



WARRIOR VILLAGE PROJECT

The Bugle: Vol 1, Issue 1, September 2019

www.WarriorVillageProject.com

PROGRESS REPORT

The Warrior Village Project was born in a conference room at Palomar College in April 2018. I met with Suzanne Sebring, Director of Occupational & Noncredit Programs, and Nichol Roe, Associate Dean, Workforce Development & Extended Studies, to “pitch” the idea of schools, non-profits, and the building industry collaborating to address the needs of homeless veterans in our community. The concept was simple: students would build cottages on their campuses that could be transported to sites to form communities of homes for veterans. Students would learn building trades, and veterans would receive permanent, affordable housing.

The encouragement I received from Suzanne and Nichol launched me on a tour of San Diego County to talk with other educators, leaders of non-profits and building industry executives to determine how this vision could be turned into reality. I needed to identify the pieces of the puzzle, and figure out how to put them together.

I met [Borre Winckel](#), President & CEO, and [Mike McSweeney](#), Sr. Policy Advisor, with the [Building Industry Association of San Diego County \(BIA\)](#). I learned about the severe shortage of skilled labor in the homebuilding industry. And I learned about industry initiatives to address the problem. Mike invited me to join him on a trip to Sacramento to meet Jill Herman, Program Director for the Building Industry Technology Academy (BITA) program offered by the [California Homebuilding Foundation \(CHF\)](#). The BITA program is a Career Technical Education (CTE) high school curriculum that integrates Common Core academic and CTE standards under the Building and Construction Trades sector pathway. Jill arranged a visit for us to Whitney High School to see a BITA program in action.

I left Sacramento convinced that building our cottages in a BITA program would be a win-win-win for students, veterans, and the building industry. This led to collaboration with the CHF and the BIA to introduce the BITA program and the Warrior Village Project to San Diego County high schools. By June 2019, we had enrolled two schools in the BITA program. Fifty students will be learning valuable skills while building the first two Warrior Village Project cottages this year.

As they say, the rest is history, or will be. In our case, the history is still being written, and will unfold in future newsletters. You will learn about others who are making major contributions to our Project, the students and their teachers who are building our cottages, and the non-profits and donors who are making it all possible.

Mark L. Pilcher, September 2019

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FUTURE EVENTS

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

VIP PROFILE: Jill Herman, BITA Program Director



As BITA Program Director, Jill Herman manages and oversees the California Homebuilding Foundation's [Building Industry Technology Academy \(BITA\)](#) program, which includes expanding the curriculum to campuses statewide, recruiting industry support and coordinating events that raise awareness for the program, as well as facilitates interaction with program sites and local industry.

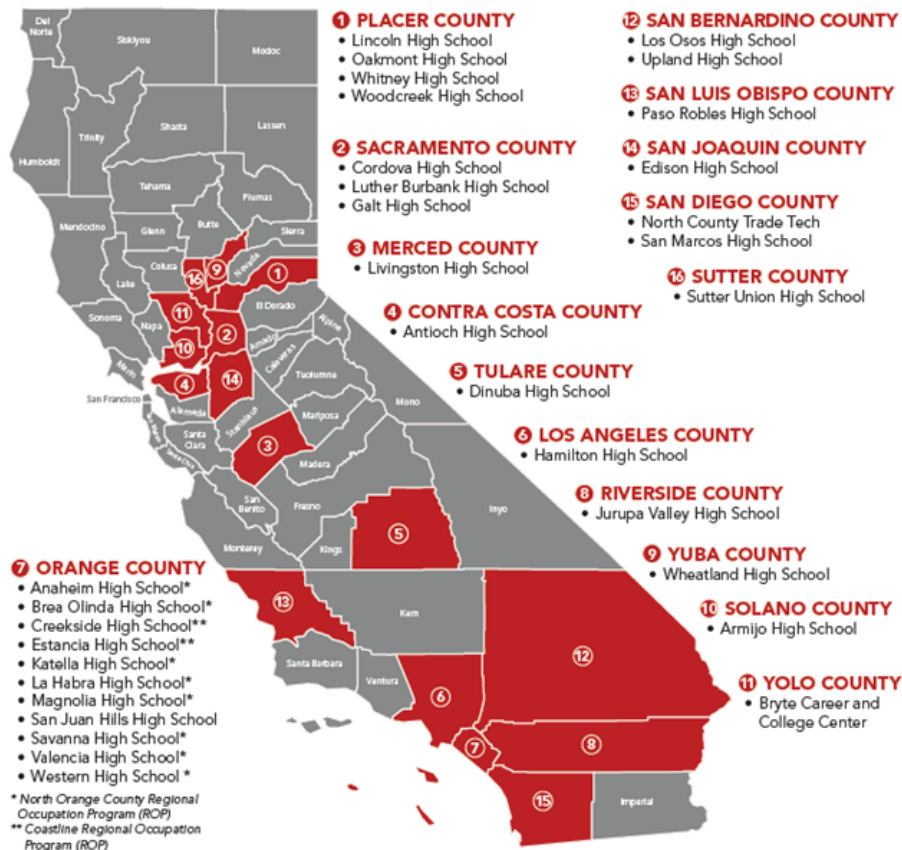
In March 2019, Jill coordinated a visit to two Orange County BITA school sites (Brea Olinda HS in Brea and Valencia HS in Placentia) for southern California teachers who were evaluating the BITA curriculum for their schools.

Jill's efforts have been very successful. In the last year 6 schools joined the BITA program, including the first two in San Diego County: San Marcos High School in San Marcos and North County Trade Tech High School in Vista. There are now 32 active BITA schools in 16 California counties.

If you want to learn more about how you can bring the BITA program to your school, contact [Jill Herman](#).

SCHOOLS IN THE BITA PROGRAM

BUILDING THE FUTURE OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY



There are 32 active schools in the BITA program, including two in San Diego County: San Marcos High School (SMHS) in San Marcos, and North County Trade Tech (Trade Tech) in Vista.

SCHOOL UPDATE: San Marcos High School

[San Marcos High School](#) (SMHS), the flagship high school in the San Marcos Unified School District, serves a population of 3,500 students from west San Marcos and communities south of the 78 freeway. SMHS works in liaison with its neighbors, [Cal State San Marcos](#) and [Palomar College](#), to provide students with a strong foundation in secondary education. The school offers many options that prepare them for life after high school, be it college entrance or a career field.

From the moment you walk onto the SMHS CAMPUS, you can tell that there is something special about the place. It is physically imposing. My first impression was that it looked more like a college than a high school. And then I discovered the secret sauce that really makes SMHS special: the teachers, the administration, and The San Marcos Promise.

[Mike McSweeney](#), my partner from the [Building Industry Association of San Diego County](#), and I were on campus for the first time on December 17, 2018 to talk to SMHS faculty about the Warrior Village Project and the BITA program. I had sent emails to anyone I could find in local high schools who might have an interest in building and construction trades. I think most of my emails entered a black hole hovering somewhere over SH 78, but a few made it to someone who cared enough to respond.

An SMHS [Career Technical Education](#) Teacher, Robert O'Neill, forwarded my email to Chris Geldert, SMHS' Cabinet & Furniture Instructor. Chris responded immediately and shared my email with Lisa Stout, Executive Director of [The San Marcos Promise](#). Lisa wrote: "This (the Warrior Village Project) is exactly the type of partnership and program our district and education foundation, The San Marcos Promise (TSMP), is looking to establish." "The San Marcos Promise strives to guide and support San Marcos students on their journeys to college and into the workforce." Lisa had been working with Chris and, Barry Zeait, Assistant Principal, "to help make things like The Warrior Village Project happen." Call it fate, or kismet, or just darn good luck, but we were destined to find each other.

If Mike McSweeney and I could have described the ideal education partners to launch the Warrior Village Project with, they would have looked exactly like Chris, Barry and Lisa. Chris is a highly accomplished cabinet maker and teacher. The quality of his instruction at SMHS is reflected in the bushels of blue ribbons his students win for their handcrafted furniture at the San Diego County Fair. Barry, a spirited Australian, is the ideal school administrator – the kind that figures out how to get something done, rather than finding reasons why it can't be.

SMHS has an excellent program of instruction. It would have been much easier for Chris, Barry and Lisa to rest on their laurels, and not respond to my email. But, that is not the kind of educators they are. When the Warrior Village Project succeeds, it will be in large measure to the efforts of Chris, Barry and Lisa, going the extra mile to make sure that their students have the opportunity and skills to succeed.



San Marcos High School craftsmanship on display at the San Diego County Fair, June 2019

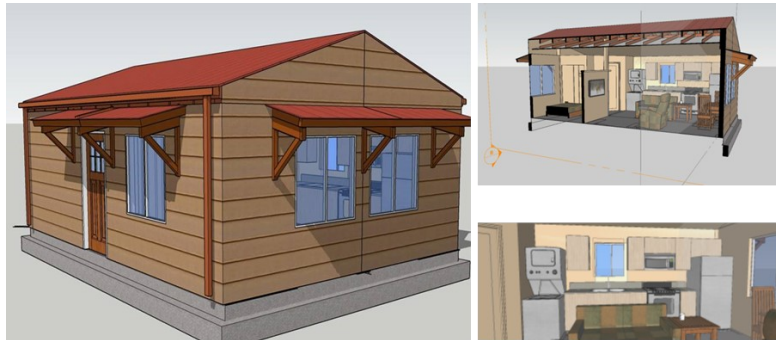
CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Our cottages will be constructed in two 8' - 6" wide, 24' long modules by students in high school building and construction classes. The construction and inspection process will conform to regulations for [Factory-Built Housing](#). The cottages will be constructed using traditional wood frame construction techniques and materials so that the skills the students learn while building the cottages will be transferrable to careers in the residential building industry. Our students will be learning project management, carpentry, electrical, painting, plumbing, and HVAC skills.

The modules will be transported to home sites on trucks where they will be joined as a permanent dwelling on a permanent foundation, indistinguishable from traditional 'stick built' homes. Our first two cottages will be installed as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs or 'Granny Flats').

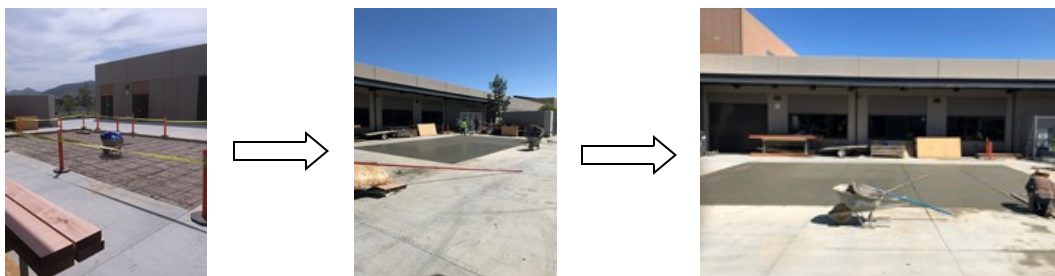
Our construction plans are for a generic cottage with an unspecified location. The plans for each cottage may need to be modified slightly to reflect the unique requirements of each home site once the installation site is identified. However, our cottage has been designed to comply with state and local building codes, including California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (i.e. Title 24) for Climate Zones 03 (San Francisco), 10 (Fallbrook), 12 (Sacramento), 15 (Palm Springs) and 16 (Mammoth).

Our architectural and engineering plans will be reviewed for compliance with California building codes by a [Third-Party Agency](#) certified by the State of California as a [Design Approval Agency](#) for [Factory-Built Housing](#). Approval of our plans by the Third-Party Agency will allow us to build cottages at our participating schools with the assurance that our cottages will comply with state and local building codes.



The cottage exterior (e.g. window and door styles, siding/stucco, roofing materials, awnings, color schemes, etc.) can be customized for each cottage.

The Third-Party Agency will also serve as the [Quality Assurance Agency](#), performing all inspections of our cottages on campus during construction that would be performed by the building departments of local jurisdictions for 'stick built' homes. The local jurisdiction's building department will inspect all site work (civil works, foundation, drainage, utility connections, etc.) and perform all inspections required once a cottage is on the installation site until a Certificate of Occupancy is issued.



Will Wiley and the SMHS M&O Department created an ideal cottage build site outside of the Cabinet and Furniture shop. Thanks Gents!

PARTNER UPDATE

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.

Non-profit Partners



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.

SPONSOR UPDATE

The Warrior Village Project is a community effort. We can provide truly affordable, permanent housing. But, we can't do it for free. To succeed, we need the financial support of our community. The materials required to build our cottages will 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, including taxes and fees. 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 Terner Center" (*Los Angeles Times, April 16, 2018*).

Private citizens have made major contributions to our Project. [Michael E. Robinson](#), Project Architect and Architect of Record for our cottage, has donated many hours to design our cottage and manage the work of engineers and contractors to produce our construction drawings. His contribution has been essential to our success. Michael will be the subject of a VIP Profile in a future newsletter.

Several professional contractors have donated their expertise and time to help Michael produce our construction drawings. [Art Smith](#), of Service Electric in Fallbrook, shared his expertise to help produce our electrical plan. [Treavor Leeman](#), owner of T L Fire Design, designed the fire sprinkler system. Mike, TJ and Matthew Amos of [MLA General Contractors, Inc.](#) have been steadfast supporters of our Project, and have provided valuable guidance and encouragement throughout the process.

We are grateful to private donors, [Rita and Dale Geldert](#), who made a generous contribution to purchase the tools and materials required to start construction of our first two cottages at San Marcos High School in September 2019. We are seeking cash grants and in-kind donations of building materials to complete the cottages over the course of the 9-month, 2019 - 2020 academic year.

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.

In future editions of our newsletter we will explain how you can donate to help cover the costs to install our cottages as Accessory Dwelling Units, and how you can help us provide support services to veterans who move into our cottages.

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.

Next month we will start introducing the many local businesses who have committed to help our students and veterans.

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

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER

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.

PROJECT CONTACTS

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