



NVHS

Impact on Homeless Veteran Population in Brevard County, Florida

Calendar Year 2013

Prepared by National Veterans Homeless Support, Inc.

1/30/2014

Brief History:

In 2008 NVHS was formed by George Taylor Sr. (Current President/CEO) and a group of his friends for the purpose of providing the local homeless veterans in Titusville, Florida with outdoor gear and food, as well as refer them to veteran housing and benefits assistance providers in the area. George Sr. and his friends had been conducting the same activity for years on their own, primarily using their own funds as members of their local Disabled American Veterans Chapter in Titusville. NVHS was created to formalize their efforts, as well as secure donations to continue these activities. The activities continued primarily in Titusville for all of 2008 and into 2009. In June 2009, NVHS began looking at the enormous number of homeless veterans located in the greater Central Florida area, and decided that more needed to be done to address this problem. As a result, NVHS made it its mission to “Eliminate Homelessness Among Veterans in Central Florida”, and it was decided our outreach program would be how this mission would be accomplished.

NVHS has grown exponentially over the last couple of years in both the amount of veterans we assist annually, and our organization’s operating budget. The exponential growth financially was largely driven by a surprise State of Florida budget appropriation in the amount of \$1 Million received for the period July 2012-June 2013. This grant was used for developing transitional housing, issuing grants across Florida to organizations conducting veteran “Stand- Down” events, and expanding our outreach program capacity. In 2013 we received another surprise appropriation of \$500,000 for the period covering July 2013-June 2014. This grant is to be used to modify our transitional facilities, issue grants to organizations in Florida conducting “Stand Down” events, and again, further build our outreach program capacity. These grants greatly amplified our organizations capacity, forever changed how we approach and interact with our clients, and allowed us to impact far more veterans than we ever thought possible.

Over the short course of time NVHS has been in operation, we have remained focused on finding more efficient ways to get our veterans off the streets and back on their feet again. Beginning in Mid-2012, we shifted our entire priority structure from one that placed the providing of basic needs to our veterans as number one, to getting them housed becoming the most important. With that change, we decided that providing basic needs is simply a means to an end... to build the trust needed for the veteran to listen to our advice and to insure their survival while we work with them. Today, NVHS remains the only known organization in the State of Florida that directly engages homeless veterans in the manner we do. We are committed to locating homeless veterans on the street, connecting them to the VA healthcare system, housing organizations, and benefits assistance providers so that they can once again rejoin society.

The Current Situation:

For comparison purposes in this document, Point-in-Time-Count (PITC) results are used as the baseline number of homeless veterans. It is important to consider that PITC's are intended to provide a snapshot of the homeless population in an observed region, as only the individuals that are physically encountered during a 1 day event in January are recorded. In general, PITCs only account for a portion of the total actual homeless, but the results are still useful to local, state, and federal agencies analyzing trends in homeless populations.

Below are the PITC results for "Unsheltered Homeless Veterans" in Brevard County (NVHS's Base of Operations, accounting for 93% of all activity in 2013), the Homeless Service Network of Central Florida (Continuum of Care Coalition for Orange, Seminole, and Osceola Counties and is the homeless coalition adjacent to Brevard), and a consolidated report for the State of Florida.

<u>Point in Time Count Results</u> <u>(Unsheltered Homeless Veterans):</u>			<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>%Change</u> <u>(2013 vs.</u> <u>2011)</u>
Brevard			122	229	229	-47%
Orange/Seminole/Osceola			354	345	500	-29%
State of Florida (SOF)			3177	3130	3368	-6%

Additionally the "total number of homeless veterans" from the respective PITC reports, which include veterans that were encountered unsheltered plus those that were found in emergency shelters, are listed below:

<u>Point in Time Count Results</u> <u>(Total Homeless Veterans):</u>			<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>%Change</u> <u>(2013 vs.</u> <u>2011)</u>
Brevard			262	352	355	-26%
Orange/Seminole/Osceola			611	574	690	-11%
State of Florida (SOF)			4915	N/A	5696	-14%

Impact We Have Made:

One major problem facing homeless veterans is that the vast majority of veteran service organization's who operate housing facilities or assist with obtaining benefits do not conduct any type of outreach to find their clients. The problem with this is that they are forced to wait for the veteran to find them at their offices, which means that unless a veteran knows of their existence, the possibility of rapidly being able to assist the veteran is very low. Given that this is the case, NVHS's outreach program was designed to arrange these connections.

When looking at the PITC numbers, it is clear that Brevard County outpaced the State of Florida's overall reduction of "Unsheltered" homeless veterans by 41%, as well as outpaced the HSN of Central Florida's reduction by 19%. When total homeless veteran numbers are compared between the three groups, Brevard outpaced the State of Florida's total homeless veteran reduction by 12% and outpaced the HSN's reduction by 15%.

The table below shows the number of clients NVHS assisted through our outreach program in Brevard County, in 2013 (2012 is provided as a comparison to show the year over year growth in service capacity):

2013 Total Veterans Assisted by Brevard Outreach	562
2013 Total Brevard Veterans That Obtained Housing:	66
% 2013 Veterans Served that were Housed	12%
2012 Total Veterans Assisted, Brevard Outreach	232
2012 Total Brevard Veterans That Obtain Housing:	22
% 2012 Veterans Served that were Housed	9%

The results above show the following:

1. Veterans served in Brevard increased 140% between 2013 and 2012
2. Percentage of Veterans served that were housed increased 3% between 2013 and 2012
3. Total Brevard homeless Veterans housed increased 200% between 2013 and 2012
4. Total Brevard veterans assisted in 2013 was 212% of total identified by PITC in 2013, and 456% of total unsheltered veterans identified by PITC in 2013

The tables below compare the number of Brevard Homeless Veterans that were “unsheltered” when we encountered them during our outreach operations that we assisted into housing, with the number of “unsheltered” veterans identified during the 2013 and 2012 Brevard PITCs:

% 2013 Brevard Unsheltered Who Were Housed	54%
% 2013 Brevard Total Veterans Who Were Housed	25%

% 2012 Brevard Unsheltered Who Were Housed	10%
% 2012 Brevard Total Veterans Who Were Housed	6%

The results above show the following:

1. Percentage of “Unsheltered” veterans assisted into housing in 2013 increased 44% versus 2012, representing over half the identified population
2. Percentage of “Total Homeless Veterans” (Unsheltered and Residing in Emergency Shelters) assisted into housing increased 19% in 2013 versus 2012

Conclusion:

Because NVHS uses a collaborative approach in our outreach program, we have greatly helped Brevard County to become a leader in the State of Florida in reducing our homeless veteran population. Our model is simple; we connect homeless veterans to existing organizations with available services that can help them off the streets permanently. The comparisons provided in this document show how NVHS was able to create a measurable and significant social impact in one year’s time, most importantly by:

1. Nearly doubling the amount of clients assisted in 2013 vs. 2012
2. Tripling the number of clients housed in 2013 vs 2012
3. Increasing our homeless to housed success rate 3%
4. Increasing the percentage of unsheltered veterans housed related to PITC by 44%

Please join our efforts to expand across Central Florida so that we can one day “Eliminate Homelessness among Veterans in Central Florida”, and hopefully beyond!