



Gold Coast Veterans Foundation  
Bob Harris  
[Bob.Harris@gcvf.org](mailto:Bob.Harris@gcvf.org) 805-482-6550

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Homeless Veteran Rescue Program Takes Off Running... and Rolling Mobile Veteran Outreach in full-time operation by Veterans Day

(CAMARILLO, CA – November 6, 2019) Gold Coast Veterans Foundation’s new Mobile Veteran Outreach (MVO) program has moved into full-time operation just in time for Veterans Day on November 11. This program was launched part-time 6 months ago and in this short period, 17 homeless veterans have been placed in housing, are on track to get into housing, or have been rescued from life threatening conditions. A recent fundraising golf tournament raised enough funds to move this program to full time for the remainder of 2019 but more funds are urgently needed to sustain this full time into 2020.

The MVO program is led by Army veteran Rafael Stoneman and his enormous service dog Leo, who either make direct contact with homeless veterans or get referral calls from law enforcement and county mental health services. A formerly homeless veteran himself (now with a degree in psychology and addiction counseling), Stoneman and Leo have the ability to get the most difficult, high-risk homeless veterans engaged into a conversation, and begin participating in a range of life-saving services. A 4 Wheel Drive “off-road” vehicle was donated at the golf event by the state’s largest oil and natural gas producer, California Resources Corporation. This will now allow the MVO team to reach the many homeless “encampments” in the Santa Clara river bed, the beaches, the hills, and other areas not accessible by road.

“Mobile Veteran Outreach started saving lives immediately, even during the test phase, and now we know that we have a model that works. We are serving an unmet need in the community. The only questions are how many more homeless veterans can we save and how quickly can we do that?” said GCVF Chairman Dennis Murphy. “Rafael and Leo are able to connect with these high-risk veterans, and quickly provide the right help. They bring back people who were written off as not able to be saved.” Murphy added, “We have raised about half of what we need to sustain this full time through 2020 but we need to raise another \$30,000 now to achieve this end.”

**About Mobile Veteran Outreach** – MVO brings comprehensive help, services, & support directly to homeless military veterans living on the streets, in vehicles, or with limited mobility. Services begin with direct intervention to prevent or reverse homelessness, followed by 1-on-1 personalized help with navigating/expediting VA and other benefits, licensed financial coaching, emotional wellness & peer counseling, veteran-focused job training & employment resources. All services are free of charge. More info at <http://www.veteransconnection.vet> (805) 482-6550

**About Gold Coast Veterans Foundation** – The largest non-profit serving veterans in Ventura County, serving 3,000 veterans each year. GCVF provides a “one-stop” resource center connecting veterans with benefits and comprehensive care for on-track, off-track, homeless, & at-risk veterans. Nine core in-house programs intervene to disrupt the root causes of suffering, homelessness and poor life outcomes. These include mobile veteran outreach & engagement, case management, health care, medical equipment, job skills training & placement, workforce development, shelter/housing services, counseling, wellness. All services free of charge. <http://www.gcvf.org> (805) 482-6550