



SCI Homeless Veterans Burial Program Earns National Recognition for Public Service

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WASHINGTON, April 30 /PRNewswire/ -- Service Corporation International (NYSE: SRV; SCI), parent company of many Dignity Memorial® funeral, cremation, and cemetery providers, has been selected for national recognition for its "Homeless Veterans Burial Program" by the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV). The Outstanding Partner Award will be presented to SCI executives at the NCHV National Convention in Washington, D.C., on May 7.

NCHV is the resource and technical assistance center for a national network of 230 community-based service and care agencies that provide emergency and supportive housing, food, health services, job training and placement assistance, legal aid and case management support for more than 150,000 homeless veterans each year. In 2001, the network provided housing and support services to 226,385 homeless men, women and children across the country. NCHV also serves as the primary liaison between those care providers, Congress and the Executive Branch agencies charged with helping them succeed in their work.

Through its advocacy and leadership, NCHV has become recognized as the nation's leading authority on homeless veteran issues by several departments of the U.S. government, including the Department of Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development, Labor and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. NCHV has successfully worked to help draft legislation and increase funding for homeless veteran-specific programs; and last year helped develop and ensure passage of the hallmark Homeless Veterans Comprehensive Assistance Act of 2001, which, if fully implemented, will provide up to \$1 billion for homeless veteran service providers and programs over six years.

SCI created the Homeless Veteran Burial Program under the guidance of Retired Army Maj. Gen. Bill Branson, who was upset that indigent veterans who had no one to claim their remains were denied the dignified final military honors they earned through their service to country. He found that one-third of those who died homeless had served during a time of war.

Numerous Dignity Memorial providers, in cooperation with local or regional Department of Veterans Affairs offices, coroner's offices, medical examiners, county administrative officials, veteran service organizations, cemeteries and community-based service providers, have developed burial programs for homeless veterans in Houston, El Paso, San Antonio, Dallas, San Diego, Denver, Kansas City, Chicago, Louisville, St. Louis and Washington, D.C. There are plans to expand the program into more communities as new partnerships are developed.

In 2002, SCI provided military funerals to 139 veterans who died in homelessness. Gen. Branson gave credit for the program's success to community partners in the cities served by the Homeless Veterans Burial Program. "Because of these partners, 139 deceased homeless veterans received burial services with full military honors. Services were furnished at no cost by Dignity Memorial funeral providers, who tell us they are privileged to participate in this display of gratitude to those whose contribution to our security would otherwise have been forgotten," Branson said.

The NCHV award acknowledges more than SCI's honorable mission of providing military funeral honors for America's homeless veterans. It is a celebration of the company's leadership role in fostering a public service partnership that serves as a model for the nation's corporate community.

The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans was founded in 1990 by a group of veteran service providers in response to the growing number of homeless veterans who were coming into their facilities, and the lack of resources to adequately provide services for them. NCHV's mission is to end homelessness among veterans by shaping public policy, promoting collaboration, and building the capacity of service providers.

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