

Governor Quinn Breaks Ground on New Supportive Housing for Veterans with Families

Written by Erin Wilson

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Hope Manor II Apartments will Connect Residents with Services Needed to Live Independently

CHICAGO – Governor Quinn today was joined by the Volunteers of America of Illinois to break ground on the Hope Manor II Apartments – one of the first large-scale housing developments in the nation designed to address the needs of Veterans with families at risk of homelessness. This announcement is part of Governor Quinn’s agenda to make Illinois the most Veterans-friendly state in the nation and ensure servicemembers have the support they need when they return home.

“We have a duty to provide Illinois Veterans with the support they deserve after serving our country,” Governor Quinn said. “Veterans often return to a unique set of challenges during the transition to civilian life, and this new community will address their family needs during this time. We must always take care of our Veterans on the home front, just as they have taken care of us.”

Under Governor Quinn’s leadership, the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) provided an \$800,000 loan to finance the development located at 60th and Halsted streets in Chicago’s Englewood neighborhood. The campus-style community will feature a mix of single-family town homes and apartments built around a park, all located on a three-acre site donated by the city of Chicago.

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Developed by the Volunteers of America, Hope Manor II Apartments also received a \$190,000 Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) grant, as well as a \$1.9 million federal HOME Investment Partnerships Program loan and a \$3 million tax-increment financing grant from the city of Chicago. Alderman JoAnn Thomson of the 16th Ward donated the property to build Hope Manor II.

“We are so excited to once again partner with IHDA to bring an important resource to our nation’s Veterans,” Volunteers of America of Illinois President & CEO Nancy Hughes Moyer said. “Hope Manor II will serve an increasingly vulnerable population of Veterans – younger Veterans with families, many of whom are women with young children. These brave young men and women have sacrificed a great deal to serve our country and they deserve a safe and affordable place to call home when they return. Hope Manor II will provide our Veterans with the stability and support they need to successfully reintegrate back into civilian life.”

The new community will provide 73 units of permanent supportive housing in studio, one-, two-, three- and four-bedroom apartments. Residents will have access to employment readiness classes, job training and coaching, computer training, a business resource center, a health and wellness center, peer support groups, recovery groups, individual and family counseling, mental health screening, case management support, and access to the Volunteers of America of Illinois’ True North Project which aids Veterans who are struggling, in crisis or at risk of serious instability in their lives.

The development is the second phase of the Volunteers of America’s Hope Manor Project. IHDA was proud to provide federal stimulus funds and federal tax credit financing for Hope Manor Apartments, which celebrated its grand opening in May 2012 in East Garfield Park. Hope Manor provides housing and services to single Veterans. A community to serve families is the appropriate next step.

An estimated 1,147 Veterans experienced homelessness on a given night in Illinois in 2012, or 15 percent of all Veterans in the general population, according to the National Alliance to End Homelessness. Women Veterans are the fastest growing demographic in the Veteran community in Illinois and many face significant obstacles upon their return to civilian life. They are often younger than their male colleagues, have different healthcare needs, face the highest rate of unemployment in the Veteran population, and access Veteran services and resources less often.

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Under Governor Quinn's leadership, Illinois has responded to the need for affordable housing and supportive services. Approximately 1,800 community-based supportive housing units have been financed across Illinois since 2009. IHDA financed 466 units of safe, affordable housing and 289 supportive housing units specifically targeted to Veterans in that same timeframe.

The first phase of construction is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2013, with a final completion date of June 2014. To qualify, residents must be at or below 60 percent of the area median income, or \$35,340 for a two-person household. All 73 units will be supported by project-based vouchers from the Chicago Housing Authority.

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