



## Perris News

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### Veteran's Resource Center Holds First Job/Business Symposium

A recently opened Perris veterans' resources center held its first business and job creating symposium Thursday, an event that drew City elected officials, community advocates, local merchants and federal government representatives.

Since opening in June, the Southwest Veterans' Business Resource Center has made it a priority to inform current and former members of the military about their benefits and opportunities afforded them because of their service.

In particular, the center serves as a clearing house for notifying veterans about potential jobs, helps them polish resumes, puts them in touch with the Veterans Administration and other government agencies and encourages them to consider becoming business owners.

Executive Director Albert Guzman said dozens of veterans have contacted center volunteers in the short time since the non-profit opened its doors in the Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce complex.

He said Perris lies at the center of a region home to many veterans, who despite outreach efforts, still either do not know about their medical, educational and employment benefits or refuse to take advantage of them.

Guzman thanked City officials for providing the space needed to reach those veterans. The City leases the office and administrative space to the Southwest Veterans Business Resource Center for \$1 a year.

"Without the City's help, we would not be here," Guzman said. "It is wonderful the City of Perris has come to the aid of veterans throughout this region."

Perris City Councilmen Al Landers and Mark Yarbrough and City Councilwoman Joanne Evans attended Thursday's "Inaugural Small Business Outreach Event." All have ties to the military. Landers' brother, Richard, was killed while serving with the vaunted 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam. Evans is a former Marine whose son, daughter and grandson are all Iraq war veterans and whose husband served in the Navy. Yarbrough's son is completing Marine Corps basic training; his daughter will leave for Army boot camp in a few weeks; his brothers, father and grandfather all served in uniform.

"You can't do enough for our veterans," Yarbrough said. "We as a nation are hopelessly indebted to them. I commend all of them. May God continue to bless all veterans who have returned home to their families and community. For those who did not make it, may we never forget."

Landers said the pain of his brother's death has not diminished, even though 45 years have passed. He said he was honored to have worked on behalf of the City to bring the veterans' center to Perris.

"This center is growing so much and I am proud to have played a small part in bringing it here," he said. "We owe a lot to our veterans, particularly those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. They have given up all their tomorrows for our today. To me they are the real American idols."

Evans called the Iraq war "a weird conflict" that has left many returning veterans wounded or suffering from post traumatic stress disorder.

"We need to support our veterans," she said. "We need to support them in any way we can."

To learn more about the Southwest Veterans Business Resource Center, visit the agency's website at [www.swvbrc.org](http://www.swvbrc.org)



Perris City Councilman Al Landers and City Councilwoman Joanne Evans chat before the business symposium at the new Southwest Veterans Business Resource Center on D Street. The City leases the site to a non-profit group for \$1 a year.



Perris City Councilman Al Landers and City Councilwoman Joanne Evans stand at attention during the Pledge of Allegiance.



Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough with Norman Towels, director of the Perris Community Partnership.



City Councilwoman Joanne Evans and City Councilman Al Landers listen while their colleague, Mark Yarbrough, addresses the crowd Thursday at the business resource center