



City of Arts & Innovation

# News Release

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## **Riverside Project Wins Governor's Award for Historic Preservation**

*'Home Front at Camp Anza' Brings New Life to Old Officers Club*

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The State of California will bestow its highest honor to Home Front at Camp Anza, a unique project that reinvented a dilapidated old Army building as a historic centerpiece for a thriving new community designed for veterans and their families.

The Home Front at Camp Anza project will be presented with the 2016 Governor's Historic Preservation Award at a special ceremony in Sacramento on November 10.

“This project is the culmination of several different entities working successfully together with the common goal of providing quality affordable housing and excellent services to our veterans,” said Riverside City Councilman Jim Perry, who represents the area. “It's through this historic preservation project that we are able to provide others the opportunity to succeed in life.”

Located in the Arlanza area of Riverside, the restored 1942 Officers Club is now surrounded by 30 new affordable residential units in compatible bungalow clusters. Once slated for demolition, the Officers Club is now eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources and the National Register of Historic Places.

The project ensured maximum retention of the Officers Club's original design and materials and created a history room to commemorate its military past as part of Camp Anza, a WWII staging area for the Los Angeles Port of Embarkation that processed more than 625,000 troops en route to and from the Pacific Theater, as well as Italian POWs.

“Home Front at Camp Anza is an incredible example of how we are better together in Riverside,” Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “So many people, agencies and groups came together to make this happen for our veterans – it's a best practice for the rest of the country.”

The four-year project was possible through partnership between the City of Riverside and Wakeland Housing and Development Corporation, a leading developer of affordable housing in Southern

California, as well as Mercy House Living Centers, which provides on-site services for residents in the historic community building.

Funding for the \$14 million project came from a variety of sources, including the City of Riverside, County of Riverside, the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee, U.S. Bank and the Home Depot Foundation.

This unique project has become a point of local pride and gained state and national attention, including from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

“Home Front at Camp Anza is a model for affordable housing and historic preservation partnership,” said project historic consultant and architectural historian Jennifer Mermilliod. “Through uncovering the story of Camp Anza and reinventing the Officers Club for a new generation, this project has demonstrated a true commitment to neighborhood revitalization while also honoring our veterans and the City’s critical role in the WWII war effort.”