

**VSACT 17 April 2019 Meeting: Lee Crossley Veterans Community Clubhouse  
(Corner of Honor Lane and East Avenue N., 1880 East Avenue N. Temple, TX)**

**\*\*Meetings normally take place the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month from 10AM – Noon at the  
Belton Job Connection (2601 Commerce St., Belton, TX 76513)\*\***

Mr. Gabriel Cervantes, Central Texas Veterans Healthcare System Patient Advocacy Program

- Special Representative aka Patient Advocate
  - The VHA is arguably the best healthcare system in the entire world. While it may have a bad rap and publicity, other countries truly wish that this option were available
  - Reason why Mr. Cervantes believes this? The VA is always continuously looking at how to look at processes/procedures and how to do things better
    - There is no one individual who knows everything about the VA; incredibly large with most individuals knowing their particular department as opposed to the processes at large
    - Reason patient advocates are there is to explain this large process and navigate to best assist and support the Veteran
      - Mr. Cervantes also assists within the process/direction of how to proceed forward with military discharge upgrades and points of contact
  - When you have concerns or you do not agree with your provider regarding your care, please take the following steps (in this order):
    - Discuss your concern with your provider and your treatment team
    - Ask to speak to the Service Level Advocate assigned to the area. SLA's are specifically trained to help resolve issues
    - Ask to speak to the supervisor or Service Chief of that area
    - If you feel your concern is still not being addressed, contact a Patient Advocate. Our office will hear your concern in a private setting
    - Sometimes the resolution may not satisfy you. If that happens, you can file an appeal to have an official second review
  - What You Can Expect:
    - We will share or refer your concern or request to the correct staff for review and consideration. These staff may contact you directly about your concern or request
    - We will help you navigate the VA Healthcare System
    - We will help you understand your rights and responsibilities as a patient
    - Contacting our office will not stop the care you receive from us, now or in the future
    - We will accept both written and verbal concerns. We also accept compliments
    - You will always be treated with dignity and respect in our office
    - Visitors and callers are helped on a first-come, first-serve basis

- How to Contact:
  - Olin E. Tague Veterans' Medical Center  
1901 Veterans Memorial Drive  
254-778-4811  
800-423-2111  
[www.centraltexas.va.gov](http://www.centraltexas.va.gov)
  - Contact Us By Phone:
    - 8AM – 4:30PM, Monday – Friday
    - **254-743-0586 or 800-423-2111, ext. 41451**
- OIF/OEF/OND Program
  - Central Texas is moving towards integration and the Mission Act
    - This legislation will strengthen VA's ability to deliver health care by:
      - Consolidating VA community care programs into a single program that is much easier to navigate
      - Expanding eligibility for Program Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers
      - Strengthening VA's ability to recruit and retain the best medical providers
      - Strengthening VA's infrastructure
- Fort Hood Area Habitat for Humanity/Lee Crossley Homes
  - Community Successes
    - First presented my idea to Habitat International in January 2016; they insisted it would take 4-5 years before we could consider breaking ground on such an unconventional community project
      - Wanted to avoid tiny houses as many Veterans do not have the ability due to present physical issues to climb up lofts, pull down Murphy beds, etc.
    - This Habitat community has become the Habitat for Humanity model on a national level, bringing partners together and build extremely affordable homes for veterans
    - 2 State Support Organizations (SSO), 10 affiliates, and 6 businesses affiliates pledged to replicate what we have done in Temple
    - Two affiliates in California have already received all of FHA Habitat's presentations, plans, white papers, and samples, with plans to start on their community this year. Florida is also beginning to reach out
      - California is planning on a 25-home community
      - **FHA is sharing to anyone possible**
  - Ground breaking
    - Event included attendees from all walks of life; outside City Council as well. Broke ground March 2018
  - 1203 Honor Lane
    - Less than two years ago, Dan (our first owner) was living under a bridge in Temple, TX

- Now he proudly displays his Marine corps fal on HIS front portch
      - These homes are appraised at \$60,000; through Habitat's forgivable lien, the cost is reduced to \$46,000. Each homeowner has 24-hour access to Community center as well
- Community Costs
  - This project cost, including infrastructure, is valued at over \$1.9 million
  - Habitat for Humanity has taken out a construction loan to facilitate moving forward with construction
    - \$0 came from federal government
    - City of Temple, however, helped enormously
  - Mixing volunteers with contractors, the project finished well ahead of traditional Habitat builds
  - Local businesses have recently donated funds to allow financial capacity to start our next community
  - Habitat still accepting donations to further reduce the interest balance
  - Meet all criteria for Green Features/Sustainability
- Homeowners Association
  - Provides continuum of maintenance and support for habitat community for vets
  - Provides landscaping and some home exterior maintenance, access to community center, etc.
- Project ultimately completed only 1 month behind from schedule
- Myths
  - These are rentals
  - Project is fully funded
  - All of the homes are full
  - Habitat gives away homes
  - Individual only
  - No widows
  - Disabled are disqualified
- FACT
  - Ownership only
  - Less than \$250,000 funded
  - There are still over 15 homes
  - No, they pay a reduced mortgage
  - Couples are accepted
  - Non-remarried widows can apply
  - These are all handicapped accessible