

## AMERICAN VETERANS CONTRACTING SOLUTIONS, LLC



RBAZ clients Josh Gonzalez (left) and Mitch Gonzalez

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Josh Gonzalez

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## SERVICE-DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED BUSINESS ACHIEVES PHENOMENAL SUCCESS

American Veteran Contracting Solutions (AVCS) was founded on the belief that every American veteran deserves to be laid to rest with dignity, honor and respect. Since 2017, the company has worked in partnership with the Veteran's Administration to provide elegantly crafted granite markers and marble headstones for veterans around the world, giving military personnel and their families another way to honor and memorialize a precious life.

## BUSINESS IS A FAMILY AFFAIR

Owner Josh Gonzalez, a veteran himself, began the veteran-owned and family-operated company with his uncle, Marco Gonzalez, who had been in the stone industry for 32 years. Marco became aware of a federal program to help disabled veterans looking to start a business of their own. Marco presented Josh with the idea of creating a company that would use his skills with Josh's talents in business operations. And the building blocks for AVCS were formed.

Josh and Marco later completed the process to become government certified to be part of a pool of companies providing headstones and markers for the Veteran's Administration. Once they obtained a government contract, the company took off, growing by leaps and bounds. At that time, Marco's son and Josh's cousin Mitch Gonzalez joined the company as operations manager.

"We have grown really fast," says Josh. "We are one of the top suppliers for the VA." The granite and marble headstones are manufactured at two of the company's facilities located in Oklahoma and Vermont and are shipped throughout the world. "A US veteran can be buried anywhere," explains Josh. "They can be buried in US national or private cemeteries and are still eligible to receive a marker or headstone."

## PROUD AND HONORABLE WORK

The work is intense with lots of travel and long hours for the management team. But it's honorable work they love, explains Mitch. The company receives orders from the VA daily. "There's a lot that goes into it in terms of cutting, boxing, packaging and shipping," says Mitch.

"The headstones are cut from blocks of marble or granite that can weigh up to 45,000 pounds," explains Marco. "The headstones and markers are cut to a specific uniform size, engraved to the specification of each individual service person, polished, packaged and shipped."

While the company can't talk specifics for privacy reasons, they have created markers for soldiers that date back to the revolutionary and confederate wars. "We have created headstones for veterans from multiple wars," explains Marco. Anytime an order comes in for a soldier killed in action they are moved to the top of the list, he said.

## **STRONG SUPPORT HELPS RELIEVE GROWING PAINS**

Finding phenomenal success quickly does have its challenges. But the team at AVCS feels fortunate to have a financial partner that believes in the company and supports its short and long-term growth plans. That partner is Republic Bank of Arizona.

"We wanted to work with a local bank that supports our vision," says Josh. "The biggest thing for us is having a strong partnership. It's why we're working with RBAZ. They were the most forthcoming with their support of our growth plans."

"The work American Veterans Contracting Solutions does is extraordinary," says Brian Ruisinger, Republic Bank of Arizona president and CEO. "Josh and his team have a clear vision and a strong growth plan. It's a well-run veteran-owned local business that does great work for a worthy cause. We are so proud to support them and look forward to helping them achieve their future goals."

To learn more about the VA's headstone program visit [www.cem.va.gov/hmm/](http://www.cem.va.gov/hmm/)

To learn more about the VA's Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business program, visit <https://business.defense.gov/Socioeconomic-Programs/SDVOSB/>

