



# HOUSING HIGHLIGHTS

A quarterly newsletter for Housing and Community Development

## ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

Mesa City Council approved the 2017/2018 Annual Action Plan that has now been submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD announced the following allocations on June 15:

- CDBG \$3,210,202
- HOME \$1,018,678
- ESG \$290,296

There is an additional \$1,877,034 (CDBG and HOME) from a prior year and program income that has not yet been allocated to programs and projects. Staff will return to City Council this fall with additional recommendations for this funding.

The Annual Action Plan contains the City's short-term goals and strategies, including specific activities recommended for funding under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) programs. The funds are used for housing and community development activities that benefit low and moderate-income residents and assist in the prevention or elimination of slum and blighting influences.

For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/1F0GqKs> and click on the "FY 2017-2018 Annual Action Plan" link.

## MESA VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER

A grand opening ceremony was held Aug. 2 for the Mesa Veterans Resource Center, 165 N. Centennial Way. The center is the result of a collaboration involving Mesa United Way, Mesa Chamber of Commerce and Mesa Community College.

The Mesa Chamber of Commerce works with veterans through their Mesa Veterans Program and has advocated for the resource center. Mesa United Way's work with veterans through the Bridge to Employment program revealed a need to bring the resources to the veterans, providing easier access to benefits and training. The center, located on the first floor of the Mesa Community College building, is within walking distance of the light rail.

The Mesa Veterans Resource Center will work with established veterans organizations as a conduit and will host training, workshops, gatherings, provide necessary transportation for veterans and will work closely with many community partners. A program to assist the Mesa Police Department and Mesa Fire and Medical Department with veterans' needs after hours and on weekends is in the preliminary planning stages as well.



## AZNAHRO SUMMER CONFERENCE

"Power of the Invite B.Y.O.V. (Bring Your Own Vision)" was the theme of the Arizona Chapter of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (AzNAHRO) Summer Conference held Aug. 9-10 in Mesa. Vice Mayor David Luna gave the welcoming remarks. Staff from public housing agencies, community development, HUD, businesses, and non-profit organizations attended breakout sessions covering program regulations, innovations, leadership and professional development.

The National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials is the leading housing and community development advocate for the provision of adequate and affordable housing and strong, viable communities for all Americans - particularly those with low and moderate incomes. Its members administer HUD programs such as Public Housing, Section 8, CDBG and HOME.



Imagine Mesa is an interactive, digital forum that allows those who live, work and play in Mesa an opportunity to share ideas, and collaborate online with each other in an enjoyable manner. We want to hear your ideas for taking Mesa to the next level! Use your imagination to create solutions and opportunities for our community. From parks and libraries to job creation and a vibrant downtown, share your ideas for making Mesa's economy thrive and our neighborhoods safe.

This is your chance to Imagine Mesa in a whole new way and provide input to City leaders on your innovative ideas. So be the SPARK we need and join in on the conversation to shape our city's future. Share your suggestions on [www.ImagineMesa.com](http://www.ImagineMesa.com) and make Mesa an amazing place for all to enjoy.

## CECILY'S STORY: A JOURNEY FROM HOMELESS TO AFFORDABLE AND STABLE HOUSING



Cecily Lara is a 26-year-old who knows that safe, decent and affordable housing is a challenge for people in her situation. Cecily entered the foster care system at age 11. At age 18, having aged out of the system and being on her own, she became homeless. She stayed in camp grounds, slept in tents, different shelters, on the streets, the light rail, her car and wherever she could find shelter. Eventually, Cecily obtained a job and in 2013 she graduated from a program called Humble Regional Occupational Program (HROP), a wildland firefighter academy in Eureka, California.

Unfortunately, Cecily encountered another roadblock getting injured on the job and having to stop working. She became homeless again, but through A New Leaf and her Community Bridges Navigator she could apply for the City of Mesa Project-Based Voucher program. She will soon be admitted to the program.



Cecily stated that she is very excited about this new opportunity, saying “moving into this apartment will give me the peace I need. I finally have stable housing and a place I can call home.” Cecily’s story highlights the spectrum of housing experiences many families encounter due to homelessness.

## FSS SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Mesa resident Lakeicia received a \$750 scholarship awarded from the Arizona chapter of National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (AzNAHRO) at their annual conference in Mesa.

Education has always been important to Lakeicia. While pursuing a degree in psychology, one of life’s detours led her to focus on work, health and family. Still yearning to continue her education, she later became interested in nursing and started taking courses in that direction. But another detour led her into a cycle of homelessness or, in her words, a “dark and hopeless place.”



But she sought resources and support from A New Leaf, Labor’s Community Service Agency and other agencies to get out of that cycle and stabilize her family again. After receiving a housing voucher from the City of Mesa, Lakeicia was determined to get back to work and move forward with her goals, and immediately enrolled in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program. She started a new job with the State of Arizona and just one year later was promoted to Special Investigator in the AHCCCS program. In this position, she is also completing the course for medical coding certification.

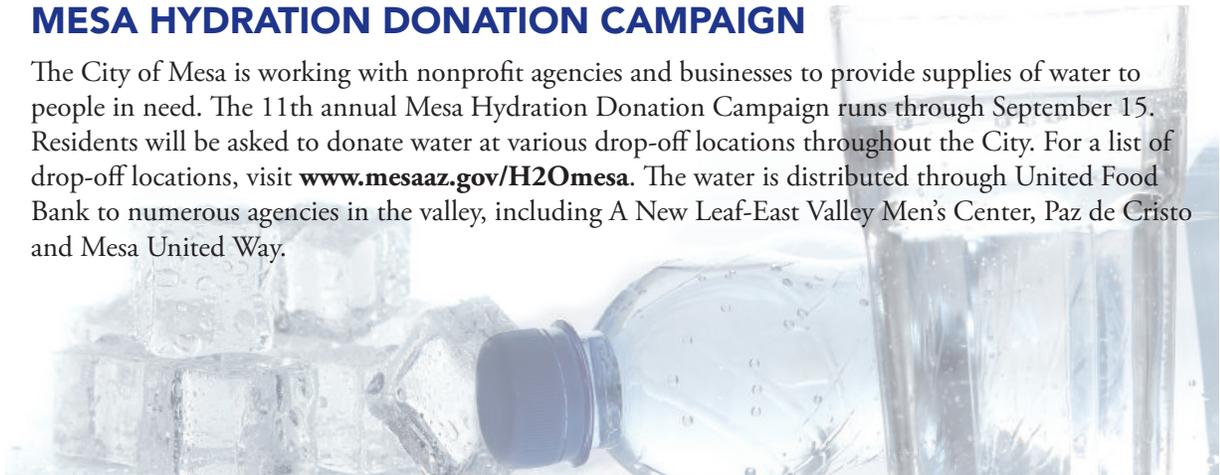
That’s not enough for Lakeicia - she is back at Phoenix College again and is on track to finally get both her Bachelor of Arts and Nursing degrees. This is a huge undertaking for a single mom to manage work, school, transportation, and childcare; but Lakeicia is excited to cross that finish line!

HELP THE VULNERABLE DURING TRIPLE DIGIT HEAT

# MESA Hydration Donation Campaign

## MESA HYDRATION DONATION CAMPAIGN

The City of Mesa is working with nonprofit agencies and businesses to provide supplies of water to people in need. The 11th annual Mesa Hydration Donation Campaign runs through September 15. Residents will be asked to donate water at various drop-off locations throughout the City. For a list of drop-off locations, visit [www.mesaaz.gov/H2Omesa](http://www.mesaaz.gov/H2Omesa). The water is distributed through United Food Bank to numerous agencies in the valley, including A New Leaf-East Valley Men’s Center, Paz de Cristo and Mesa United Way.



## NONPROFIT PARTNER PROFILE: MARC COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Marc Community Resources, Inc. (Marc), in collaboration with Paz de Cristo and the City of Mesa, will soon be providing an employment services program to help address a growing homeless/employment issue within Mesa and the east valley by working with vulnerable people in need.

Marc is developing a Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) at Paz de Cristo that includes the assessment and prioritization of identified individuals experiencing homeless and unemployment. The heart of the CEO program will be formation of a team dedicated to providing workforce development services in conjunction with supportive housing to improve the individual's self-sufficiency. The City of Mesa will be assisting with CDBG funding for the program, which is expected to begin in October.

Founded in 1957, Marc Community Resources, 924 N. Country Club Drive, is a private nonprofit corporation providing educational, therapeutic, rehabilitation and social services to children and adults with developmental and physical disabilities and behavioral health challenges. Through the years, Marc has continued to evolve and reinvent itself to adapt to changes in the political, social and economic environments. It has been providing employment services to people with behavioral health disabilities for the past 23 years.

Marc Community Resources serves more than 4,000 people each year and reaches over 9,000 when the activity of its affiliates is included.



### EMPLOYEE NEWS

**ROSARIO BELTRAN** has been promoted to Housing Services Coordinator

## CALENDAR OF MEETINGS/EVENTS

**THUR., SEPT. 7.** HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD. 6pm. Lower Level Council Chambers, 57 E. 1st St.

**FRI., SEPT. 8.** MESA ARTS CENTER SEASON KICKOFF. 6pm-10pm. Mesa Arts Center, 1 E. Main St.

**MON., SEPT. 11.** CITY COUNCIL. 5:45pm. Upper Level Council Chambers, 57 E. 1st St.

**MON., SEPT. 18.** CITY COUNCIL. 5:45pm. Upper Level Council Chambers, 57 E. 1st St.

**MON., OCT. 2.** CITY COUNCIL. 5:45pm. Upper Level Council Chambers, 57 E. 1st St.

**THUR., OCT. 5.** HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD. 6pm. Lower Level Council Chambers, 57 E. 1st St.

**MON., OCT. 16.** CITY COUNCIL. 5:45pm. Upper Level Council Chambers, 57 E. 1st St.

**SAT., OCT. 21.** HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION EVENT. 8am-Noon. East Mesa Service Center, 6935 E. Decatur St.

**SAT., OCT. 21.** CELEBRATE MESA. 5pm-9pm. Red Mountain Soccer Complex, 6935 E. Decatur St.

**SAT., OCT. 28.** MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY. 7am-Noon. Various locations in Mesa.



### CONTACT:

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

480-644-3536 | [housing.info@mesaaz.gov](mailto:housing.info@mesaaz.gov) | Hours 7am-6pm Monday-Thursday