



HVAF Happenings

HVAF of Indiana, Inc.
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From homeless to home owner: How HVAF helped Ray Lay overcome homelessness

After returning from two years of service in the U.S. Marine Corps, Ray Lay began struggling with service-related mental health issues. Eventually these issues would lead to and be compounded by substance abuse, incarceration, and finally homelessness.

Seeking a new start, Ray moved to Indianapolis at the end of 1993; however, six years after coming to Indy, Ray became homeless in 1999 and would struggle with housing stability for the next 10+ years.

In 2003, a Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center (VAMC) Substance Abuse Treatment Section social worker directed Ray to HVAF for assistance.

In the 2003-2004 time frame, Ray sought and received HVAF assistance. Along with housing, HVAF helped Ray with food, clothing, and accountability. Ray attributes the straight talk and “super swift kick” from people like HVAF Peer Mentor Fred Young as being significant messages he needed to hear in his recovery journey.

“(HVAF) helped me to accept the fact that I needed to make adjustments and changes in my life,” Ray said. “Another thing that really helped me was acceptance of my mental health condition.”

Finally with permanent supportive housing secured, Ray said his homelessness ended in July 2011. Ray now owns his own home, and he married this past March.

“HVAF helped me to accept the fact that I needed to make adjustments and changes in my life.”

He attributes his vast amount of volunteerism, as Ray said, “like a medicine to me,” in helping him continue with his sobriety and positive mental health.

Ray volunteers at many philanthropic/service organizations, including: board member to The Coalition for Homelessness Intervention & Prevention (CHIP); board member to Indiana Balance of State Continuum of Care; active member of National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) / peer support specialist, Indiana certified recovery specialist, and a VA peer support specialist; trainer for new correctional and police officers around the state; Roudebush VAMC Escort Services transporter.

His latest of many recognitions came from Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) in May, where he received the Supportive Housing Community Champion Award for “demonstrating leadership, action, and a commitment that has affected change in the supportive housing field.”

Ray said he encourages all veterans in need to check out HVAF’s programs and services.

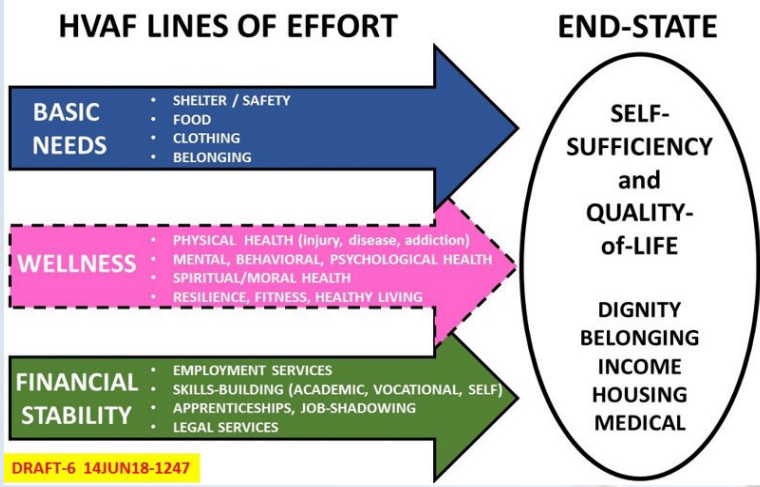
“We are not getting any younger,” Ray said. “And we all have opportunities presented to us every day, and one of the best things we can do is utilize those opportunities.”



Ray (middle) receiving the Supportive Housing Community Champion Award. Photo courtesy of CSH.

~From HVAF President & CEO Brian Copes~

This concept expresses a “strategy” (or methodology) to accomplish HVAF’s mission. Our **ENDS** (desired end-state) are *self-sufficiency* and *quality of life* (defined as personal dignity, a sense of belonging, sufficient income, stable housing, and access to medical/health care); our **WAYS** are “Lines of Effort”; and our **MEANS** are the resources necessary to provide Basic Needs, Wellness, and Financial Stability.



HVAF holds Annual Meeting

Although HVAF’s annual meeting is held every year in June, this year was especially unique. The organization also celebrated its 25th anniversary– complete with a history video, sharing defining moments, and CAKE! Here are some pictures from the event:



HVAF’s Annual Meeting & Birthday included awards and of course– cake!



HVAF board member Louise– the oldest member of HVAF– and case manager Lauren– the youngest member of HVAF cut the cake together



Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett won the Richard J. Schwartz II Distinguished Leadership Award



3 HVAF vets participated in a panel discussion– sharing how HVAF’s programs and services helped them

To view the entire Annual Report, including the top 12 Defining Moments from the past 25 years, click [here](#).

Check out our history video– pinned on our [Facebook page!](#)

Volunteers Needed

Veterans Community Center

HVAF of Indiana, Inc.

As we work on opening up a Community Center for Indy’s veterans, we are in need of volunteers to spend time with them. This includes playing games, watching movies, and fellowshiping.

Interested? Contact our Volunteer Coordinator Audrey Hopkins: AHopkins@hvaf.org or 317-951-0688 ext. 2116

HVAF Highlights



Westfield presented HVAF with a \$4,000 check



Mooresville Legion stopped by with a check and essential items!

HVAF hung out with vets at the annual Mayor’s Vet Appreciation picnic



Home Depot painted our Manchester Apartments

Connect with us!

Like us on Facebook

Follow us on twitter

@HVAFofIndiana

HVAF Needs:

- ~Underwear (all sizes)
- ~Canned veggies
- ~Canned meats
- ~Canned fruit
- ~Granola bars
- ~Ramen noodles
- ~Hamburger Helper
- ~PB&J

Drop off your donations to HVAF Headquarters today!

Do you have a group that would like to help in our food, clothing, and hygiene pantries? Call 317-951-0688 for more info!