



Friday Faces Series

Putting a Face to the

Journey from Homelessness to EDEN

May 18, 2017

1. Fitz

Fitz served in the U.S. Marines from 1982-1986. He was stationed in Japan most of that time. He related that it was very difficult adjusting to civilian life after returning to the U.S., and stated that he had “a very rough time, for many years”.

Fitz feels that in the past, treatment and services for veterans “were hidden”. He says that now, they are much easier to find. Because he was unaware of what was available to him at the VA, he didn’t hear about services for veterans until 2000.

This past year, Fitz made a commitment to himself to improve his physical and mental health, and stabilize his housing situation. On December 6th of 2016, Fitz moved into EDEN’s new Commons at West Village Permanent Supportive Housing building. He relayed that he “I couldn’t believe that I was deserving of a beautiful and safe apartment, like this”. He looked around his spotless apartment with pride, and stated that he loved to sit in his recliner by the window overlooking the grounds. He pointed out his new coffee table and a framed picture of his beloved mother, and turned up his favorite smooth R. and B. song.

We asked him if there was anyone that was instrumental in helping him secure and settle into permanent housing, and he spoke glowingly about all the staff at West Commons. He mentioned the property manager, Julie, who he said is “wonderful and kind”. Fitz broke into a huge grin when describing Annabella, the full-time VA case manager on-site, and said she is “so nice, and so friendly, and so helpful. She is always there for me”.

There are 24 other veterans living in West Village besides Fitz, and they comprise 36% of the residents. There are weekly meeting groups for support, and a picnic is planned for the week before Memorial Day. Fitz stated that he loves the informal interactions with the other veterans in the building. He said “It is nice to know that there is a group of people that just understands. We all do our own things, but whenever we see each other, we can really relate to each other.”

The Commons at West Village



Left
Fitz and EDEN Communication Coordinator
Danielle Drake inside his living room

Below
Fit's clean and organized kitchen



