

BERGEN County NEW JERSEY



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Unique Public/Private Collaboration Welcomes 14 Bergen County Veterans to New and Beautifully Furnished Apartments in Emerson

(Emerson, NJ)- This morning, the Housing Development Corporation of Bergen County (HDC), the non-profit development arm of the Housing Authority of Bergen County, and the County of Bergen celebrated the completion of new Veterans Supportive Housing units in Emerson. Joined by the dedicated non-profit and private partners whose support was invaluable to this project, Bergen County officials cut the ribbon to officially welcome 14 veterans with special needs to these affordable, accessible, fully furnished one-bedroom apartments. Prior to the speaking program, media and members of the public were invited to tour a newly furnished unit (a brief video tour of this unit is available upon request).

“I believe we have a moral obligation to do right by the men and women who have faithfully served our country and made sacrifices on behalf of all Americans,” said Bergen County Executive Jim Tedesco. “Today, we celebrated as 14 Bergen County veterans were welcomed home to brand new, fully furnished one-bedroom apartments at the new Veterans Supportive Housing development in Emerson.”

“This Veterans Housing facility is part of our continuing commitment to try to repay what can never fully be repaid,” said Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders Chairwoman Tracy Zur. “Under this Administration, Bergen County was among the first to eliminate chronic veterans homelessness and we take pride in that accomplishment. As we strive to continually meet the evolving needs of veterans in our community we promise to continue to have the backs of the soldiers who had our backs when we needed them most.”





Background Detail:

The Housing Development Corporation of Bergen County (HDC), the non-profit development arm of the Housing Authority of Bergen County has completed the construction of 14 one-bedroom apartments for disabled veterans with special needs. Project funding was provided by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFA), Bergen County Community Development and the Housing Development Corporation of Bergen County. All 14 units were furnished by generous donations of labor, material or funding by the Bergen County Division of Veteran Services, American Legion Post 269, Making-It-Home, and many corporate and nonprofit donors.

The property, occupied by the American Legion Post 269, was donated by the Post to the project. Arcari & Iovino Architects of Little Ferry designed the 7-building complex which features 14 single-story, one-bedroom duplex style apartments for disabled veterans with incomes of less than 50% of Area Median Income. The site was selected in 2014 to be the first of an Innovation in Affordable Housing Student Design and Planning competition sponsored by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development & Research.

Applications for the apartments were publicized widely and open to disabled veterans with special needs. The Housing Authority of Bergen County, Division of Veteran Services, and Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark determined the applicant eligibility. Catholic Charities will provide supportive services to all project residents, including onsite case management, connections with community organizations for health care and other services as well.

Making-It-Home, a Bergen County nonprofit, decorated the 14 apartments and coordinated the fundraising effort to pay for new furnishings. Making-It-Home brings donated furniture and a safe, healthy and comfortable living environment to veterans, formerly homeless families, disabled individuals, the elderly, and victims of domestic violence who are referred by partner agencies and moving to new but unfurnished apartments.

Sponsors for furnishing the Emerson Veteran apartments include \$22,400 in financial contributions from Valley National Bank, Nam Knights Motorcycle Club, Lyndhurst Elks, Rotary Military Family Assistance Center, Suez, Camp Merritt American Legion Post 21, Unity Bank, The Gallagher Agency of Farmers Insurance, and CPL Jedh C. Barker Memorial Post 153. More than \$21,900 in product and installation services were donated by Samsung Electronics America (14 Full HD LED TVs and Blu-ray™ Players on behalf of the Samsung Veterans Community), NJ State Elks (bed frames, mattresses, housewares), Home Depot (window blinds), and CORT Furniture (discounts on living room and bedroom sets).