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CITY SUPPORTS FOURTH ANNUAL STAND UP FOR VETERANS SEPT. 24 AT GLENDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Glendale, Ariz.– Glendale’s fourth annual “Stand Up for Veterans” will be held at Glendale Community College, 6000 W. Olive Ave., on Sat., Sept. 24, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Nearly 1,000 veterans have attended the community outreach event in its three-year history to utilize the many resources available. City of Glendale’s municipal courts as well as the city’s department of community services participate in the event.

A local committee representing city, state and federal agencies, local businesses and non-profit partners has begun planning Glendale’s Stand Up for Veterans which will provide opportunities for veterans to gain employment on the spot and access to a wide array of services. Organizers are now accepting business, non-profit and government agency vendor applications.

“The whole purpose is to provide our veterans with a hand *up*, not a handout,” said Glendale Mayor Jerry P. Weiers, who initiated the Glendale Stand Up event three years ago. “They can potentially walk into the event without a job and bogged down with legal issues, and they can walk out of the event gainfully employed with essentially a clean slate. That truly can change someone’s life for the better.”

One critical service on hand that day is access to court and legal services. Glendale City Court Presiding Judge Elizabeth Finn will be representing dozens of Arizona municipal courts where veterans with criminal cases may be able to satisfy outstanding court fines and fees by performing a community service work project. Veterans with active misdemeanor warrants in participating courts will have them quashed (cancelled) by 5 p.m., Monday, Sept. 26, 2016.

Judges from many additional Justice Courts in Maricopa County will also be present to offer similar opportunities to reduce or eliminate court fines through community service. Glendale’s Community Services Department will provide transportation from Glendale Community College to historic Sahuaro Ranch Park, where the community beautification work service project will be offered.

Additional free legal services offered will include consultation with members of the State Bar of Arizona on civil matters and with attorneys from the Maricopa County Public Defender’s Office on felony matters. The City of Glendale Prosecutors Office will also be on hand. The Arizona Motor Vehicle Division will be present to advise veterans of requirements for reinstatement of their driving privileges and other MVD business.

“One of my most rewarding experiences is having someone come to the event with a suspended license which prevents them securing appropriate employment,” said The Honorable Elizabeth Finn, Presiding Judge of Glendale City Court. “They complete community restitution benefiting the City of Glendale and leave with a valid license. This allows them to better provide for themselves and their families. We take pride in being able to provide all these services at Stand Up for Veterans,” Judge Finn said.

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As many as 50 employers who are presently hiring will have representatives and interviewers at the event and many will hire veterans that very day. Advisors will also offer professional resume-building suggestions and other job search assistance.

Veterans will learn what higher educational opportunities are available through Glendale Community College, which offers a Veteran Services Center ranked eighth nationwide for Vet-friendly two-year colleges.

"Glendale Community College, one of the top nationally ranked veteran-friendly schools, is proud to be part of such an important event to support our veterans," said Dr. Teresa Leyba Ruiz, Interim GCC President. "It's not just about veterans, it's about their families, too—all of those who have made sacrifices—and GCC is happy to be part of it."

Sandy Coor Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 1433 in Glendale serves as the non-profit administrator of the event, working in partnership with the committee.

"The event is consistent with the VFW national mantra, 'No One Does More for Veterans,'" said Ed Besta, immediate past Commander of Post 1433 and chairman of Glendale's Stand Up for Veterans. "Our post has been an active supporter of veterans in the Glendale community since it was first chartered more than 90 years ago," Besta said.

Veterans can apply for health-care and other benefits through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and social service agencies and non-profits will assist with family and personal matters. Although offering social assistance, Mayor Weiers emphasizes that this event differs from "Stand Down" events which provide needed supplies and services specifically to homeless veterans through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

"These are people who have served our country, and they deserve an opportunity to be given a second chance with the tools to succeed, so our goal is to reach them before they hit rock bottom," said Mayor Weiers. "If they attend our Stand Up event, hopefully they'll never need the services of a Stand Down event."

The Military & Veteran Affairs Committee of the Glendale Chamber of Commerce is actively promoting the event. Local businesses have committed in-kind and cash support for Glendale's Stand Up For Veterans. Republic Services provides complimentary lunch to all veterans in attendance. Additional business supporters have included Rolfs Salon and Credit Union West.

For more information or to become a vendor go to www.GlendaleStandUp.org.

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