

Help for Homeless Veterans
877-4AID-VET
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ENDING VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

Veterans' Success Profiles

Many Veterans who were homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless have changed their lives — with the help of the various supportive services offered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and its partners — and have been successfully rehoused, employed, or both. VA's collaborative efforts with businesses and community, faith-based, and nonprofit organizations have expanded opportunities for Veterans. The following three stories of Veterans' triumphs over homelessness illustrate how you or your organization could assist VA in creating positive change in a Veteran's life. Contact us at homelessvets@va.gov to get involved and visit www.va.gov/HOMELESS/successstories/veterans.asp for more stories.

Veterans Journey to Overcome Homelessness Pays Off. After Army Veteran Johnnie Mims of Chicago left the military, he got a job at the U.S. Postal Service, married, and started a family. But when life's challenges became overwhelming, Mims turned to alcohol and ended up divorced and unemployed. Although he was without a permanent home for 19 years, Mims never stopped taking steps to change his life. He entered a 45-day treatment program at the VA Medical Center (VAMC) in North Chicago and became sober in 1993. However, regular employment still eluded him.

In 2015, Mims was accepted into [VA's Compensated Work Therapy \(CWT\)](#) program at Chicago's Jesse Brown VAMC, working in the wellness center. Earning between \$400 and \$500 every two weeks, Mims secured housing with assistance from the [Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing \(HUD-VASH\)](#) program. He also connected with VA's newly launched [Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services \(HVCES\)](#).

Later that year, the Jesse Brown VAMC's Community Employment Coordinator (CEC) arranged a hiring event with USPS. Mims' tenacity and determination to complete the complicated application process landed him an interview. Shortly after that, he was hired as a temporary USPS custodian for \$13.25 per hour. Through his hard work and ability to get along with colleagues, Mims, then 60 years old, became a full-time employee, earning a comfortable salary, overtime pay, and benefits.



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[Two Veterans Find New Careers After Experiencing Homelessness and Housing Instability](#). After six years in the U.S. Navy and 18 years working for a large telecommunications company, Tom Jett never anticipated becoming unemployed and homeless. Likewise, U.S. Air Force Veteran Monique Beck never thought she would have a hard time finding stable housing for herself and her three sons. Both of these Veterans, however, were able to turn their lives around — and find full-time jobs — with assistance from VA's Ann Arbor [Healthcare for Homeless Veterans \(HCHV\)](#) program.

Working with the CEC at the Ann Arbor VA, both Jett and Beck received job skills training and attended [Hire MI Vet](#), a collaborative effort among [Michigan Ability Partners](#), [Michigan Works!](#), the [Rotary Club of Ann Arbor](#), and [Washtenaw Community College](#). They both attended a four-hour preparation workshop where they developed and revised their resumes, participated in mock interviews, were fitted for professional attire through Dress for Success, and more.

Beck now works for Michigan Ability Partners as a full-time job developer serving Veterans in need of employment. Her drive to succeed and contribute to her community is still in full swing, and her next step is to apply to a Master of Science in social work program.

Jett tapped into his previous military and work experience as well as applied the job skills training he received through VA Ann Arbor's HCHV and [CWT](#) programs and landed a job with Jaytec, where he has 19 employees reporting to him.

[Formerly Homeless Veteran Helps Comrades Regain Their Independence](#). After years of military service in the U.S. Army and U.S. Navy, Robin Rollins was honorably discharged due to medical concerns and difficulties mastering highly technical requirements of a new job. No one to call on and no financial support from her family, in Pennsylvania, Rollins found herself at the [Opportunity Center for the Homeless](#) in El Paso, TX.

Rollins worked with a VA caseworker and used VA's homeless programs and supportive services to get her life back on track. After moving into the Veterans transitional living center, she took college classes and obtained her bachelor's and master's degrees.

Rollins now works as one of VA's 150 [CECs](#) collaborating with employers ready to hire Veterans exiting homelessness. Her education and life experience are invaluable in supporting Veterans who are working to regain their independence. Her advice for fellow Veterans experiencing homelessness is, "Know that these services are always available to you when you're ready to receive them."

A phone call away.

If a Veteran you know is homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless, refer him or her to their local VA medical center where staff is ready to assist, or urge them to call **1-877-4AID-VET (1-877-424-3838)**. Trained, supportive professionals are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to connect Veterans with the care they need to get back on their feet.



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