



MEETING  
AN UNMET NEED *for*  
OUR VETERANS



THE PENFED FOUNDATION  
VA PALO ALTO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Each year, more than 63,000 veterans of the United States military seek medical treatment at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System in Palo Alto, CA. The system is one of the largest and most medically advanced VA facilities available to veterans living in the Western U.S. and Pacific Rim. It serves veterans with a range of medical needs, from cancer treatment to traumatic brain injury, amputation and spinal cord injury.



Many veterans who receive outpatient treatment at the VA campus travel from all over the western United States and as far away as Guam, Alaska, and the Hawaiian Islands. Medical appointments can be a trying experience for anyone with an illness or injury; however, when these appointments are coupled with the stress of expensive and long distance travel, it can become incredibly difficult. In addition, financial constraints and expensive hotel rates in the Palo Alto area (\$120-\$180/night) force some veterans to stay in substandard accommodations. Many forego their doctor's appointments, surgeries and rehabilitation sessions due to high costs of accommodations, while others sleep in their cars or in the waiting rooms in order to make their much needed medical appointments.

The existing outpatient lodging facility on the VA campus will be demolished in 2013. It is only capable of accommodating 13,074 of the 15,561 veterans whose annual out-patient care requires an overnight stay. It fails to meet the building compliance requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the US Fire Administration. For veterans with impaired mobility, this ADA non-compliance only serves to emphasize their physical ailments and impede their recovery.



As our nation's heroes fight to recover, they should not have to face the additional stress resulting from insufficient lodging and financial burdens. These men and women, from World War II to present, have served our country in times of war and in peace. Now they need our help.

The PenFed Foundation is addressing this problem by constructing the Defenders Lodge, a "home away from home," to provide veterans with comforting accommodations while they receive treatment at the VA. Free to outpatients and their caregivers, the Defenders Lodge will be 100% ADA compliant and will provide annually more than 20,000 nights of stay. With most patients coming for appointments once a month, requiring two nights of stay each visit, this translates into a savings of \$2,500-\$4,000 per veteran each year.

*"[The Defenders Lodge] will stand as a very important symbol of the repayment that we can never give, but the gratitude that we most certainly want to show."*

— former Secretary of State  
Condoleezza Rice

We need your help to provide for this urgent need. By supporting the Defenders Lodge Campaign, you can help ensure that veterans and their caregivers — who have sacrificed so much — have a safe, comfortable, affordable and convenient place to stay while receiving world-class treatment.

*One thing is certain:*

*With concerns about their*

*health, finances, and*

*transportation, the last thing*

*they need to worry about is*

*where they will sleep.*



## HELPING OUR HEROES

**Who are “they” and what do “they” need? They are our nation’s defenders, primarily residing in the Western U.S., but many are from all over the country. Veterans from every generation — those who served during World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan — fly or drive to the VA Palo Alto Health Care System for treatment, operations, and therapy. This hospital system serves our nation’s most seriously wounded veterans — veterans who will need complex care for the rest of their lives.**

**The sacrifices made by these men and women are significant and life-changing.**

# THE VA IN PALO ALTO



The VA Palo Alto Health Care System consists of three inpatient facilities located in Palo Alto, Menlo Park, and Livermore; plus seven outpatient clinics in San Jose, Capitola, Monterey, Stockton, Modesto, Fremont, and Sonora. Affiliated with the Stanford University School of Medicine, these facilities provide some of the world's best healthcare, with cutting-edge technology and first-class medical services.

The Palo Alto VA provides a full range of patient care services in areas of medicine, surgery, psychiatry, rehabilitation, neurology, oncology, dentistry, geriatrics, and extended care. Serving more than 63,000 veterans annually, the VA campus is home to a variety of regional treatment centers, including:

- Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center
- Spinal Cord Injury Center
- Comprehensive Rehabilitation Center
- Traumatic Brain Injury Center
- Western Blind Rehabilitation Center
- Geriatric Research Educational and Clinical Center
- Homeless Veterans Rehabilitation program
- National Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Amputee Center

The Palo Alto Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center is one of five VA facilities in the country designed to provide intensive rehabilitative care to veterans and service members who have experienced severe injuries (including brain injuries) to more than one organ system.

# WHAT IS POLYTRAUMA?

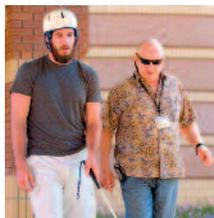
Polytrauma care is for veterans and returning service members with multiple, complex combat-related injuries. Polytraumatic injuries include:

- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Extensive Organ Damage
- Complicated Fractures
- Visual Impairment
- Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Hearing Loss
- Amputations
- Burns
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

These injuries cause physical, cognitive, psychological, or psychosocial impairments, functional disability, and may be life threatening. Any one of these conditions alone presents an uphill battle to recovery; however, when a veteran suffers from two or more of these conditions, then the battle is that much more challenging and often leads to many life alterations.

Established by an act of Congress in 2005, the VA Polytrauma System of Care provides comprehensive, high-quality, and inter-disciplinary care to patients. Teams of physicians from every relevant field administer an individually tailored rehabilitation plan to help the patient recover and readjust to civilian life.

Rehabilitation could include physical therapy, occupational therapy, burn treatment, psychological counseling, speech/language therapy or cognitive retraining and community re-entry rehabilitation. For veterans and returning service members with multiple traumatic injuries, polytrauma care is essential and often continues for the rest of their lives.



# THE SITUATION TODAY



The VA Palo Alto Health Care System serves veterans from across the country. Many of the veterans must travel more than 100 miles to receive treatment. Some need a place to stay for the night to ensure timely arrival for surgery or tests the next day. Others stay for longer periods, as they measure their recovery in months and years. Regardless of the length of their recovery, one thing is constant: these veterans and their caregivers need a place to

stay throughout their treatment.

The VA campus is near both Stanford University and a very active business district. While hotel rooms exist near the medical center, affordable accommodations are not readily available and there is no guarantee that these rooms will accommodate veterans' medical needs.

In order to address this need in the past, the hospital modified a former (temporary) surgical ward into a lodging facility. The result was a layout that resembled a hospital rather than a place where veterans could relax and recover with caregivers. Since its conversion from a surgical ward to a lodging facility in 1995, this building is no longer compliant with California building code requirements, and is scheduled to be demolished in 2013.

Unfortunately, the demand for medical care and the need for temporary lodging by veterans and their caregivers is not likely to subside. Given the level of care required by wounded military personnel from Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as aging veterans who served in World War II, Korea and Vietnam, patient visits and the need for affordable lodging will increase through the next two decades and beyond. It is our responsibility to provide these brave men and women with a tangible sign of our appreciation by ensuring they are able to access top-notch medical care at the VA without the additional financial burden of expensive lodging.

*This is our obligation as  
Americans: to ensure that  
these families do not suffer  
a financial hardship  
alongside a medical hardship  
while seeking care at the  
Palo Alto VA.*



## THE SOLUTION IS SIMPLE

**The Defenders Lodge is a gift from the PenFed Foundation and its supporters to our nation’s veterans in an effort to ease the veterans financial burden while seeking outpatient treatment.**

**The PenFed Foundation has committed to raise \$11 million for the construction of the Defenders Lodge, which will contain 52 rooms with a total of 104 beds and provide free lodging to all patients and their caregivers. All future operating and maintenance expenses will be assumed by the VA.**

**While the VA Palo Alto Health Care System has the funding to provide excellent medical care for generations of veterans, lodging and other acute needs outside of these health services still exist and remain unfunded.**

**It is here where Americans have to step up and help provide the resources around medical care that are essential to veterans’ recovery.**

**Due to the lack of affordable lodging and reliable transportation, veterans often delay treatment or cancel surgery and appointments critical to their long-term health. The Defenders Lodge will be located adjacent to the main hospital, polytrauma unit and spinal cord center, making accessibility to appointments and therapy treatments easier for those with limited mobility — such as those who are amputees, blind, or wheelchair bound.**

The Defenders Lodge will provide short-term (one to seven nights) accommodations for outpatient veterans and service members, along with their caregivers, while they receive the care and treatment they require.

In addition to easing the financial burden of veterans treated at the VA, the Defenders Lodge will provide them a place to relax with their caregivers and interact with other veterans and caregivers who have had similar experiences both on and off the battlefield. This sense of community, and the peace of mind that comes with knowing they have a place to sleep, creates one less worry during the recovery process for a wounded veteran and his or her family.

The Defenders Lodge will be a home away from home for our nation's veterans. It will be a place of healing.

*“The combat wounded are facing years . . . years . . . of ongoing care to rehabilitate. The Defenders Lodge will provide these very brave men and women and their caregivers a very high quality and free place to stay as they continue to receive the care that we owe them and that they so well deserve.”*

— Deborah Lee James

# WHO AND WHY



During his second tour of Iraq, Sgt. McLaughlin sustained a head injury and swelling of the brain. As a result, he is suffering from hearing and vision loss. He lives four hours away from the VA Polytrauma Center and is unable to drive to the hospital for treatment. Sgt. McLaughlin says the new Defenders Lodge will help with morale as he and other veterans fight to recover. “Soldiers who have housing and transportation issues [will] have one less thing to worry about so they can concentrate on their appointments and help themselves to get better and back on track with their lives.”



Gunnery Sgt. Johnson\* is a veteran of the Korean War. He and his wife are in their eighties, live on a fixed income and travel more than three and a half hours to and from the Palo Alto VA hospital. “Trips to the doctor and the VA are hard on us. To make things easier, we try to schedule multiple appointments over several days. Without a building like the Defenders Lodge we would never be able to make all of the appointments I need to come to. My wife and I really appreciate having a free place to stay.”



Staff Sgt. (Retired) Meyer\* is an Iraq/Afghanistan veteran from Guam who was admitted to the Women’s Trauma Program at Palo Alto. “My husband came with me, but we were not able to find a place to accommodate the both of us. Since his involvement in the Family Group program was crucial to my recovery, we did not know what we were going to do. Luckily he was able to stay at the existing lodge on campus and he could fully participate in group sessions and help me heal.”

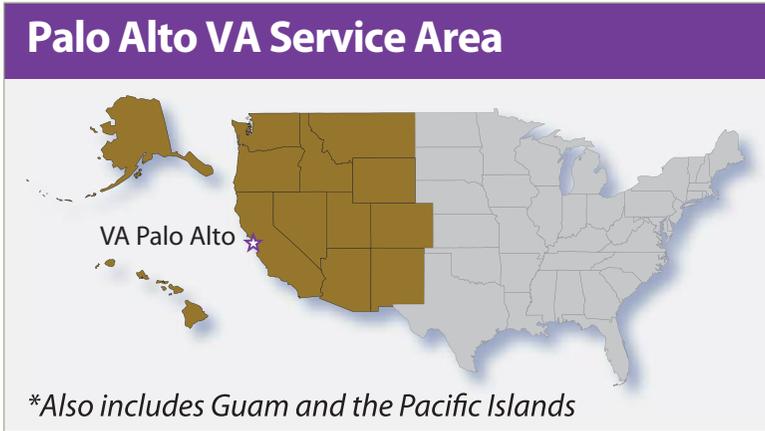


Mr. Barkley, a Vietnam veteran, travels to the VA Hospital from Alaska for his cancer treatment. He thinks the atmosphere in the present lodge is that of an old hospital room. “It’s cold and damp. I’ll admit it ... I end up crying and miss my family. But I need to be here for treatments—the doctors are great and that’s why I’m here. I believe the PenFed Foundation came up with a great idea for a new lodge, and if they can make that happen, it would relieve a lot of stress.”

*\* names or titles have been changed for confidentiality purposes*

# THE DEFENDERS LODGE POPULATION

## WHERE DO THE VETERANS AT THE VA PALO ALTO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM COME FROM?



## WHY DO THE VETERANS COME TO THE VA PALO ALTO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM?

**Veterans who stay at the Defenders Lodge receive the following types of treatment:**

- Chemotherapy
- Spinal Cord Injuries
- Sleep testing
- Physical and occupational therapy
- Vision treatment
- Radiation
- Major/Minor surgeries
- Gastrointestinal treatment
- Dental treatment

## HOW MANY VETERANS NEED A PLACE TO STAY?

In 2011:

**958,881** outpatient visits were recorded at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System

**63,844** veterans received treatment at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System

**15,561** of those veterans needed multi/overnight accommodations

**13,074** veterans received lodging at the existing, outdated, temporary lodging facility

**2,487** veterans had to seek alternative lodging in the Palo Alto area

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## WHAT IS THE COST SAVINGS FOR A VETERAN TO STAY AT THE DEFENDERS LODGE?

Average number of visits to the VA Palo Alto Health Care System: **12-36 per year**

Average Length of Stay: **2 nights per visit (up to 6 weeks)**

Cost of lodging in the Palo Alto area: **\$120-\$180 per night**

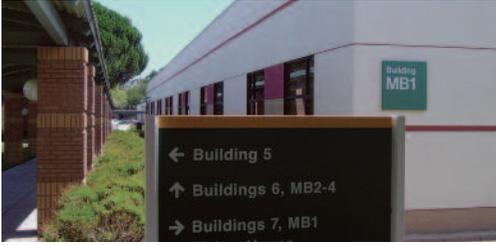
Average savings per visit by staying at the Defenders Lodge: **\$240 - \$360**

Average savings per year by staying at the Defenders Lodge: **\$2,500 - \$4,000**

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Total annual savings to our veterans: **\$3,088,800 per year on average**  
(assumes 10% vacancy)

# BEFORE AND AFTER



## **BEFORE (THE EXISTING FACILITY): Scheduled to be demolished in 2012**

- Does not meet standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act or the National Fire Protection Association (ADA/NFPA)
- Built in 1989 as a temporary/modular surgical unit after the San Francisco earthquake and was to be demolished after new hospital was built
- Existing facility became outdated in 2000
- Building structure degraded
- Floors buckle and are in need of constant repair
- Doors do not have locks
- Surgical-ward layout with up to five people per room
- Not designed for caregiver support
- No laundry facilities or comfortable common areas
- Limited/insufficient meal preparation facilities — two microwaves and one snack machine

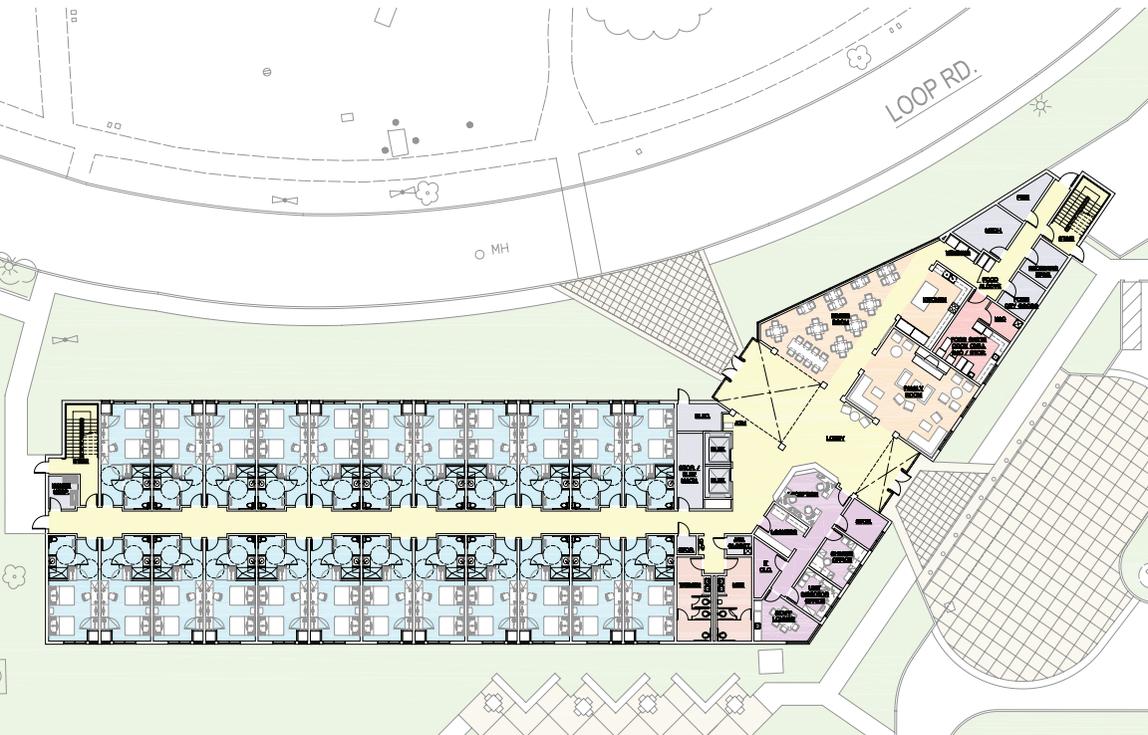


## **AFTER (THE DEFENDERS LODGE)**

- 100% Americans with Disabilities Act and National Fire Protection Association (ADA/NFPA) Compliant
- Designed by a hotel architect, the Defenders Lodge will be a modern, efficient, friendly and welcoming environment
- Private and secure living accommodations for veterans and their caregivers
- Prominently located on the VA medical campus, making accessibility easy
- First class kitchen and laundry room
- Activity room and reading room

# FLOOR PLAN

The Defenders Lodge will replace the existing temporary lodging facility, scheduled to be torn down in 2012, and provide free, comfortable and safe accommodations for the more than 19,600 outpatients and their caregivers who visit the Palo Alto VA campus each year for treatment.



**Total Rooms: 52**

**Total Beds: 104**

**Total Gross Area: 34,076 ft.<sup>2</sup>**

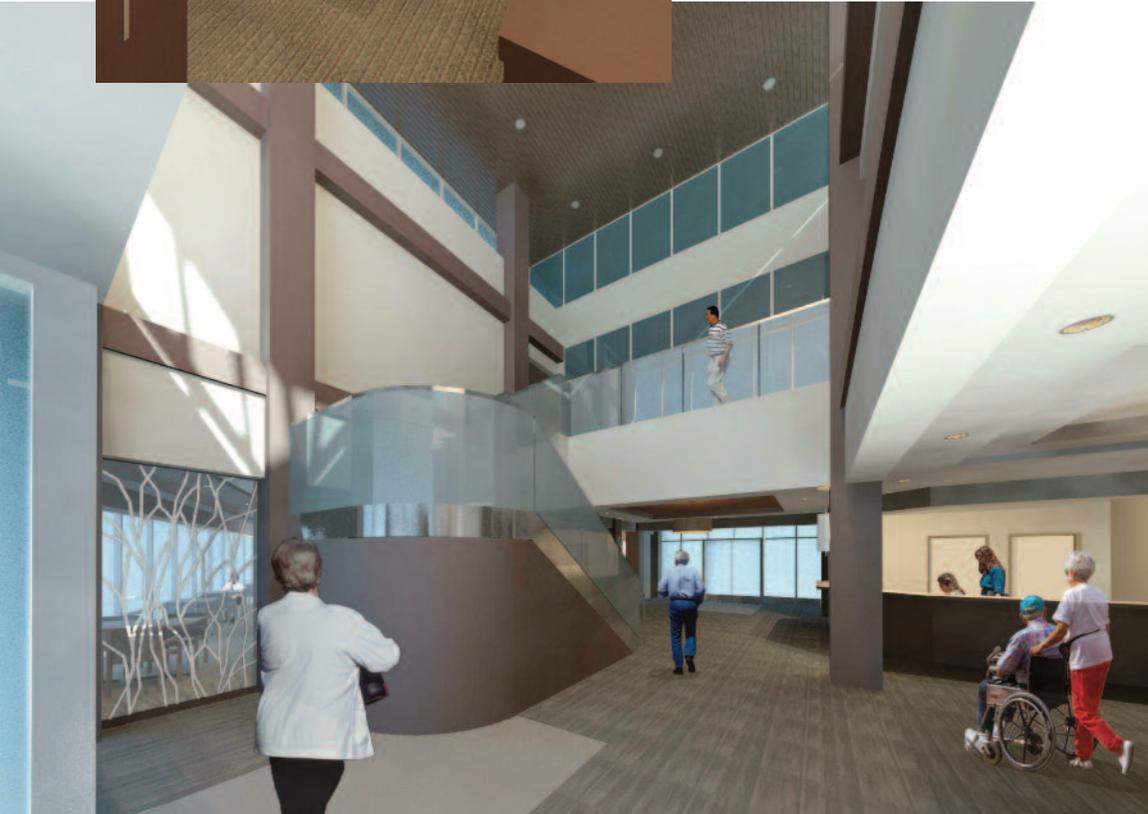
- 100% ADA/NFPA compliant
- Wireless laptop network provided
- The building will accommodate catered meals from the hospital
- Living room, dining room, kitchen, activity, and reading rooms
- Laundry facilities
- Private living accommodations for veterans and their caregivers

# ARCHITECT'S RENDERINGS



<<< Guest room

v v v Main lobby



# DEFENDERS LODGE PROJECT TEAM

The Defenders Lodge will be constructed on land made available on the Palo Alto VA hospital campus by the U.S. government, but will be financed entirely through private contributions.



The Defenders Lodge will be a gift from the Foundation to the Department of Veterans Affairs, with the Department assuming the operating and maintenance costs for the Defenders Lodge after it is built.

## **Project Lead/Project Sponsor**

The PenFed Foundation, a nationally recognized, nonprofit organization dedicated to meeting the unmet financial needs of our nation's defenders. Pentagon Federal Credit Union has provided the PenFed Foundation with a low-interest loan (1/2 point below prime) to start construction of the Defenders Lodge that will ensure our veterans have a place to stay when the current facility is demolished. Additionally, PenFed Credit Union pays 100% of the Foundation's labor and rent costs to maximize the support that goes directly to the service members.

## **Project Developer**

Gilbane Development Company, one of the country's largest and oldest developers (founded in 1873).

## **Project Architect**

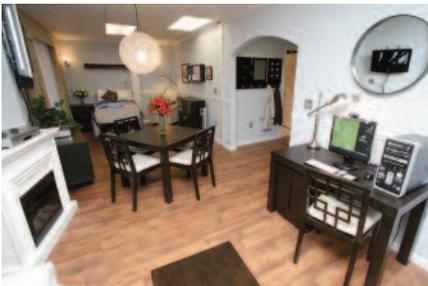
RYS Architects has been providing quality architectural and interior design services since 1989. Located in San Francisco, RYS specializes in hospitality projects ranging from renovations to new multi-story hotel projects.

# ABOUT THE PENFED FOUNDATION

The PenFed Foundation is a national nonprofit organization working to meet the unmet needs of military personnel and their families. It works in the areas of financial literacy, housing, alternatives to predatory 'pay-day' lending, and support for wounded, ill, and injured veterans and their families. Since 2002, the Foundation has served more than 5,000 of our troops and veterans through its programs. Each program incorporates financial literacy education. The PenFed Credit Union pays 100% of the Foundation's labor and rent costs to maximize the support that goes directly to the service members.

Major projects of the Foundation have included:

- The development of a last stage hospice at **Walter Reed Army Medical Center**, including the supply of wireless laptop networks and computers at major military hospitals.
- The provision of grants, through the **Dream Makers** program, of up to \$5,000 for down payments has enabled more than 300 families and first time homebuyers qualify for more than \$40 million in mortgages.
- The creation of a national micro-credit program, **Asset Recovery Kit (ARK)**, has provided financial counseling and low cost alternatives to predatory 'pay-day' lending for military families. The program has provided more than 5,500 interest-free loans to service members, totaling nearly \$2.2 million.
- The development of the **Military Heroes Fund** in January 2008 has provided more than 2,000 emergency grants to wounded service members from Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Totalling over \$2 million, this is financial support that the Department of Defense or Veterans Affairs cannot offer due to budgetary and regulatory restrictions. The Military Heroes Fund also provides financial literacy education to all grantees. Examples of services this financial assistance covers include, rent, utilities, car payments and child care.



**The Foundation's Hospice Room at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, designed by architect Seiko Obayashi.**



**Operation Iraqi Freedom Marine Sergeant Jason Lilly bought his first home in Oceanside, California, with the help of a Dream Makers grant.**

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*Thank you for  
your support of  
Defenders Lodge.*



[WWW.DEFENDERSLODGE.ORG](http://WWW.DEFENDERSLODGE.ORG)



*PenFed Foundation*

*Because Military Heroes need heroes too*

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