

# impact



Summer 2012

Permanently disabled Army veteran Anthony Mitchell (right) and his wife Madeleine welcome a visit from family, including granddaughter Cherrie. The Mitchells were unable to host their family for a time because they were homeless.

Photo by Chris Takagi



## Winning is Still Possible

After living in a car for six months, it was a mistake that turned around the lives of former U.S. Army First Lieutenant Anthony Mitchell and his wife Madeleine. "We got off at the wrong light-rail stop," says Anthony. "As we walked around the area, we came across this nice, new apartment building, saw a sign and started asking questions."

The Mitchells had happened upon a development that was built specifically to house people like them – homeless veterans and their families. The building is called The Fourth Quarter Apartments, located at 3150 Downing Street in the Five Points neighborhood.

Developed and run by the Bo Matthews Center for Excellence (BMCE), it's called The Fourth Quarter Apartments because the fourth quarter

is the time in a football game when players believe winning is still possible. And it was two former football players who played a key role in building the apartments.

Bo Matthews played college football at the University of Colorado Boulder and professional football for the San Diego Chargers. After his football career, he owned a successful moving company in Denver. In 2005, he and his wife Barbara began to

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## Mission Statement

Rose Community Foundation works to enhance the quality of life of the Greater Denver community through its leadership, resources, traditions and values.

We value our Jewish heritage and our roots in Jewish traditions including charity, philanthropy and nondiscrimination.

We value excellence and uphold the highest standards in the pursuit of our mission.

We value the trust and respect of the community and continually strive to earn and sustain that trust by consistent and disciplined adherence to our mission.

Rose Community Foundation's support for the Greater Denver community is focused in five program areas: Aging, Child and Family Development, Education, Health and Jewish Life. In addition to grantmaking, Rose Philanthropic Services is available to assist individuals and families in their philanthropic activities.

## Taking the Long View

Coming on the heels of the wildfires that devastated large swaths of Colorado, the Aurora theater shootings were an affront to our sensibilities and continue to be a challenge to process. It will take many months and years – if ever – for some in our community to deal with the unspeakable violence.

But the rapid, generous response from people and organizations across the Denver/Boulder region also provides renewed faith in the resilience, resourcefulness and unity of the community. In times of crisis, people want to act and they want immediate outlets through which they can demonstrate their support for those affected.

We salute our colleagues at Community First Foundation for providing their online giving platform, [givingfirst.org](https://givingfirst.org), to collect funds for immediate assistance and to direct interested donors to nonprofit organizations serving current community needs in response to the tragedy.

We also commend the many families who have donor-advised funds at Rose Community Foundation who directed dollars to victim assistance groups and to organizations seeking answers to the underlying issues at the root of the incident.

Once the immediacy of these kinds of events diminishes and the headlines fade away, the need for significant community support continues. That's where Rose Community Foundation can add the most value. We can and will combine our knowledge, networks and perspective with the financial ability to take the longer view.

To that end, we have reached out to nonprofit partners to determine an appropriate, timely and authentic way for our resources to be best utilized. Staff is recommending grants to both Aurora Public Schools and the Aurora Mental Health Center. These organizations are on the front line of responding to both the

urgent and ongoing mental health needs of the community. We have worked with both of them in the past and commend them for the extraordinary work they are doing for the victims, their families, first responders and for the community. We are also communicating with donors to let them know of our decision should they wish to align personal contributions with ours.

### In This Issue

Taking the long view in assessing community needs has special relevance in this issue of *Impact* as we focus on military veterans and the range of housing, job opportunity and physical and mental health services that our returning troops desperately require.

Their stories are at times heartbreaking. But many others are hopeful and point to the continuing need for effective nonprofit organizations that can have the perspective, the means and the will to help create better futures for our veterans.

While veteran issues are not a focus area of our grantmaking, the health, wellness and vitality of our community are at the center of what we do at Rose Community Foundation. I believe Major General Maurice Rose, the highly decorated World War II leader and Denver native for whom the Foundation and Rose Medical Center were named, would be proud that we're bringing some needed attention to these issues and to the deserving service members who are an integral part of our community.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheila Bugdanowitz".

Sheila Bugdanowitz  
President and CEO

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purchase small homes to house individuals and families in need. Two years later, they shifted their focus to homeless veterans.

The Matthews then teamed up with former Denver Bronco Claudie Minor, Jr., also a successful Denver businessman. They put together funding from several federal, state and local sources, which enabled them to replace the small houses with a 36-unit apartment building that opened in 2011.

The Fourth Quarter has at least 25 units reserved for homeless veterans. The rest are filled by either veterans, very low-income individuals and families, or clients served by Denver's Road Home, the city's effort to end homelessness.

"This is permanent housing, not a homeless shelter," says Tom Klein, BMCE's executive director. "We present a menu of services and help for homeless veterans. Some have been down so long, they lose their sense of self. If we can give them some confidence back, they start to thrive."

Each veteran resident has two case managers – one through the BMCE and another through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) – who help determine the resident's needs and offer solutions to problems. The BMCE, one block away from the apartment

building, partners with other agencies to offer mental health counseling, life skills classes, job training, and computer training and access. And the VA has established its first drop-in community resource center in the same building. Approximately 170 veterans per week access counseling, get help with their benefits, and take advantage of the opportunity to do their laundry, take a shower or just have a place to store some belongings.

The Mitchells describe the program as a blessing. All of the furnishings and electronics in their two-bedroom, one-bath apartment have been provided by the BMCE. Anthony, who was a POW for six months while serving his country and is permanently disabled due to a traumatic brain injury, has received counseling and encouragement to begin a book about his experiences. His wife Madeleine has enrolled at the Community College of Denver. Both feel optimistic. "This is a recovery program. They get personally involved with us. And Mrs. Matthews makes sure we stay up to par with the program," Anthony says with a chuckle.

While the Mitchells are making clear strides to improve their lives, some of the building's other residents have less-obvious victories. "Measuring success can be difficult because there are so many different issues," says

Klein. "We had one very angry veteran here who died suddenly. We found out after his death that during his time here, he had mended fences with his family. Sometimes that happiness quotient is what it's all about."

To learn more about the BMCE or The Fourth Quarter Apartments, call 303.295.0376.

Barbara Matthews (right) and BMCE trainer and case manager Ernie Hernandez



Photo by Chris Takagi

## Home, but Homeless

The Metro Denver Homeless Initiative does an annual Point-in-Time Survey, a count of the number of people who are homeless in the metro area. As of January 2012, it showed that there are 12,605 homeless men, women and children in the community, and that 13% of the homeless population is comprised of veterans.

The City and County of Denver's Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program offers employment assistance services to veterans and referrals for other services such as housing, food banks, legal services and counseling. Learn more at [denvergov.org/veterans](http://denvergov.org/veterans).

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## University of Colorado Denver Boots to Suits

For many military veterans returning to school, culture shock can be one of the toughest challenges they face. “You’re coming from a very structured team environment

where you’re responsible for other people’s lives,” says Cameron Cook, director of veteran student services at the University of Colorado Denver (UCD). “School is an individual pursuit, and a college campus has a much more laidback feeling. There’s no one telling you that you have to be at school.”

To help ease the initial transition, UCD offers a mentoring program for incoming veterans, who are matched with an upper-level peer. Once a student is enrolled, he or she can join the Veteran Student Organization (UCD’s is the largest organization of its type in the state, with 250 members). And to help

veterans move from college to a career, UCD has established the Boots to Suits program.

Boots to Suits offers skills training and opportunities to connect with future employers. “A lot of our students joined the military at 18. By the time they finish serving then go to college, they are older than the average college graduate,” says Cook. “They’ve never written a resume, never dressed for an interview, and never done an interview.”

What many veterans do have is valuable experiences and traits that employers want. “If you give us a job to do, we are going to do it,” says Adam Sutton, a UCD senior in business administration with four years in the Marine Corps and two tours of duty as an infantryman in Iraq under his belt. “We are self-disciplined and self-motivated. We know how to work with and manage people from diverse backgrounds and with different learning styles. And we manage logistics incredibly well.”

Since Boots to Suits was established in 2010, one of the first pieces Cook focused on was a mentoring program that matches student veterans with community business leaders. “It



Photo by Chris Takagi

Cameron Cook, a Marine Corps veteran and director of veteran student services at the University of Colorado Denver (UCD)

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### The GI Bill

The GI Bill, a federal law that provides benefits for military veterans, has had several variations since it was first instituted in 1944 but one of its main intents is to provide military members with the opportunity to further their schooling after an honorable discharge. The Post-9/11 GI Bill provides financial support for education and housing, and includes graduate and undergraduate degrees, vocational/technical training, on-the-job training, flight training, correspondence training, licensing and national testing programs, entrepreneurship training, and tutorial assistance.

Eligible participants are provided with up to 36 months of education benefits, generally for up to 15 years following release from active duty. The Post-9/11 GI Bill also offers some service members the opportunity to transfer their GI Bill to dependents.

[gibill.va.gov](http://gibill.va.gov)

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has taken off,” he says. “People want to help veterans but they don’t always know how. This has given business people a tangible way to support former service members.”



Photo by Chris Takagi

Adam Sutton, a UCD student veteran

Business mentors commit to meeting with their assigned students four times throughout one semester. The veterans also have two meetings to get advice from a human resources executive, as well as a leader from their specific fields of interest. All of this helps the students learn how to package their abilities and skills for the business world.

In addition to the mentorship program, Boots to Suits includes an internship program, job matching with interested employers, and, through donations, provides new suits for job interviewing.

“I get to see new veterans come in with a thousand-yard stare and leave here prepared to go to work,” says Cook. “School is a great reintegration tool.”

Most colleges and universities now have some kind of veterans program, and Sutton’s advice for new student veterans is to get involved. “You’ll get more out of school if you reach out. Get out and meet other veterans in the same situation.”

To learn more about Boots to Suits, visit [www.ucdenver.edu/bootstosuits](http://www.ucdenver.edu/bootstosuits).

## Community Updates

### Jim Jonas Joins the Foundation

Jim Jonas is the new vice president for communications and marketing at Rose Community Foundation. He was previously director of marketing and communications for the University of Colorado Foundation. From 2000 to 2010, he was a partner at Peak Creative Media, a Denver-based creative communications and advertising agency that he co-founded. He has been a communication consultant for a variety of nonprofit, corporate, public affairs and political organizations for more than 25 years. Jonas holds a bachelor’s degree from Guilford College and a master’s in political management from the Graduate School of Political Management now at The George Washington University.



Honoring Our Namesake

## Major General Maurice Rose – A Colorado Hero



Photo by Rose Community Foundation staff

Arthur Diamond (left) and Dr. Ervin Moss (center) meet with Rose Medical Center CEO Ken Feiler to help create a more prominent display about Major General Maurice Rose within the hospital.



Major General Maurice Rose

Arthur Diamond and Dr. Ervin Moss are World War II veterans with a new mission. They want to see Major General Maurice Rose remembered and honored as a Colorado hero. "We want the community to realize what a wonderful son of Colorado he was," says Diamond.

Rose Community Foundation derives its name from Rose, who was killed on the battlefield in Germany in March 30, 1945. In the year prior to his death, a group of Denver Jewish business and professional leaders had started an effort to build a new hospital that would be open to doctors and patients of all creeds, races and origins, and dedicated to excellence in medical care.

When Rose was killed, it made the front page of newspapers across the country. Since he grew up in Denver as the son and grandson of Orthodox Jewish rabbis, the hospital fundraising campaign gained momentum when the organizers decided to name the new hospital General Rose Memorial Hospital. The institution was later renamed Rose Medical Center and was sold in 1995 to a health care corporation. With the proceeds of the sale, approximately \$170 million, the hospital trustees formed Rose Community Foundation. The Foundation is not affiliated with the hospital but is proud to share a joint heritage.

This is an excerpt from a condolence telegram sent on April 2, 1945 by Supreme Allied Commander Dwight D. Eisenhower to Major General Maurice Rose's widow, Virginia Rose:

"He was not only one of our bravest and best, but was a leader who inspired men to speedy accomplishment of tasks that to a lesser man would have appeared almost impossible...I hope that your realization of the extraordinary worth of his services to his country will help you in some small way to bear your burden of grief."



During Rose's career, he received many military honors including the Distinguished Service Medal. A hands-on leader, he led a number of successful military drives in North Africa and Europe during World War II, including one of the first assaults on German forces occupying Omaha Beach one day after D-Day.

In 1944, he was commander of the U.S. Army's 3rd Armored Division, the first military unit to penetrate Germany during the war. His final effort on the battlefield helped bring about the "Rose Pocket," which isolated a large number of German troops and supplies. The result? "A couple days after Rose's death, 340,000 Germans surrendered," says Moss.

Rose was known for his personal courage. Diamond's infantry unit was part of the VII Corps, which included Rose's 3rd Armored Division. "He not only impressed the powers that be, he impressed the men under him," Diamond says. "He led from up front. And he wouldn't ask anyone to do anything that he wouldn't do himself."

Moss and Diamond are currently leading an effort to have a permanent exhibit about Rose installed at History Colorado. They want to be sure that a leader like Major General Rose is known to future generations of Coloradans. "We need to honor this great Coloradan. He should not be forgotten," says Moss.

## "Thank You for Your Service"

This ubiquitous phrase has become the conventional way to express gratitude to a veteran. Here are some other suggestions of ways to offer moral and more tangible support.

### Donate Cash

Many nonprofit organizations have stretched to add programs or services specifically for veterans. If you'd like help identifying agencies that will make good use of your financial support, please contact Rose Community Foundation's Philanthropic Services Department at 303.398.7433 or [awesley@rcfdenver.org](mailto:awesley@rcfdenver.org).

### Volunteer at or Donate Goods to a VA Hospital

Denver's VA Medical Center welcomes volunteers, cash and the following items: magazines, coffee and cookies, toiletry items, new or gently used clothing and pre-paid telephone cards. Visit [denver.va.gov](http://denver.va.gov) to learn more.

### Respect Their Privacy

Some veterans want to talk about their experiences, others do not. Try to find the balance between lending an ear and prying. Listen without judgment.

### Give Your Time

Particularly for veterans who are learning to cope with physical or mental injuries, your time and energy may be what is needed most. Offer to do chores, household repairs or run errands.

### Support Legislation

Pay attention to proposed legislation affecting veterans. Let your legislators and elected officials know that you support vet-friendly policies.

### Provide Employment

Let veterans know they are welcome to apply with language in your job postings. Create human resources policies that allow veterans to receive needed services during the workday if necessary.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Zachary Mott

An Air Force ROTC group performs the MIA/POW Ceremony, honoring Prisoners of War and those Missing in Action.

### Support Their Families

Be a listening ear for a veteran's spouse. Provide free babysitting so parents can reconnect after being separated. Buy a gift certificate for a family-friendly activity or restaurant.

### Make Them Welcome

Re-entering everyday life can be a challenge. Invite a veteran to a social gathering, a fun event, or to attend a worship service. Ask more than once – an offer that is rejected at first might be more welcome down the road.

## Veterans and Mental Health

# The Costs of War



Photo by Chris Takagi

Joni Masse, a veteran, nurse, psychotherapist and massage therapist, speaks at a talk for families about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder organized by Veterans Helping Veterans Now.

*The New York Times* reported a sobering statistic in June: the number of suicides among military personnel was higher than the number of deaths in battle so far in 2012. Through May this year, there had been 154 reported suicides.

While suicide is the extreme, experts say that nearly all combat veterans will experience some kind of mental health issue because of their experiences. Some are handled through talking and connection with good friends or family. But others require medical treatment that can last months or years.

“People can get themselves into situations in 20 minutes that will take them years to get out of,” says Dr. Stewart Brown, a clinical psychologist in Boulder who works with veterans and others living with Post Traumatic

Stress Disorder (PTSD). “If you ask someone to get involved in a situation that’s laced with tragedy and human suffering, there are going to be things that happen that will change that person’s life.”

Brown’s clients are trying to deal with a number of problems: sleep disorders, anger,

intimacy issues, “...anything that requires a person to be vulnerable,” he says.

“I would just lie in bed next to my wife because I couldn’t sleep,” says David F., a former Army Ranger who prefers to remain anonymous. “She wanted me to sleep next to her because it had been hard for her to sleep alone while I was overseas. But those were some of the longest hours of my life.” David is currently receiving counseling and reports that things have gotten better, but he still feels he has a long way to go.

Other veterans have more severe PTSD symptoms. Brown tells of a client who was separated from his unit behind enemy lines while serving in Vietnam. He eventually made his way back to safety but it was a very harrowing experience with lots of close calls. Decades later, he works as a machinist putting in up to 18 or 20 hours a day, never takes vacations, and treats his work deadlines as if they were life-and-death.

“His wife says, ‘I don’t know why we have to live like this.’ It can be baffling for those around them,” says Brown. “Veterans like this are doing what they can to control things. It’s part of our adaptive survival – to learn to overcome situations that are threatening or would put our lives in jeopardy. If we get

### Help is Available

The Department of Veterans Affairs operates veteran counseling centers across the nation, including mobile vans and drop-in centers. Counseling is also available for family members of veterans.

Services include:

- individual and group counseling
- marital and family counseling
- bereavement counseling
- medical and benefits referrals
- employment counseling

Call 877.927.8387 (877.WAR.VETS) for more information and to locate the closest center.



into a situation once that has a bad outcome, we as human beings like to set up new circumstances and try to fix it the second time around.” Since it is unlikely that this veteran will ever find himself behind enemy lines again, he has created circumstances in his life that create a similar feeling of pressure so that he can prevail.

For veterans who have experienced combat trauma, drug and alcohol addictions are not unusual. “Marijuana and alcohol are often the choice because both are depressants. They are trying to calm down,” says Brown.

This also rings true with David, who admits that his drinking causes problems in his life. “I probably drink more than I should but it feels really good to just zone out and take it easy with a few beers. My wife doesn’t like it but she doesn’t have to live inside my head.”

Brown encourages his clients to tell their stories to others when they are strong enough to do so. “America needs to hear their stories,”



Photo by Chris Takagi

Participants try out one of Masse's body-focused techniques for coping with trauma. Veterans Helping Veterans Now offers programs and other services to veterans and their families. Learn more at [vhvn.org](http://vhvn.org).

he says. “I think we’d all be better off if we paid a little more attention and had a better idea of the real costs of war.”

## Community Updates

### Information on Health Reform

As has been widely reported, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in a ruling handed down Thursday, June 28. Several Rose Community Foundation grantees have released information about the court ruling and how the law affects Coloradans.

- The Bell Policy Center has posted several publications relevant to the ACA: [bellpolicy.org/research-publications](http://bellpolicy.org/research-publications).
- The Colorado Center on Law and Policy website includes this section specifically about health care: [cclponline.org/health\\_care](http://cclponline.org/health_care).
- Colorado Consumer Health Initiative, a health-consumer advocacy organization, has information here: [cohealthinitiative.org/affordable-care-act](http://cohealthinitiative.org/affordable-care-act).
- The Colorado Health Institute has released a report analyzing the court ruling and the many issues still to be resolved: [coloradohealthinstitute.org](http://coloradohealthinstitute.org).

## Women Veterans Serving Quietly

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Zachary Mott



Retired Lieutenant Colonel Kathryn Wirkus (left) and Lieutenant Colonel Cynthia Rasmussen at the 2011 Colorado Women Veterans Conference and Healthfair Expo. Rasmussen led a session on transitioning from soldier to civilian.

The picture of America's war veterans has changed greatly in the last 20 years. And it's not just because it includes younger veterans. It's also because there are now large numbers of women serving – with about 214,000 active-duty and nearly 600,000 in the Reserves or National Guard in 2012.

"Women don't often think of themselves as veterans," says retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Kathryn Wirkus. "Women don't relate to two years of service as the high point in their lives. For many, motherhood takes that spot. We come home and think of ourselves as mothers and sisters and aunts."

In addition, Wirkus says, women don't always 'look' like veterans. "We don't usually have Marine Corps tattoos on our arms or wear caps with patches from our service branches. We blend back into society."

But whether female veterans look or feel like their male counterparts, they face many of the same challenges of reintegration, plus some that are more prevalent within their gender. One of the long-buried issues that is now coming to light is the high incidence of military sexual trauma (MST), defined as sexual assault or repeated, threatening sexual harassment that occurred while the veteran was in the military.

"One in four women in the military has reported being sexually assaulted, and we know there are a lot more who haven't reported," says Wirkus. "Often, the perpetrator is a colleague in a power position." While MST may not be reported at the time it happens, its effects can ripple for years.

Wirkus, who now works on behalf of Colorado Congressman Ed Perlmutter representing veterans in their dealings with the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), tells of a woman who had not reported MST at the time it occurred but whose military records told the story for her.

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### Women Veterans of Colorado

In 2010, Kathryn Wirkus and others established Women Veterans of Colorado, a nonprofit organization "chartered to give women veterans of Colorado a voice, a community and a celebration of our service." One of the group's most successful projects in 2011 was to organize a free Colorado Women Veterans Conference and Healthfair Expo, which was attended by more than 160 women. The second annual Conference and Expo is being held August 25, 2012.

[womenveteransofcolorado.org](http://womenveteransofcolorado.org)  
[cowomenveteransconference.org](http://cowomenveteransconference.org)

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"She was a top achiever, then suddenly her performance crashed," Wirkus says. "She had been raped by a superior but never told anyone until years later. By the time I was in touch with her, she was living completely isolated on a piece of land in a dugout with a tarp for a roof. I was able to successfully argue her case so that she could get the mental health and other services she needed and deserved."

Rebecca Sawyer Smith, a public affairs officer for the VA, encourages all female veterans – wartime and peacetime – to access the full range of services available to them through the agency. "We provide compensation for injuries, the GI Bill, and other services like home loans, but our primary function is plugging veterans into health care," she says. "Sometimes vets think that because they didn't have service-related disabilities, they shouldn't access the VA. We want all veterans to identify themselves so

they can get the health care and other services they are qualified to receive."

The VA projects that from 2000 to 2036, the percentage of female veterans will grow from 6% to nearly 16% of the entire veteran population. Sawyer Smith wants women veterans to know that the agency is changing to meet their needs. "This is not their fathers' VA. We have a women's program. We are there for them."

Learn more about services available to all veterans at [va.gov](http://va.gov). For female-specific services, visit [va.gov/womenvet/](http://va.gov/womenvet/).



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Zachary Mott

Retired Army Sergeant  
1st Class Dolores T.L.  
Collins, whose career as  
a registered nurse in and  
out of the Army began in  
the 1950s

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## *What would you choose?*

If you could pick one thing — a document, a meaningful item, a photograph — to represent your philanthropic values, what would it be?

That's what we asked members of Rose Community Legacy Circle to consider as they participated in the Living Legacy Tapestry, a commissioned work of art recently unveiled in the lobby of Rose Community Foundation.

The tapestry recognizes and honors legacy donors to Rose Community Foundation and is a compelling, artistic archive of the values and experiences that inform their philanthropy and demonstrate their dedication to the community.



Photo by Chris Takagi

Rose Community Foundation Trustee and donor Irit Waldbaum shows her granddaughter a special family image on the Living Legacy Tapestry which was created by Lynn Bregman Blass and Leah Sobsey of the Visual History Collaborative.

We welcome individuals and families interested in more information about the Living Legacy Tapestry and Rose Community Legacy Circle to contact Vicki Dansky at [vdansky@rcfdenver.org](mailto:vdansky@rcfdenver.org) or 303.398.7422.