

PROUD TO BE A



# David L. Williams Jr.

## Founder of DLW Veterans Outreach Center

---



*David L. Williams Jr. says he kept meeting military veterans in Richmond with horrendous stories about their struggles to make it in the civilian life.*

*“They were homeless or unable to find jobs,” he says. “They needed support to get back on their feet.”*

*The former Air Force staff sergeant says he couldn’t close his eyes to what was going on. Instead, he took action.*

*Using his own money, the 53-year-old Richmond native purchased a vacant business property on North Side and set up a veterans outreach center named honoring his father, “his hero.” And with the help of volunteers, he is providing desperately needed services.*

*Since opening in 2009, he says more than 600 veterans seeking help have come through the doors of the DLW Veterans Outreach and Training Center at 2706 Chamberlayne Ave.*

*“We pride ourselves on assisting veterans to become self-supporting and make the transition back to civilian life,” says Mr. Williams, the center’s unpaid executive director.*

*That includes connecting veterans with housing, job services, education and other services. In the rear of the center, he brings in volunteers to train clients to weld, fix cars and repair lawn mowers and other small engines.*

*Most of those who come are homeless, many suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or being treated for medical care at the McGuire Veterans Administration Medical Center, he says. “We provide the services at no cost. Our clients have very little. But they are seeking advancement in life.”*

*Mr. Williams cites a nine-year female Army veteran as an example of the individuals who come to help. “She came in after being on the streets for three years,” he says adding: “We were able to offer her housing and gain service-connected compensation that allowed her to find permanent housing,” he says. “Before she came through our doors, she was unaware that she was even eligible for benefits.”*

*Mr. Williams says he got his start in helping veterans 12-years ago when he became a volunteer companion and mentor to wounded warriors recovering from head trauma at the McGuire Medical Center.*

*Seeing veterans who were comatose for two years “wake up and begin recovery was a life-changing experience,” he says.*

*As a Scoutmaster, he and his Boy Scouts in Troop 411 also distributed food to homeless veterans in Monroe Park, where he also learned what recipients were facing.*

*He spent 31 years with the U.S. Postal Service, mostly in Richmond. He retired three years ago as a manager in a Postal Service program in Washington.*

---

**Location:** 2706 Chamberlayne Ave., Richmond, VA 23222

**Information:** [www.DLWveteranscenter.org](http://www.DLWveteranscenter.org)