



WARRIOR VILLAGE PROJECT

The Bugle: Vol 1, Issue 2, October 2019

www.WarriorVillageProject.com

PROGRESS REPORT

September was a great month for our Project!

Our students at San Marcos High School returned to school on August 20. Chris Geldert, Building Industry Technology Academy (BITA) Instructor, worked feverishly over the summer to get ready for them to start building.

Mike McSweeney, Senior Public Policy Advisor, Building Industry Association of San Diego County, talked to our students about his experience as a General Contractor and answered questions about current career opportunities in the construction industry.

Michael E. Robinson, Project Architect and Architect of Record for our cottages, told our students about his industry experience as an Architect and General Contractor and presented his architectural plans for our cottages.

Sponsors stepped forward to support our students and our veterans. [The Grainger Foundation](#) was our first business sponsor to grant us a cash donation, in the form of a generous \$5,000 check.

The timely donation and delivery of lumber from [Reliable Wholesale Lumber, Inc.](#), a Building Industry Association member and longtime supporter of the BITA program, enabled our students to start building on schedule in September.

[Simpson Strong-Tie](#), also a Building Industry Association member and longtime supporter of career development programs, donated hardware to assemble the lumber into floors for our cottages.

The Grainger Foundation

The Grainger Foundation supports the Warrior Village Project with a \$5,000 donation to The San Marcos Promise.

[See more](#)



Reliable Wholesale Lumber, Inc. donated the lumber needed to construct our first two cottages.

[See more](#)



Simpson Strong-Tie donated hardware to assemble the floors for our first two cottages.

[See more](#)



Twenty-four BITA Students at San Marcos High School started building two cottages.

[See more](#)

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FUTURE EVENTS

Watch for our Website:
WarriorVillageProject.com
 Will launch in October.

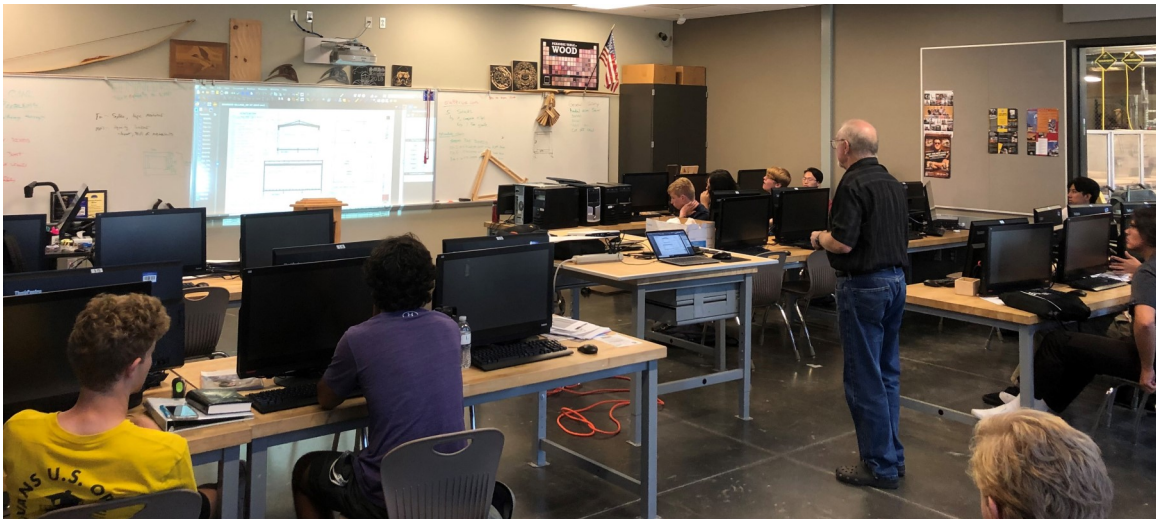
VIP PROFILE: Michael E. Robinson, Architect

The Warrior Village Project is a collaboration of building industry trade groups, nonprofits serving veterans, high schools and community colleges, and business sponsors working together to *provide affordable, permanent housing for homeless veterans while training the next generation of home-builders*. One of the individuals working to make the Warrior Village Project a success is [Michael E. Robinson](#), Project Architect and the Architect of Record for our Warrior Village Project cottage. Michael is a 1974 graduate of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo School of Architecture.

I have known Michael since 2005. I met him when my wife and I asked him to design our dream home in Fallbrook. At that time, Michael had 30 years of experience as an architect. But, what really impressed us was that as a General Contractor he had also built houses. He could produce beautiful architectural drawings, but he had also worked as a framer and general contractor in his younger days. We love the home that Michael designed for us, and we forged a lasting friendship. As an added bonus, Michael has a Tae Kwon Do Black Belt, which helps when he is managing our consultants!

It had been a long time since I had seen or talked to Michael when I asked him to meet me for lunch in September 2018. Michael told me about his Basic Shelter Project, an idea he had been working on to provide shelter to refugees from war and conflict, earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes and other natural or man-made cataclysmic events. I told him about the idea I had for the Warrior Village Project. I asked him if he knew a hungry, young architect who would work cheaply to design a cottage for the Warrior Village Project. Without hesitation, Michael said that he would do it for me. Michael is a busy architect whose services are in high demand, but he has devoted many hours to design our cottage and manage our consultants for free. In the interest of full disclosure, I confess that I buy him a (cheap) lunch occasionally to show my appreciation, and to keep him motivated!

I was elated when Michael volunteered his services. One would think that it would be an easy task to design a simple 400 sq. ft. cottage. But, we needed a design that could be built by students in modules on school campuses, transported to a permanent site, and joined together on a permanent foundation to form a permanent dwelling. And, to make sure that our cottage would be acceptable to the community, we needed it to be indistinguishable from a traditional “stick built” home so that it would not look like a mobile home. My request to Michael was to design an inexpensive, easy-to-build cottage that could be sited in a village of cottages, but could also be maneuvered into small backyards as Accessory Dwelling Units (aka ADUs or Granny Flats). It would have to be built to Factory-Built Housing standards, but also meet the building codes for permanent dwellings in many jurisdictions in Southern California. I knew that no one was better qualified to take on the challenge or would do a better job than Michael, and I am very grateful for his help.



Michael E. Robinson presented his cottage plans at San Marcos High School.

SCHOOL UPDATE: North County Trade Tech High School

[North County Trade Tech High School](#) (Trade Tech) is the second school in San Diego County to join the California Homebuilding Foundation's [Building Industry Technology Academy](#) (BITA) program. Trade Tech joined the BITA program because Principal Phil Lutgen wants to increase the opportunities for his students by expanding the school's curriculum to include residential building technologies. The Warrior Village Project is working with Trade Tech to get ready for Trade Tech students to start building a cottage during the 2020 - 2021 academic year.

For 11 years, Trade Tech has provided an alternative to high school students seeking preparation for college and careers through hands-on, STEM-centered learning. Trade Tech is a tuition free, public charter school operating under a charter approved by the Vista Unified School District Board of Trustees. The school is bringing [Career Technical Education](#) into the 21st century and ensuring that its students are prepared for success in life, college and high skill, high wage professions.

Based on research of labor market needs in North County, a decision was made to focus on preparing students for careers in the building and construction industry. Recognizing the emerging opportunities in green building and alternative energy, Trade Tech students are exposed to state-of-the-art STEM curricula, equipment, and labs to prepare them for their futures. This decision was affirmed when, in February 2006, over 100 industry professionals attended a roundtable and joined in the planning. Another roundtable was held in April, with an additional 100 people representing community colleges, state universities, apprenticeship programs, community leaders and additional industry leaders, including architects, engineers and building trades professionals.

Trade Tech opened its doors in the Fall of 2008, and moved to its current location in Vista in August 2010. The school started with 36 students and has steadily grown to its current enrollment of 196 students in grades 9 through 12. Trade Tech is a traditional high school in that the school meets five days a week and offers English, Math and Social Studies. What really makes Trade Tech different is its focus on Relationships, Relevance and Rigor. Students engage when they are a part of a team that cares about them. Small classes and hands-on work lend themselves to students engaging in their studies. The Trade Tech way must be working, because its graduation rate has been 99% over the last 10 years.

When you walk through Trade Tech's facility, you are impressed by the high level of activity for such a small school. The students look busy, because they are. The students are engaged and working in their shops, labs, and computer design centers. Trade Tech students already know how to build. They have been learning building skills in the school's existing commercial construction program in classes led by teachers Shaun Geahigan and Dadre Rudolph. When you walk around the campus you see construction projects under way, projects not too dissimilar to the cottages that Trade Tech students will build, albeit on a smaller scale..



To learn more about the awesome students and faculty of North County Trade Tech, watch [this video](#).

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

On August 20, our [San Marcos High School](#) (SMHS) Building Industry Technology Academy (BITA) students returned to school to start the 2019 - 2020 academic year. We have 24 students enrolled in the inaugural BITA class at SMHS, the first BITA class in San Diego County.

The students started preparing for the construction of two cottages by building 'rolling stem walls' to support the platform floors during construction. The rolling stem walls are sturdy, wood frame boxes on casters that slide under the perimeter of the cottage modules at six points to raise the floor and make it possible to move the modules around the build site.

Set on top of the rolling stem walls, the floors are elevated so that the areas under the floor joists can later be accessed to install drainage lines from the sinks, shower and toilet. With two cottages, and two modules per cottage, the students had to build 24 rolling stem walls. Why are they called rolling stem walls? Because Chris Geldert invented them and he got the naming rights (patent pending)!

The first load of lumber, to build the platform floors, was donated and delivered by [Reliable Wholesale Lumber, Inc.](#) on September 19. [Simpson Strong-Tie](#) donated and delivered [floor joist hangers](#) to secure seventeen 2" x 8" floor joists for each of the four modules. Our students had to cut a lot of 2" x 8" lumber before they could even start building.

By October 10, our students had completed framing 4 platform floor modules and had started measuring (twice) and cutting (once) 4' x 8', 3/4" sheets of tongue and groove plywood floor sheathing. Most of work is done during long Thursday class sessions. At the end of the week the students can take the weekend off knowing that they had a good week on the job!

Mike McSweeney, Senior Policy Advisor for the Building Industry Association of San Diego County, and a licensed General Contractor, has volunteered on several occasions to help teach our students the 'tricks of the trade'.

At all times, our students work under the careful supervision and watchful eye of their Instructor, Chris Geldert, but I have been really impressed with how well the students work independently and as teams. It is amazing how capable these young people are when doing meaningful work that they clearly enjoy.

The American work ethic is alive and well in the Building Industry Technology Academy program at SMHS!



PARTNERS

The Warrior Village Project is a community effort. It is a collaboration of building industry trade groups, nonprofits serving veterans, high schools and community colleges, business and private donors, and private citizens working together to **provide affordable, permanent housing for homeless veterans while training the next generation of homebuilders**. Each of the organizations contributing to the Project is providing expertise and resources consistent with its unique capabilities and the mission of its organization. Our Industry, Non-Profit, and School Partners include:

Industry Partners



The [California Homebuilding Foundation](#) (CHF) provides the Building Industry Technology Academy (BITA) curriculum and grants to participating high schools. CHF recruits industry support for schools and facilitates interaction with program sites and local industry.



The [Building Industry Association of San Diego County](#) (BIA) and its individual members are supporting the Warrior Village Project by providing instructional support for the Building Industry Technology Curriculum program and contributing tools and construction materials to our participating schools.



[The San Marcos Promise](#) (TSM) is the fiscal sponsor for the Warrior Village Project at San Marcos High School. TSM is a 501(c)(3) that accepts donations to fund the purchase of tools and materials for the construction of our cottages at San Marcos High School.



Veterans helping Veterans - [Homes For Our Troops](#) (HFOT) has built 300 homes for severely wounded veterans, including 22 in San Diego and Riverside Counties. HFOT is helping the Warrior Village Project identify homes where our cottages can be installed as ADUs (i.e. 'Granny Flats').



Veterans Helping Veterans - The [Gary Sinise Foundation](#) has built 57 homes for severely wounded veterans, including 6 in Southern California. The Foundation is helping the Warrior Village Project identify homes where our cottages can be installed as ADUs (i.e. 'Granny Flats').



Veterans Helping Veterans - The [Veterans Village of San Diego](#) (VVSD) is the leading nonprofit focused on the needs of homeless veterans in San Diego County. VVSD will help identify deserving veterans to reside in our cottages and provide transition and follow-up services to those veterans.

School Partners

Our participating schools include [San Marcos High School](#) in San Marcos, and [North County Trade Tech](#) in Vista. These schools joined the Building Industry Technology Academy program in June 2019. We are hoping to rapidly grow our network of participating schools throughout San Diego County.

SPONSORS

The Warrior Village Project is a community effort. To succeed, we need financial support. We have been receiving a tremendous response to our pleas for help from individuals and businesses.

We are grateful to [The Grainger Foundation](#) for a generous \$5,000 donation to [The San Marcos Promise](#) for the Warrior Village Project. The donation was presented in the SMHS workshop, in the form of a suitably large check, by Carlos Ramirez, Manager, Branch Network, Grainger, Inc. (San Diego 723 & San Marcos 721). Carlos was joined in the check presentation by his Grainger colleague, Meggan Ochoa.

Receiving the check on behalf of The San Marcos Promise was Chris Geldert (BITA Instructor,) Angel Casarez (BITA student and CTE Ambassador), Lisa Stout (Executive Director, The San Marcos Promise), and Mark Pilcher (Warrior Village Project volunteer). Thank you Carlos and Meggan!



We are also indebted to [Reliable Wholesale Lumber, Inc.](#), who donated the lumber for our first two cottages, and rushed us enough lumber to start building the floors. Reliable is a Building Industry Association member and a great friend to the California Homebuilding Foundation. Randall Richards, EVP of Operations & Sales, quickly responded to our request for help. Reliable has been a staunch supporter of the Building Industry Technology Academy (BITA) program. Randy personally heads up BITA's Design Build Competition every year. Thank you Reliable and Randy for all that you do!



Joining our rapidly growing roster of generous business sponsors this month is [Simpson Strong-Tie](#). Simpson Strong-Tie donated the hardware needed to assemble the floors for our cottages. Angel Leon, Training Specialist and Outreach Coordinator, personally delivered floor joist hangers from Riverside to make sure that they arrived in time for our students to start building. Thank you Angel!

We look forward to future visits from Angel, delivering hardware for our trusses and sharing his wisdom about great careers in the building industry.

Next month we will introduce more of the businesses who have committed to help our students and veterans.



DONATE TO THE WARRIOR VILLAGE PROJECT

We can provide truly affordable, permanent housing. But, we can't do it for free. To succeed, we need financial support. The materials required to build our cottages cost about \$25,000 per cottage. The cost of installing a cottage as an Accessory Dwelling Unit will depend on the home site. But, it should cost about \$15,000 to \$25,000 per cottage. Hence, we can provide permanent housing for a veteran or a couple for \$40,000 to \$50,000. This is a bargain when compared to the cost of other 'affordable' housing projects. "In 2016, it cost an average of \$425,000 to build one unit of affordable housing in California, according to the Turner Center" (*Los Angeles Times, April 16, 2018*).

Donors who wish to donate to San Marcos High School for the construction of our first two cottages can make a contribution online through [The San Marcos Promise](#), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that supports programs in the San Marcos Unified School District. When you donate online, please 'Leave A Comment' indicating that your donation is for the Warrior Village Project. Alternatively, you can mail a check, made payable to The San Marcos Promise, to:

The San Marcos Promise
255 Pico Ave, Ste 103
San Marcos, CA 92069

If you send a check to The San Marcos Promise, please write on the Memo Line that your donation is for the Warrior Village Project.

If you are interested in supporting the Warrior Village Project and would like more information, please contact Mark.L.Pilcher@gmail.com. Our website, WarriorVillageProject.com, should 'go live' during October 2019. The website will include information about the Warrior Village Project as well as links to our Partners' websites.

***Please help us to
provide affordable, permanent housing for homeless
veterans while training the next generation of homebuilders.***

PROJECT CONTACTS

Volunteer.....	Mark L. Pilcher	760-666-0077 ...	Mark.L.Pilcher@gmail.com
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If you would like to receive future editions of our Newsletter via email, please send an email to Mark.L.Pilcher@gmail.com. Thank you for your interest and support.