

**Media Contact**  
Ranggin Hedayat  
Reveille, Inc.  
949.394.1454  
[ranggin@reveilleinc.com](mailto:ranggin@reveilleinc.com)



**ORANGE COUNTY VETERANS INITIATIVE AWARDS \$862,000 IN GRANTS SUPPORTING LOCAL VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

*Additional Funding will Include a Five-Year Follow-Up Study to Assess Progress and Opportunities to Further Serve OC's Veteran Community*

**NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. (January 23, 2020)** – The Orange County Community Foundation (OCCF) is partnering with the Orange County Real Estate (OCRE) Luncheon, an annual veteran-focused event among OC's top real estate companies and financial institutions, to grant \$862,000 to 13 nonprofits serving military veterans and their families. OCCF also announced funding for an evaluation to assess both the progress of the OC Veterans Initiative (OCVI) and future opportunities for continued impact.

Founded in 2011, OCVI has received support from generous donors and businesses in Orange County seeking to help veterans receive the welcome home they deserve. In February 2015, OCCF released a first-ever study documenting that many military veterans coming home to Orange County are significantly unprepared for civilian life. This study examined chronic issues veterans face, including employment and finances, housing and homelessness, and physical and mental health. Post-9/11 veterans, in particular, experience significant barriers to accessing care. Since the 2015 study, OCCF has administered the OCVI by directing philanthropic resources to address the gaps identified in the study.

"We are honored to be partnering with the OC real estate community for the fifth year of this grant program to address the serious challenges local veterans and their families face," explained Shelley Hoss, president and CEO, OCCF. "Through our Veterans Initiative, we are proud to channel the efforts of our generous donors and partners and collaborate with high-performing, veteran-focused organizations in Orange County to fuel innovative solutions to critical gaps in services and improve outcomes for local veterans and their loved ones."

In this fifth year of the grant program, the OCVI, in partnership with the OCRE Luncheon, is investing a total of \$862,000 in the following veteran-serving organizations/programs:

- Cal State Fullerton's Veterans Resource Center
- Child Guidance Center's Strong Families Strong Children program
- Goodwill Industries of Orange County's Tierney Center for Veteran Services
- Goodwill Industries of Orange County's Veterans Employment Program
- Irvine Valley College Foundation's Veterans Resource Center
- Saddleback College's VET Center
- St. Jeanne de Lestonnac Free Clinic Veterans Dental Clinic
- Strength in Support's Mental Health Service program
- University of California, Irvine's Role as Convener of the OC Veterans & Military Families Collaborative
- Veterans Legal Institute's Pro Bono Legal Support program
- Volunteers of America Greater Los Angeles, Battle Buddy Bridge program
- Warrior Scholar Project Veterans Academic Boot Camp
- Working Wardrobes for a New Start's VetNet Employment program
- 211 Orange County's Veterans Resource program

In 2020, OCCF will also partner with Harder & Co. and University of California, Irvine, to conduct a five-year OCVI program evaluation assessing the progress made since the first veterans study was released in 2015, as well as a community-wide needs assessment of current challenges and opportunities in serving OC veteran and military families.

These investments represent an important milestone in OCCF's long-term commitment to support the needs of local veterans and its efforts to engage businesses, philanthropists and community leaders to work together to solve the greatest barriers to their successful re-entry to civilian life. In the last four years of this grant program, the collaboration between OCCF and the OCRE Luncheon has resulted in grants exceeding \$3 million to nonprofits and provided service to more than 22,000 veterans and their families.

**About Orange County Community Foundation**

Founded in 1989, the Orange County Community Foundation (OCCF) works with donors, strengthens the local nonprofit sector and works to find solutions to community needs. Since its inception, OCCF has awarded \$630 million in grants and scholarships and ranks in the top one percent in grantmaking activity among more than 780 U.S. community foundations. For more information, visit [oc-cf.org](http://oc-cf.org) or call 949-553-4202. Be a part of our conversation on [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). View OCCF's 2019 annual report [here](#).

###