

Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center



One-Stop for Veterans & Military

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Proud of our Partners

As the saying goes, we're stronger when we work together. Partnering with leading organizations and individuals allows each the opportunity to serve our veteran community. In February, Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center is joining SMART Heroes in celebrating our one-year partnership, training transitioning service personnel and veterans searching for a hands-on trade.



SMART Heroes is a local program designed to provide sheet metal industry training, at no cost, to enlisted military service personnel prior to discharge. SMART Heroes recognizes that many transitioning service members enjoy working with their hands and that a career using their tactile talents was a natural fit. While the program is free and many students participate within 180 days of separation, veterans of all eras, military spouses and dependents are also welcomed.



SMART Heroes Manager Greg Daniels

It's the veterans' component where Mt. Carmel Peer Navigators on Ft. Carson recognized a gap. Veteran students were working part-time jobs, in addition to seven full weeks of classes and training, just to leave the position at graduation. Our peer navigator recommended the internship program and our partnership was born. Mt. Carmel is enabling veterans' participation in the SMART Heroes program for hands-on training and certification, while obtaining a paycheck to cover their monthly bills. This financial support allows them to focus on the training.

A recent intern graduate who received financial assistance from Mt. Carmel shared, "I thought the program was very well structured, and it was definitely helpful that it was a paid internship."

Upon completion of the seven-week course, graduates will have fulfilled their first year of sheet metal apprentice training and will receive a coveted union certification.

Mt. Carmel is fortunate to partner with over 200 organizations and individuals locally. *We truly are stronger, and can serve the community better, when we partner together.*

By Col. Bob McLaughlin, U.S. Army, Retired
Chief Operating Officer

Notes from Those We Serve

Staff

Col (R) Robert McLaughlin
COO

Leslie Abrams
Executive Assistant

Dave Burton
Director of Operations

Paul Price
Dir, Employment &
Transition

Peer Navigators

Richard Gagne
Jessica Griser
Tandi Zerfoss

MilSpouse Career Program

Kirsten Belaire
Dir, Behavioral Health Prog.

Abbey Westphal
Behav. Health Retreat Coord.

Savannah Cunning
Behav. Health Admin. Asst.

Katie Travis
Supportive Svcs. Case Mgr

Liz Foster
Supportive Svcs Case Mgr.

Volunteer Program

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Greet & Connect

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Donor Relations

Melodie Owens
Dir, Development & Events

Marcia Mitchell
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Nannette Cioffi
Staff Accountant

Laura Marth
Comm. & Marketing Mgr.

Chris McGeorge
Facilities, Resource &
Event Coord.

Randy Gradishar
Outreach Coordinator

This holiday season our hearts were warmed as we helped prevent homelessness for a veteran and his family who were barely making ends meet. The honorably discharged Army veteran holds a disability rating of 80 percent related to his military service, which limits employment opportunities. His family, including a spouse and two children, ration their limited monthly income. His wife was actively searching for a job when they visited Mt. Carmel looking for assistance. Unexpected vehicle costs, coupled with a disability payment shortage, landed them in a position where they were unable to pay their rent and utilities and were facing imminent eviction.

To compound the family's stress, the veteran underwent emergency surgery while receiving services from Mt. Carmel's Veteran & Family Resources. His wife put her job search on hold to care for him and their kids until he regained strength and function. Shortly after restarting her job search with the assistance of Mt. Carmel, she found employment. And her husband was connected to a veterans' service officer on-site at Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center to assist with increasing his disability rating following surgery. Financial assistance from Mt. Carmel and two partnering agencies, Salute, Inc. and Operation Second Chance (both out-of-state nonprofits serving veterans), prevented this family's homelessness through rent assistance, a holiday meal and emergency financial assistance. The Phil Long Family of Dealerships offered help by purchasing gifts for the kids, a nice meal at a family restaurant, gas, groceries and household goods.

While these heart-warming stories are plentiful around the holidays, our Veteran & Family Resource case managers tirelessly provide similar services to vulnerable veterans throughout the year.

Make a Difference Today!

At Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center, we believe military heroes need a hand-up, not a handout. You can play an important role and have a direct impact on thousands of veterans in our community!

**Donate today to help provide vital services,
programs and resources.**

Visit veteranscenter.org to Donate



ST. PATRICK'S DAY BREAKFAST & PARADE
FUNDRAISER FOR THE BENEFIT OF GAZETTE
CHARITIES-EL POMAR FOUNDATION
EMPTY STOCKING FUND & MT. CARMEL
VETERANS SERVICE CENTER

JOIN US FOR A ST. PATRICK'S
DAY PARADE & CATERED
BREAKFAST ON SATURDAY,
MARCH 14TH AT 10:00 AM

BLONDIES ROOFTOP DECK
24 N TEJON ST.

PARADE BEGINS AT
12:00 NOON

SAVE THE DATE!
SATURDAY, MARCH 14TH

\$30 PER PERSON
TICKETS GO ON SALE THE FIRST
WEEK OF FEBRUARY

EMPTY STOCKING FUND

Mt. Carmel

Holiday Meals for Military Community



As the December holidays approached, 300 meals were given to military families in need on December 18. What we hope will become an annual tradition, the giveaway provided much needed and appreciated hope this holiday season. *We are grateful for Catholic Charities and Safeway for their donations and partnership.*

Prep Connect 360 Celebrates Graduates

Mt. Carmel's Transition & Employment team is honored to partner with Prep Connect, a five-day advanced workshop for job seekers. The first class of 2020 celebrated the graduation of 14 students comprised of transitioning military members, veterans and spouses. On day four of the class, students focused on interviewing skills and 20 company representatives participated in the mock interviewing session. Later that day, students participated in Mt. Carmel's monthly networking event at Red Leg Brewing Company. A total of 755 individuals have graduated from Prep Connect! ***The next workshop will run March 9-13. Please contact [Paul Price](#), director of transition & employment, to learn more.***



Prep Connect Graduate Ed Lopez presents a donation check to Prep Connect Executive Director Namette Breide in appreciation for the complimentary class.

Pikes Peak Association of Realtors' Winter Gala to Support Mt. Carmel

Your Presence Is Requested At The 4th Annual PPAR

Winter Gala

Benefit Event for Mt. Carmel Veterans Services

Live Entertainment Provided by

Collective Groove

5:30PM
SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 1ST

\$79/Person
DINNER, DANCING
& TWO DRINK TICKETS

Buy Tickets Online At
tinyurl.com/PPARGala2020

AT THE:
ANTLERS HOTEL
4 S. CASCADE AVE.
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO

FORMAL ATTIRE REQUIRED
EVENT IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



Please join the Pikes Peak Association of Realtors (PPAR) and Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center (MCVSC) for the 4th annual Winter Gala on Saturday, February 1 at the Wyndham Antlers Hotel in downtown Colorado Springs. The evening of live entertainment, dancing, a three-course dinner and two complimentary beverages has been a tremendous success in years past, and this year will be no different! The PPAR is honoring MCVSC with all the proceeds. PPAR raised \$15,000 last year, and they have a goal of \$20,000 this year! To purchase tickets for this fun event, go to <https://ppar.ticketspice.com/2020-winter-gala>

Are You Listening to the Award-Winning Veterans Voice?

The Mt. Carmel Veterans Voice Podcast was awarded first place at the Colorado Broadcaster Association Awards of Excellence on April 12 in the Best Use of New Media Category! The bi-monthly radio show is a podcast broadcast on KRDO Radio. Veterans Voice is hosted by KRDO personality and Navy veteran, Mike Lewis, and is presented by USAA in partnership with Star Dental Institute.

To listen, visit <https://krdonewsradio.podbean.com/p/the-mt-carmel-veterans-voice-with-mike-lewis/>

The Mt. Carmel Veterans Voice Podcast
with Mike Lewis



Mt Carmel
VETERANS SERVICE CENTER
WELLNESS • TRANSITION • RESOURCES

Presented by USAA
in Partnership with
Star Dental Institute



Texas Roadhouse Treats Vets - Not Once, Not Twice, but Three Times!



We'd like to extend a BIG thank you to the Texas Roadhouse Powers Boulevard location for treating veterans to three complimentary meals. Restaurant owner Vince Baraket, manager Cassidy Arilli and their team provided free meals to veterans on Veterans Day, plus staff donated tips and guests donated funds totaling over \$2,000, which was turned into gift cards. On Thursday, January 16, they hosted an appreciation luncheon at Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center and personally distributed the gift cards to all invited guests.

We are incredibly grateful for Texas Roadhouse Powers Boulevard location's support of local veterans! Please stop by the locally owned restaurant and thank the staff for all they do for veterans!

Partner Spotlight: Mark & Mary Shuster



Mark and Mary Shuster are a Marine Corps family. Mark is a Lieutenant Colonel in the US Marine Corps Reserves and Mary is a United Airlines flight attendant and Gold Star sister. In May 2013, Mark and Mary Shuster were married and in 2014 found themselves with \$50,000 of consumer debt and needed a solution to change their financial future. They started following Dave Ramsey's principals, completed Financial Peace University and in 10 months paid off the entire \$50,000 in debt.

In April 2017, they moved to Colorado Springs for Mary's job. Mark was unemployed, looking for a new job in Colorado Springs and that's when he became a Mt. Carmel client, as our Transition and Employment team assisted him in finding his current job.

As a way to give back to military, veterans and their families across the Pikes Peak Region, Mark and Mary now volunteer their time hosting Dave Ramsey's nine-week Military Financial Peace University class twice a year. To date, the 30 families that have completed the class have paid off more than \$237,000 of consumer debt, including student loans, credit cards, car loans and timeshares to name a few. They are currently teaching their sixth iteration of the class.

We cannot thank Mark and Mary enough for their selfless dedication and service to Mt. Carmel and the clients we serve!

Thank You, Year-End Donors!

These are just a few of the organizations that made a direct impact on those we served in 2019.
Thank you!



T. Rowe Price Site Strategy Manager Nicola Roark presents a check to Mt. Carmel COO Bob McLaughlin



Rebecca Sanguenza presents a check to the Mt. Carmel team on behalf of Colorado Springs Osteopathic Foundation



Medicare Mentors Rich Lewis, Pam Lewis and Nick Palarino present a check to Mt. Carmel COO Bob McLaughlin

King Soopers Community Rewards Help Veterans

SPREAD THE WORD:

Help Veterans just by using your King Soopers or City Market card - after you select us online (in just a few clicks)...and there is no impact to your fuel points.

For details, visit <https://veteranscenter.org/king-soopers-community-rewards/>

SHOP. SAVE. SWIPE. SUPPORT.

To support veterans through the King Soopers Community Rewards Program!

PROVIDE A HAND-UP TO VETERANS, MILITARY AND THEIR FAMILIES SIMPLY BY SHOPPING AT KING SOOPERS OR CITY MARKET!

KingSoopers.com

ENROLL IN THE KING SOOPERS COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM AND SELECT

Mt. Carmel REFUGIO SERVICE CENTER

AS YOUR NON-PROFIT!

Participation has no impact on fuel points.

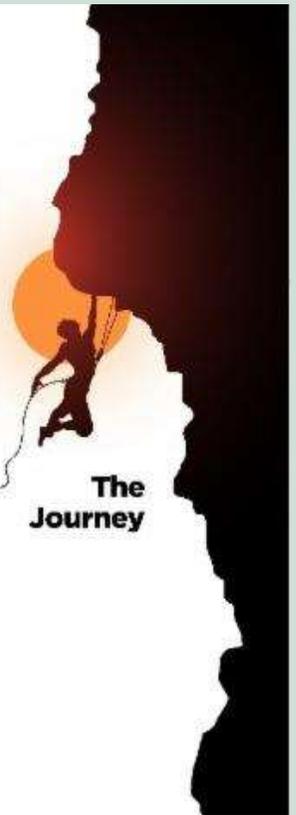
Veterans Climb

Serving Those Who Served
In Community Partnership

Career & Transition Services • Supportive Services • Health & Wellness



PIKES PEAK
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE



Veterans Tribute Walkway



Honor a loved one or show your support of a veteran friend or family member by purchasing a brick or paver, featured as part of our Veterans Tribute Walkway on the Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center campus.

The proceeds are used to continue providing our essential veterans services. Bricks range from \$175 - \$200; Pavers from \$750 - \$850. They can even be personalized with military emblems.

To order your brick or paver,
or for additional information,
visit www.thatsmybrick.com/mtcvsc



Upcoming Events

(All events at Mt. Carmel unless noted - additional events at veteranscenter.org)

Art Expression - promoting stress relief and self-healing

Mondays, 5 - 7 pm

Spiritual Connection Group

Tuesdays, Noon - 1 pm

Veteran-X PTS-focused Group

Tuesdays, 4:30 - 6:30 pm

Yoga, PT/Trauma Relief-focus

Tuesdays, 5 - 6 pm

AARP Foundation Tax Service - FREE Call (719) 772-7000 to make appointment

Wednesdays, 9 am - 2 pm

Warriors First

Wednesdays, 4 - 5 pm

PTS Support Group

Thursdays, 9 - 10 am

Pre-registration required: (719) 772-7000

PTS Support Group

Thursdays, 10 - 11 am

Pre-registration required: (719) 772-7000

Acupuncture

Thursdays, 6:15 - 8:15 pm

Expressive Writing

Fridays, 4 - 6 pm

Therapeutic/Trauma Focus Tai Chi

Saturdays, 10-11 am

Employer Day: Mutual of Omaha

Wednesday, January 29, 10:30 am - 2 pm

Create a Better Resume

January 22, February 19 & March 25, 2 - 4 pm

Quilts of Valor Awards

Monday, February 3, 9 am - noon

Honor Flight

Saturday, February 8, 9 - 11 am

Veteran Medicare Seminar

Wednesday, February 12, 2 - 3 pm

Portraits for Patriots

Wednesday, February 19, 10 am - 3 pm

Recruit Military Employer Day

Wednesday, February 19, 11 am - 1:30 pm

Teaching as a Second Career Seminar

Thursday, February 20, 4:30 - 8 pm

Mt. Carmel Quilters

Saturday, February 22, 10 am - 12 pm

St. Patrick's Day Parade & Breakfast at Blondie's

Saturday, March 14

Colorado Springs Philharmonic's Becoming Heroes Festival

March 28 - May 17

1350 Distilling at 520 E. Pikes Peak Ave. will display Mt. Carmel veterans' art

Are you following us online and on social media?

For the latest Mt. Carmel information, events and services, visit veteranscenter.org.
Follow us on social media platforms: Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Twitter;
and listen to the [Veterans Voice Podcast](#) at KRDO.com.

Mt. Carmel Wellness & Community Center | 911 Robinson Avenue, Trinidad, CO 81082 | MtCarmelCenter.org