

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Office of County Judge Mark Henry
Galveston County, TX

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GALVESTON COUNTY LAUNCHES VETERANS HOUSING RECOVERY PROGRAM

“Salute to Veterans Program” expected to build approximately 20 homes for Veterans impacted by Hurricane Ike

October 23, 2014

GALVESTON, TX – Next Tuesday, County Judge Mark Henry and Commissioner Ryan Dennard will be handing the keys to a brand new home over to Vietnam veteran and Purple Heart recipient, Sgt. Michael Hudgens from Bacliff, TX. The ceremony will mark the official start of the Salute to Veterans Program under the Galveston County Hurricane Ike Housing Program where construction of approximately 20 homes for veterans are expected to start in January 2015.

Sgt. Michael Hudgens honorably served 6 years in the United States Army as a Senior Airborne Medical Specialist in Vietnam where he received several medals for his heroic service to our nation. In addition to receiving a Purple Heart, Sgt. Hudgens received 11 Air Medals, 2 Bronze Stars and the Distinguished Flying Cross Medal. He and his wife, Gwenna, have been living in Bacliff for over 31 years. After being impacted by the devastating aftermath of Hurricane Ike 6 years ago, Tuesday will complete a chapter in Hudgens’ recovery when they receive their new home.

Veteran specialty programs are not uncommon in Galveston County. Last year, County Judge Mark Henry, who himself is a veteran serving in the first Gulf War with the Air Force, created one of seventeen veteran treatment courts in the State of Texas while also being one of the only courts in the nation completely staffed by veterans. When asked about the Salute to Veterans Program, Judge Henry said, “Galveston County has been leading the way in veteran programs. With over 20,000 veterans living in Galveston County, programs such as this are important to the quality of life that these brave men and women deserve. We are always looking for ways to honor their service with programs such as this.”

The Galveston County Hurricane Ike Housing Recovery Program has built over 978 homes with an additional 120 currently in construction. The Salute to Veterans Program is a combined effort between the Texas General Land Office, Galveston County Veterans Services and the Galveston County Hurricane Ike Disaster Recovery Program. The builder of Sgt. Hudgens’ home, Steve Mataro, a partner in DSW Homes, has been involved with the disaster recovery program since 2009 building hundreds of homes while assisting families with getting back on their feet after Hurricane Ike. Mataro said, “DSW Homes is honored to be part of the Disaster Recovery Housing Program. Working together with the General Land Office and Galveston County over the past five years building homes to over 1,000 families devastated by Hurricane Ike is a great testimony to all. Being able to put Sgt. Hudgens, a true American hero, back home is a wonderful thing that we will always be proud of.”

In addition to local county officials, Congressman Randy Weber and State Senator Larry Taylor are expected to be in attendance to honor Sgt. Hudgens’ and the start of Galveston County’s Salute to Veterans Program.

WHEN: Tuesday, October 28TH at 8:30AM
WHERE: 4738 12th Street
Bacliff, TX

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For more information, contact Tyler Drummond, Chief of Staff to County Judge Mark Henry, at 409-771-2373