

SHORTCUTS

GIVING BACK



Photo: Kelli Uildal

VTC Expands its Reach in Time of Crisis

BY RENEE BRINCKS

The Veterans Transition Center (VTC) provides housing, job training and a food pantry (pictured with Executive Director Colonel Kurt Schake and volunteers).

From stepping up clinical services for clients, to equipping alternate shelter facilities with cots and blankets, the Veterans Transition Center of Monterey County (VTC) has played an active role in local COVID-19 relief efforts.

The Fort Ord-based nonprofit, which offers housing, job training, medical referrals and other services for veterans and families, has also seen food assistance requests nearly triple.

"We're really trying to fill in the gaps in our community's nutritional needs," says VTC Deputy Executive Director Jack Murphy.

Murphy and his colleagues have partnered with the Food Bank for Monterey County and local purveyors to gather canned goods, protein and fresh produce for those in need. Staffers

now distribute approximately 100 bags of groceries to seniors and families each Wednesday afternoon. In May, Congressman Jimmy Panetta handed out groceries as a program volunteer.

The VTC also maintains a food pantry for the nearly 100 members of its residential program. VTC Executive Director and retired U.S. Air Force Colonel Kurt Schake expects to welcome about 30 new residents as the crisis continues.

"We really feel very proud that, in the midst of a pandemic, we're able to grow and serve the expanding needs of the VA and the community," he says.

To support Veterans Transition Center programs, please visit www.vtcmontgomery.org.