

Supporting Our Veterans...Transforming Lives

Imagine moving into new housing. You have a roof and walls, but not the basics of everyday living. That's when the joy and generosity of the holiday spirit shows up to fill that void.

Once again, the Transportation Management Association of Chester County (TMACC), through the Foundation for the Improvement of Transportation (FIT), helped to coordinate a holiday gift drive to recognize the valor and sacrifice of our men and women veterans of the Coatesville VA. They were able to give them one less thing to worry about, especially after the challenges of the past year.

FIT's and TMACC's annual gift drive provides much-needed support to those veterans transitioning into permanent housing. This year, with member, partner, and community support, these donations will provide bedding, towels, and appliances; enough to give a much-needed head start for ten full apartments. These essential household items will help supplement what the Federal programs can provide, and reduce the out-of-pocket expenses of outfitting a home.

"We feel blessed to have the ongoing support of TMACC to support our Veterans in the community. To be able to bring these items to our Veterans in need, is a gift. Having community partners such as TMACC, who can help meet needs and brighten the holidays of our Veterans is what the season is all about! Our extreme gratitude to TMACC." stated Jennifer Lilly, Chief, Voluntary Services of the Coatesville VA Medical Center.

The Coatesville VA is a major stop along the Coatesville Link, a bus service run by TMACC. Many veterans are riders of the Link, and this gift drive gives TMACC, its members, and partners, a connection to the veterans, and an opportunity to give back locally.

"At a time in the year that we are celebrating, this is a wonderful opportunity to give back to the men and women who served our Nation who now need our support in rebuilding their lives," said Tim Phelps, Executive Director of TMACC.

TMACC teamed up with members, community partners, and the public, to provide the veterans with the holiday cheer. Betty Shaw, along with her husband, Rick, founded the drive 23 years ago, and eventually expanded it to partner with TMACC. This year, they received generous donations of household items, as well as clothing, toiletries, and games, from the Village of Roseview in Jennersville.

Already looking ahead to 2021, Shaw said, "I found that even though many people have lost jobs and are feeling the financial strains caused by COVID-19, they were still willing to help take care of our Vets' needs for adequate, safe housing. I look forward to continuing our contributions next year."

TMACC, FIT, the Shaws, and their community partners, were once again fortunate to be able to help transform the lives of military veterans in Chester County, by transforming a house, into a home.

The Transportation Management Association of Chester County (TMACC), is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit corporation established in 1991 to activate, foster and facilitate cooperation between the public and private sectors of Chester County; to identify, evaluate and analyze significant transportation issues and to recommend solutions that reduce congestion and improve air quality. The **Foundation for the Improvement of Transportation (FIT)** believes in connected, cohesive communities that encourage healthy, happy lifestyles. Through partnerships, advocacy and education, we believe in creating communities with inclusive transportation infrastructure, better mobility options, and environmentally conscious commuters. The **LINK** is the public transportation service traveling from Coatesville to Parkesburg, with stops at the Brandywine Hospital, the Parkesburg Library, and the Coatesville Veterans Affairs Medical Center. To learn more about TMACC, FIT and Link go to www.TMACC.org.