



# City News

## Award-winning innovative program provides showers for the homeless

by Jill Forman

“Hygiene restores dignity and restores hope” says Deanna Handel, describing the shower component of the Ventura Health Care Agency’s program for the homeless, which is an “opportunity to extend the front door of the health care system out into the community. This is cutting edge work, a pilot program; not many communities deliver health care this way.”

Handel, manager of the program called Whole Person Care, speaks with passion about the its mission. And she is quick to point out that her outlook is shared by the entire staff. “They need to be welcoming and engaging; invite the clients in.”

Whole Person Care has been delivered by One Stop, weekly outreach events with multiple agencies offering assistance in areas such as housing, mental health services, medical referrals, drug and alcohol counseling, lunches, and so on. Many persons in the community have numerous service needs and barriers to getting those needs met, for example disability, mental health issues, or lack of transportation. By having services in one place, the hope is that they can connect with agencies and individuals to assist them. One Stop has many locations throughout the county. Showers are the latest component in offering more complete assistance.

Care Pods, the shower element, has been in place since December of 2017. They are made from container units which can be put on a truck and taken to locations. Made of steel, they are resistant to damage or vandalism. Fully self-contained units, they hook to city water with a hose. At this time, they stay in one location and are opened on a regular schedule. They each contain four showers, including an ADA-approved unit for the disabled. The company is local, founded by Vernon Alstot, a retired Ventura Fire Department executive who not only had experience with showers for

fire personnel, but also brought relationships with local cities and organizations that were helpful to the Health Care Agency.

Relationships with communities and law enforcement have been key to the implementation of the Whole Person concept, engaging cities and law enforcement, getting everyone one board to find an appropriate location. There needs to be “careful conversations” to include everyone’s perspective. The Health Care Agency relies on city staff and law enforcement to be ambassadors to their communities. Law enforcement works with these individuals every day and knows the barriers they face to getting appropriate services.

The two locations currently with Care Pods are River Haven in Ventura and at the El Buen Pastor Church in Santa Paula. The Ventura site currently serves an average of 25 persons on a weekly schedule, though it has been as many as 41 in a day, and has provided 1700 showers total. The Santa Paula site serves 20-30 persons a week and has provided 1400 showers. HCA is in talks to expand to two more locations; there is funding for six units.

The program recently won a statewide award from the California Association of Public Hospitals – Safety Net Institute, a statewide advocacy body. The Quality Leaders Award recognized their outstanding effort to administer team-based, right place-right time care. A highly competitive award, it was “a real honor.”

Handel is proud of the program and has high praise for the staff and volunteers. The philosophy is centered on friendly workers: community health, professionals, medical staff and volunteers who give care that is compassionate and non-stigmatizing. “All staff really care about the clients. They are amazing.”

For more information visit [www.carepodz.com](http://www.carepodz.com).



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*Pendleton joined the Ventura Port District in 2015.*

## Brian Pendleton announced as new General Manager of Ventura Port District

The Ventura Port District Board of Port Commissioners announced the appointment and promotion of Brian Pendleton to General Manager of the Ventura Port District effective May 1, 2019. Pendleton, was the Deputy General Manager of the Port District, he succeeds Oscar Pena, who retired after 20 years of service to the Port.

Pendleton joined the Ventura Port District in 2015 as the Business Operations Manager, responsible for management, supervision and oversight of

District finances, facilities, marinas, property and risk management. In 2018, due to his successes at the Port, the Board of Commissioners promoted Pendleton to Deputy General Manager to perform asset management duties for a diversified portfolio of real estate holdings including Ventura Harbor Village, hotels, marinas, boatyards, and rental housing.

“I want to personally thank Chris Stephens, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, along with Vice-Chair Brian Brennan, and fellow Port Commissioners for providing me with the opportunity and privilege of serving the Port District as its next General Manager,” said Pendleton. “I look forward to collaborating with our Board to establish key priorities in the coming months and work alongside the hard-working team of the Port District, our Harbor tenants, and key stakeholders to achieve our goals.”

In his new role, Pendleton plans to enhance and expand the Port’s mission to provide a safe and navigable harbor and a seaside destination that benefits residents, visitors, fisherman, and boaters to experience Ventura Harbor’s exceptional facilities, events and services.

“The District Board has recognized the value Mr. Pendleton has brought to the organization since he joined us four years ago,” says Chris Stephens, Chairman of the Ventura Port District Commission. “We are confident that Mr. Pendleton will lead the Ventura Port District to fulfill its mission and serve as a leading commercial fishing center and a valued recreational marina and

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*On May 23, a two-alarm fire consumed a Ventura radiator business located on Thompson. Ventura Radiator and Auto Air Conditioning was badly damaged in the fire. The fire damaged a large portion the building garage which caused the roof to collapse and the exterior walls to buckle. The estimated damage to the structure was approximately \$500,000 and personal losses were estimated to be \$100,000. The cause of the fire remains under investigation. Photo by Richard Lieberman.*