

PHOENIX MISSION

To **Save Lives**, To **Rescue Lives**, To **Serve Lives**, To **Change Lives**
www.phoenixrescuemission.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Active Duty National Guard Soldiers to serve homeless this Veterans Day

Phoenix – Sergeant Crystal Reidy describes moving from abandoned buildings to dilapidated houses to living in a van with straightforward coolness. Unfortunately, she was not describing her latest deployment in Iraq, but her life as a homeless child.

Sergeant Reidy and members from the 123rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment with the Arizona National Guard will serve dinner at the Phoenix Rescue Mission on Veteran's Day, Wednesday, November 11 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. The 123rd just returned from Eilat, Iraq in August.

For Reidy, serving a meal at a homeless shelter is personal.

"Because of the National Guard, I was able to break the cycle of homelessness," said Reidy, who joined the Guard right after high school graduation. "Without the Guard I would have started out my life as a homeless person. It is nice to be able to give back."

At its annual Veterans Day Dinner, Veterans will be pinned with a patriotic ribbon and served by active duty personnel. The Phoenix Rescue Mission shelters between 16 and 22 homeless Veterans nightly. Many more Veterans living on the streets come to the Mission daily for hot meals. Mission staff believes 85 homeless individuals who once donned a military uniform will attend the Veterans Day Dinner. According to the National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients, Veterans account for 23 percent of all homeless people in America.

Reidy's message for helping the homeless is simple – treat all people with dignity and respect.

"My family was homeless most of my childhood. I always remember the little moments – a stranger who made me feel like I mattered," said Reidy. "Those little moments are the reason I am standing behind the serving line this Veterans Day instead of in it."

The Phoenix Rescue Mission is located at 1801 S. 35th Ave. on 35th Avenue just north of Buckeye. Dinner starts at 4:30 p.m. Sergeant Crystal Reidy is available for interviews.

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About Phoenix Rescue Mission

Founded in 1952, Phoenix Rescue Mission provides food, shelter, chapel and other services to the homeless and working poor people of metropolitan Phoenix. Hundreds of hot meals are served daily, showers and clean clothing are available, 180 beds provide shelter for men nightly, and clothing and food boxes are given to families in need. A 12-month, spiritually-based addiction recovery program is available for up to 20 men at one time. For more information, visit www.phoenixrescuemission.org.