

As members of the military, I'm sure you understand how complicated it can sometimes be to access information about benefits. Fortunately for veterans living in the East Valley, assistance is now available locally. In fact, the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services recently opened its first office outside of Phoenix and Sun City, here in Chandler.

Certainly, the opening of this branch office will make it easier for the estimated 26,000 Chandler veterans to access information they need to better their lives and receive the benefits they deserve. The office, located at 3130 N. Arizona Avenue, just north of Elliott, is the first of 19 new benefit centers planned statewide. It is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. I strongly encourage you and your families to visit or call the office (480-558-2052) to speak with a certified veteran benefits counselor.

The Chandler City Council annually sets aside funding to improve services for the men and women who honorably served our country. The first Veterans' Benefit Expo was hosted by the City of Chandler in October 2006. The event was extremely successful. Consequently, informational booths were set up at the Senior Expo and the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration at Tumbleweed Park. The next Veterans' Benefit Expo is scheduled for October 20, 2007, at the Community Center, 125 East Commonwealth Avenue. Dozens of vendors will be present at the event to inform the public about topics such as health care and retirement benefits, compensation, and vocational assistance as well as educational opportunities, mortgage funding options, and more.

Another important aspect of the City's program centers on transportation and representatives from the City's Transit Services Division will be at the Expo to inform you on a service that provides transportation to medical care facilities. If you wish to learn more about this event, please call Jennifer Honea at the City of Chandler, at (480) 782-2228.

Thank you again for your service and sacrifice. We are committed to ensuring that you and your families receive the benefits you need and deserve.

Councilmember Matt Orlando