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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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High school students participate in home makeover of Navy Vet's widow

Glendale, Ariz. (February, 2022) -- Students from West-MEC's General Construction Technology program spent their Friday morning renovating a veteran's widow's home in Glendale as part of their work-based learning and community service.

LaGean Levar is the wife of Thomas Phillip Levar, a Navy veteran who passed away nearly a year ago. The veteran served the country from 1984 to 1986. Levar's house was dilapidated and needed immediate attention. The City of Glendale contacted Jeff Turney due to his previous service to veterans. Turney shared, "The house was going to be condemned due to its condition and I contacted Angels on Patrol and Operation Enduring Gratitude. They stepped in to help Ms. Levar and renovate the house."

Operation Enduring Gratitude, the nonprofit started by West-MEC's General Construction Technology instructor and veteran Charlie Ellis, serves veterans and families in need. The nonprofit undertook renovations to make Levar's house a home again.

On the first Friday in February, students from West-MEC's construction class reached the site and put to use the skills learned in their program. They filled in cracks, replaced windows with cinder blocks and bricks, and performed repairs on cracked masonry joints. Avanti Windows and AZ Masonry Council guided students in the process.

Ximena Navarro, a student of the program said, "It feels great to use the skills that I've learned in class while also giving back to the community."

Ellis said, "The class is here to make a tangible difference while seeing real-life application of techniques learned in the lab. They will be coming back a few more times to help in the restoration process."

Currently, American Pride Airconditioning is installing an HVAC unit for OEG. The nonprofit hopes to wrap up the project within three months.

Levar said, "I'd like to thank the students, Operation Enduring Gratitude and others who have helped in the restoration process."

About West-MEC:

West-MEC is a career technical education public school district that focuses solely on innovative career and technical education (CTE) programs that prepare students to enter the workforce and pursue continuing education. West-MEC CTE programs provide students opportunities to earn college credit and industry credentials. West-MEC serves more than 37,000 students from 48 high schools, across 3,600 square miles in the northern and western cities of the Phoenix Metropolitan area. West-MEC now also offers adult education programs. Visit www.west-mec.edu for more information about West-MEC's career-driven education opportunities or follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

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