



Making Calgary a better home for everyone.

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Helping veterans find a place to call home Madison Place provides lifeline

Calgary, Alberta—On the eve of Remembrance Day, as we honour those who sacrificed their lives for our freedom, it's also important to recognize the need to support those who survived and continue to live with the effects of war.

For some, life after their time in the Armed Forces is difficult. And for those vets who are struggling, one of their biggest challenges is finding affordable housing and the support needed to help them turn their lives around.

Joey Bleviss, of the Calgary Poppy Fund and Veteran's Food Bank, says it can be hard for veterans to adjust to civilian life and many are at greater risk of addiction and homelessness. As a community, it is our responsibility to help them and providing affordable housing first is the first step, he adds.

"To have a place to call home gives them a sense of security," says Bleviss. "That's the start of recovery, so they can feel secure in themselves. Shelter is very important."

At Calgary's Madison Place, run by Calgary Alpha House Society, one of nine agencies in the RESOLVE Campaign for affordable housing, veterans have a safe and affordable home with 24/7 support services.

Madison Place provides affordable and supported housing to 15 male veterans. Their needs are often highly complex and may include mental health issues, addictions and other challenges. Calgary Alpha House Society operates the building and provides support services such as one-on-one chats; accompaniment to appointments; social activities; help with daily living and anything else they may need.

Resident James Cardinal credits Madison House with saving his life.

"If it wasn't for Madison Place, I would be in a psychiatric ward, or dead," says Cardinal.

Mr. Cardinal became a private in the Canadian Armed Forces at age 15. His drinking spiraled out of control while he was in the service and, four years later, he was medically discharged. He couldn't hold down a job and, after his parents passed away, he had nowhere to go and turned to the streets. For 15 years, he called a mat in a shelter home. Two years ago at age 53, James found a home at Madison Place where he has been able to lead a healthier lifestyle, taking medication regularly and without alcohol.

"Living here helps me stay away from situations I shouldn't be in," he says. "I've been able to move away from the street mentality."

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The Calgary Poppy Fund campaign provides support for veterans in crisis and has a long-standing partnership with Calgary Alpha House Society support. Funds from the campaign provided the furniture at Madison Place.

Calgary Alpha House Society is one of nine partner agencies involved in the RESOLVE Campaign, which is helping to provide housing to our veterans as well as other vulnerable Calgarians. The campaign aims to raise \$120 million to create affordable, supported housing for 3,000 Calgarians.

James Cardinal, Joey Bleviss and Alpha House executive director Kathy Christiansen will be available for one-on-one interviews between noon to 2 p.m. today.

To arrange for an interview, please contact:

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RESOLVE Campaign partners include: Calgary Alpha House Society, Accessible Housing, Bishop O'Byrne Housing, Calgary Homeless Foundation, Calgary John Howard Society, Horizon Housing Society, Silvera for Seniors, The Mustard Seed Foundation and Trinity Place Foundation of Alberta.

For more information about the campaign or James Cardinal, visit our [website](#)

About RESOLVE

RESOLVE is helping to end homelessness by raising \$120 million to build affordable, supported housing for 3,000 vulnerable Calgarians. Our partners include: Accessible Housing, Bishop O'Byrne Housing, Calgary Alpha House Society, Calgary Homeless Foundation, Calgary John Howard Society, Horizon Housing Society, Silvera for Seniors, The Mustard Seed and Trinity Place Foundation of Alberta.

For more information, visit www.resolvecampaign.com