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Piestewa Native American Veterans' Center Becomes Reality

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Cavco Homes Builds New Veterans' Center for Native Americans



Tuba City, AZ -- Cavco Industries, Inc., a producer of manufactured housing has donated a 2,350 square foot building to be used as the new **Piestewa Native American Veterans' Center** on the Navajo Reservation in Tuba City. The center is dedicated to the memory of Spc. Lori Piestewa, a member of the Hopi Tribe and a native of Tuba City. She was the first female Native American soldier killed in combat in a foreign war.

Cavco was approached by ABC Television's Extreme Makeover: Home Edition to participate in this project and had only two days notice to accept their challenge. The building is somewhat of an engineering marvel, having been designed in one day and built by a team of 400 dedicated employees, some working around the clock for four days to complete the building. It is valued at more than \$125,000 including installation. **Extreme Makeover: Home Edition** will provide finishing touches to the building, such as painting and decorating.

"We consider this is a great opportunity to assist the Native American community and to recognize their importance to our culture and their service to our country. This facility will be a place for their veterans to call their own," said Joe Stegmayer, President and CEO of Cavco Industries, Inc. He continued, "This is the first donation of its kind to our knowledge and Cavco is the first manufactured home builder to team with Extreme Makeover: Home Edition.

The building donated by Cavco is based on one of the company's popular homes however the design was reconfigured to accommodate the needs of the project. It has several large open spaces to serve as meeting and display areas, a spacious kitchen and dining room, and two consultation rooms for private meetings with veterans. The building will be handicap-accessible including bathroom facilities. Special lighting throughout the interior spaces allows maximum flexibility for different occasions and purposes. The exterior will be finished with stucco to fit in with the territorial or Santa Fe style of architecture so prevalent in the Southwest.

One of the participants in the concept of creating a veterans' center for Native Americans is former POW Jessica Lynch, who served with Lori in Iraq and credits Piestewa with saving her life. Lynch has been quoted as saying of Piestewa: "We were not similar in size, frame, race, religion or origin, but in our friendship, only one heart existed with two people connected.

Cavco is the largest manufactured housing company in Arizona and the tenth largest in the United States. The company has been based in Phoenix for forty years and is a member the Manufactured Housing Industry of Arizona (MHIA). The statewide organization's membership is dedicated to increasing home ownership

opportunities in Arizona by focusing on affordable housing, zoning equality, and customer satisfaction. Members have consistently participated in many charitable and civic projects.

The Piestewa episode of **Extreme Makeover: Home Edition** is scheduled to air May 22, on ABC as the season finale.

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