life of an animal in need.

All pets are spayed and neutered, up-to-date on vaccinations, and have a microchip implanted. You'll also receive a free veterinary exam at a participating veterinary clinic within seven days of adoption.

Visit our seven animal care centers, located in the cities of:

- Agoura
- Baldwin Park
- Carson/Gardena
- Castaic
- Downey
- Lancaster
- Palmdale

Our ACCs provide safe and humane care for animals that are lost or can no longer be cared for by their owners. The ACCs work tirelessly to reunite lost pets with their owners or find new homes for unwanted pets.

You can help us reach our goal of placing animals into new, forever homes by adopting today. Your kindness will be repaid countless times by the love and affection of your new family member. Our adoption fees vary but you can learn more by visiting our website at <http://animalcare.lacounty.gov>.

CELEBRATING QUALITY SERVICE

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7. **Blazing Trails on the World Wide Web** (Parks and Recreation with National Park Service, California State Parks, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, Mountains Restoration Trust, and Internal Services)
8. **Jail Mental Health Liaison Program** (Public Defender with District Attorney, Mental Health and Sheriff)
9. **Think Health LA: Let Your Fingers Do the Walking** (Public Health)
10. **Adult 101 Life Skills Bootcamp for Teens** (Public Library)

2017 Commission Special Awards:

1. **Changemaker** – Caseload Accountability Panel: Promoting Teamwork (DCFS)
2. **Commissioners' Legacy** – DPSS Model Office Concept for District Lobbies (DPSS)
3. **County Image Enhancement** – Library Offers Mobile Makerspaces (Public Library)
4. **Customer Service** – Sandbags for Homebound Seniors (Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services with Public Works, Fire, DPSS, and CEO/Office of Emergency Management)
5. **Performance Measurement Award** – Vision Zero Collision Geodatabase (Public Works)
6. **Process Improvement Award** – Saving Dollars, Saving Time, Saving Lives (Health Services – Olive View UCLA Medical Center, Utilization Management Department)



The Chair Leadership Award was presented to Dr. Steven Golightly, Director, Child Support Services Department.

How to Stay Warm and Safe When Temperatures Drop



Residents of Los Angeles enjoy living in sunny Mediterranean weather that ranks internationally as one of the best climates to live and work. But there are occasional days when a drop in temperature sends Angelenos indoors in search of the warmth given by a space heater or furnace. Unfortunately, that can put residents at risk. Every year, hundreds of people die from carbon monoxide poisoning and space heater-related fires. The Los Angeles County Fire Department has tips on how to keep you and your family safe from the dangers of carbon monoxide and space heaters.

Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a silent killer. It is an odorless, tasteless gas that cannot be seen. CO poisoning can result from faulty furnaces or other heating appliances, such as portable generators, water heaters, clothes dryers or cars left running in garages.

Some symptoms of CO poisoning include headaches, nausea and drowsiness. Being exposed to undetected high levels of CO can be fatal.

In California, it is the law that every home and multi-home dwelling have a working CO detector installed.

How to avoid CO poisoning:

- Make sure all fuel-burning, vented equipment is vented to the outside to avoid CO poisoning.
- Keep the venting for exhaust clear and unblocked.
- If you need to warm up a vehicle, remove it from the garage once you turn it on, regardless if the garage doors are open.
- A generator should be used in a well-ventilated outdoor location, away from windows, doors and vent openings.

If your CO alarm sounds:

- Immediately move to a fresh air location (outdoors or by an open window). Make sure everyone inside the home is accounted for and safe.
- Call 9-1-1 or the Fire Department from a fresh air location. Remain at a fresh air location until emergency personnel arrive to help you.

Space Heaters

Space heaters are a widely used and an inexpensive way to keep warm during the cold winter months. Each year, hundreds of fires are started by the improper use of space heaters.

When Operating a Space Heater:

- Place the heater on a level, hard, nonflammable surface, such as a ceramic tile floor.
- Make sure the heater is at least three feet away from any flammable materials, such as bedding, drapes and furniture.
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
- Always turn off heaters when you leave the room.

Remember:

- NEVER leave a space heater on when you go to sleep.
- DO NOT place a space heater anywhere near a sleeping person; they may toss and turn in the middle of the night and burn themselves.
- DO NOT use portable propane space heaters indoors or in any confined space unless they are specifically designed for indoor use.

Mark Your Calendar: Replace Batteries Twice a Year

Be sure and check all fire alarms and carbon monoxide gas alarms throughout your home and replace all batteries every six months to ensure they are in working condition.



Stories From the Homefront

Vet Gets Back on His Feet

After serving in the U.S. Army and working in the retail business for over 16 years, Mr. Young found himself homeless. The Veterans Administration linked Mr. Young to health care services and referred him to the Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (HACoLA) Homeless Incentive Program. HACoLA staff provided transportation for Mr. Young to view available units acquired by the Housing Initiative Program and helped him apply and pay for the security deposit. Mr. Young moved into his new unit in July 2017.

Working for You

Department of Public Health

The holiday season is a time to celebrate health and happiness with friends, family, and loved ones by spending time and eating festive meals together. If you are tasked with preparing a holiday feast for your guests, remember to pay attention to food safety standards in order to prevent food borne illnesses.

General Food Safety Tips:

- 1. Clean.** Wash your hands with soap and warm water before, during, and after you prepare food. Do not forget to clean surfaces that were used to prepare food (kitchen counter, cutting boards, etc.)
- 2. Separate.** Keep raw meat, poultry, and eggs separate from fresh foods (vegetables, fruit, and other ready-to-eat foods). Use separate cutting boards for raw meat, poultry, and seafood.
- 3. Cook.** Use a food thermometer to ensure that you are cooking food at the right temperature. Check out <https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/mintemp.html> to determine what temperature is safe for the type of food you are preparing.
- 4. Chill.** Refrigerate leftover foods within two hours. Keep your refrigerator at 40°F and throw out any food that has gone bad right away. Thaw your foods in the refrigerator or microwave. In order to prevent bacteria and foodborne illnesses, do not thaw foods on the counter.

Additional food safety tips for cooking poultry (turkey or chicken):

- 1. Thaw your poultry safely.** Completely thaw your poultry before placing it in the oven. Thaw your poultry in the refrigerator, in the sink (if water is changed every 30 minutes), or in the microwave. Leaving poultry to thaw on the kitchen counter can lead to unsafe food temperatures and cause bacteria to grow.
- 2. Stuff poultry safely.** Cook your stuffing before placing it in the turkey or chicken. If you decide to stuff it, do it right before cooking the turkey (or chicken) and use a food thermometer to check for safe food temperatures.
- 3. Cook poultry safely.** Set the oven temperature to 325°F. Place a food thermometer in the stuffing and thick parts of the poultry to ensure the food temperature reaches 165°F.

For more information about holiday food safety, visit the following websites:

<https://www.cdc.gov/features/turkeytime/index.html>
<https://www.nphic.org/toolkits/foodillness/16tgiving-tips>

We wish you a safe, healthy and happy holiday season.

The Music Center Presents

George Balanchine's The Nutcracker

The Music Center is bringing a much beloved holiday tradition back to Los Angeles with the iconic choreography of George Balanchine in an all-new world premiere production of *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*® by Miami City Ballet featuring a live orchestra. The performances will feature the visionary designs of Cuban-American designers Isabel and Ruben Toledo, who are creating all-new sets and costumes for this production. In addition, for the first time, the performances will feature student dancers from both the Colburn School and The Gabriella Foundation's *everybody dance!* program, along with live choral music from the Los Angeles Children's Chorus. Performances will take place at The Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion from December 7 - 10, 2017. Described by *The New York Times* as "exceptional," Miami City Ballet is one of the few companies in the country to continuously perform *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*®, which it has done for almost 30 years.

For a limited time, County employees can save 20%* off select seats to the Thursday, December 7, at 6:30 p.m. performance of *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*®. Access your exclusive offer online, in person or over the phone with the following code: 34917.

*20% off valid for Main Orchestra, Front Orchestra Ring, Orchestra Ring, and Main Founders only for the Thursday, December 7, at 6:30 p.m. performance of *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*®. Other restrictions may apply. No refunds, cancellations, or exchanges. Offer expires December 1, 2017.

Retirees

Congratulations to the following employees who are joining the ranks of the retired after their many years of service to the County of Los Angeles:

50+ Years

HEALTH SERVICES: Melvin T. Calloway

45+ Years

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES: Karen L. Scott

HEALTH SERVICES: Ana B. Velo, Carol Y. Woods

40+ Years

HEALTH SERVICES: Sheila Mitchell, Francisco Ruiz, Richard Valencia

INTERNAL SERVICES: Carl M. Rhodes, Jr., Richard Verrett

PROBATION: Zandra Carruthers

PUBLIC WORKS: Bobby Williams, Jr.

SUPERIOR COURT: Patricia R. Horton, Jana Larsen

35+ Years

FIRE: Patricia E. Floyd

HEALTH SERVICES: Rodolfo S. Bautista, Barbara J. Brewer, Marilyn Brown, Nazim Goberdhan, Sherley R. Joy, George J. Kolle, Patrice Thomas

INTERNAL SERVICES: Thelma A. Cumby, Corliss M. White

PUBLIC DEFENDER: Mary L. Barrett-Spar

PUBLIC WORKS: Debbie Hugues

SHERIFF: Renee M. Botts, David E. Coleman

SUPERIOR COURT: Albert H. Epstein, Kin-Wai Kam

30+ Years

ASSESSOR: Cicil Yacoub

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES: Monica E. Airen, Esther M. Herrera

FIRE: David M. Garcia, Gilbert A. Nelson, Dana A. Provost

HEALTH SERVICES: Charito Barnachea, Praxedes P. Cusi, Khanang Jiam, Edward R. Lind, Lourdes R. Lucas, Michael Orlinsky, Gregory Van Dam, Patricia J. Walker, Margaret Winrow

PROBATION: Bruce V. Franer, Pamela J. Twiggs

PUBLIC WORKS: Grace E. Stohs, Henry Zepeda

SHERIFF: Steven P. Anderson, Todd F. Anderson, Shonte D. McBride, Derek K. Sill, Don K. Walker

TREASURER & TAX COLLECTOR: Carl S. Fonseca

25+ Years

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES: Ana Dolores D. Holguin, Cassandra D. McKinley, Luzviminda G. Nash, Sophia L. Prado, Nelson Sanchez, Mary Stallworth, Cynthia Willis

FIRE: Craig K. Doolittle, Carole E. Montague

HEALTH SERVICES: Olivia R. Andrade, Rutilia M. Bonilla, Sandra Brenes, Manju P. Gan, Shannon M. Moody, Maximina V. Stanley, Christine S. Wang, Christina C. Yu

PROBATION: Dianna A. Mata

PUBLIC WORKS: Efrain Fernandez, David L. Smith

SHERIFF: Robert J. Connor, Davin D. Emmons, Raul Esparza, Romeo M. Leyesa, Yolanda Loya, Richard J. Pompa, Steven M. Sheridan, Doris D. Walker

SUPERIOR COURT: Albino A. Catindig

TREASURER & TAX COLLECTOR: Gloria I. Gomez

HACoLA Aims to End Veteran Homelessness

In October, the United States Veterans Administration (VA) of Greater Los Angeles hosted the third annual Veteran Stand Down event in downtown Los Angeles. The annual event provides services to veterans, including employment services, counseling, health resources, and hot meals.

The Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (HACoLA) participated in this year's event to issue housing vouchers through its streamlined process called On the Spot. On the Spot allows a veteran to apply for a Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) voucher, complete the application and criminal background screening processes with HACoLA, and attend a voucher issuance presentation – all in the same day.

At this year's Stand Down event, HACoLA received 33 applications and 30 of those veterans left the event with a VASH housing voucher in hand. The VASH Program is one of the ways HACoLA is fighting to end homelessness in the County. The Program combines case management and clinical services with housing vouchers to enable homeless veterans to improve their physical and mental health and remain stable, housed, and integrated in their local community.

These efforts have proven to be more important now since the 2017 Los Angeles County Homeless Count found over 4,800 veterans are homeless – which is a 57% jump from last year.

Through the regional effort with the County, service providers, and other key partners, events and programs, like the VA Stand Down and VASH, will bring us one-step closer to eradicating homelessness.

Probation Recognizes Its Own in Solemn Veterans' Day Ceremony



Probation's military service personnel draped in "Quilts of Valor" during the Department's annual Veterans' Day Tribute Ceremony.

*Robert fought in the Vietnam War as an engine mechanic in the United States Navy and received four Bronze Stars in the commission of his duties. He is also currently on probation under AB 109.

On Thursday, October 26, 2017, 15 veterans, including Robert, were honored in a poignantly fitting tribute at the Bob Hope Patriotic Hall in downtown Los Angeles. The ceremony lauded Probation AB 109's probation officers who are military veterans, as well as the homeless veterans under their supervision, in a tribute that visibly moved many of those who were present.

"We did not serve [in the U.S. military] for acknowledgement, so for the Probation Department to take time to recognize and celebrate our sacrifice is very meaningful," said U.S. Navy E5 Petty Officer 2/Surface Warfare (SW) DPO II Germaine Moore. "Working in a civilian capacity, the formality of the ceremony brought me back to my military roots. I felt part of a brotherhood," he added

Senior Reserve Deputy Probation Officer Staff Sergeant 224th Support Brigade Frankie De Guzman, served as the ceremony's emcee, while AB 109 Bureau Chief Darlyne R. Pettinicchio identified all the veterans as heroes.

"Today, we recognize the sacrifices you have made to defend honor, duty, and protect country. You are warriors, we honor you as heroes. Thank you," said Pettinicchio.

Chief Probation Officer Terri L. McDonald conveyed gratitude in her opening remarks.

"We would not be able to live the lives that we live in America if it were not for the sacrifice of our veterans so we celebrate them today," said Chief McDonald.

The tribute included a stirring rendition of the national anthem sung by Ashley Stanley. A recording of TAPS filled Patriotic Hall while the enactment of the 'Prisoner of War' table ceremony further lent itself to the solemnity of the occasion. A power point presentation, highlighting the military contributions of each of the veterans, followed by a Veteran's Recognition Award presentation, created a lasting and heartfelt memory for our servicemen.

The highlight of the program was the presentation of handmade quilts to each veteran by the nationally renowned non-profit foundation, "Quilts of Valor," honoring them for their sacrifices. The movement was originally started by Catherine Roberts of Seaford, Delaware, whose son Nat, was deployed in Iraq in 2003. To date, over 5,000 veterans have received quilts. And now, Robert is one of them.

"Today was very meaningful to me," said Robert. "I have a tender heart and this really brought my spirits up," he added. Clutching his quilt, unable to stop his tears from flowing, he proclaimed, "I love this quilt and when I go, it's going with me." Pointing up towards heaven he added, "When I go *there*, this is coming with me."

**Robert is a pseudonym used to protect the probationer's identity.*

Rideshare L.A. County!

from Department of Human Resources

We all know that air pollution is bad for your health. We are just starting to learn just how bad. According to the first national study on the link between Autism and air pollution, it has been confirmed in the Environmental Health Perspectives journal that a woman in a high pollution area is twice as likely to have an autistic child as a woman in the cleanest part of the areas in the study. Ridesharing is more than just saving money, time, and lives. It's about saving children from a disorder that can be as crippling as any physical disability. Do your part to Take Pride and Share the Ride. For more information on Ridesharing, contact your local ETC or go to www.rideshare.lacounty.gov.