

PLANTING SEEDS OF *Peace*

A Community For Peace opens up new opportunities in Oak Park

BY ANNE STOKES

Since 2008, A Community For Peace (ACFP) has been helping clients rebuild their lives by providing emergency housing, counseling, legal services and other lifesaving assistance. But these clients — many coming from South Sacramento — sometimes faced considerable obstacles reaching ACFP's Citrus Heights location. Rather than creating another hurdle for survivors to overcome, ACFP is bringing services where they're needed the most. By summer 2019, the nonprofit will be opening up three new locations in Oak Park to serve Sacramento's most vulnerable and underserved populations.

"That happens to be the LGBTQ population and foster youth — in particular foster youth, LGBTQ and transgender individuals of color," said Elaine Whitefeather, ACFP executive director. "The unique aspect is our cultural sensitivity and the social justice response to the multicultural, complex trauma needs of the people we're serving."

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ELAINE WHITEFEATHER
Executive Director,
A Community For Peace

SACRED SPACE

Whitefeather points out that many children removed from homes due to domestic violence end up in the foster care system. According to the California Child Welfare Council, foster youth are at high risk of being exploited by sex traffickers. LGBTQ foster youth face even greater risk.

With help from nonprofit organizations including Soroptimist International, Rotary International, Sierra Child & Family Services and the faith community, ACFP has opened a youth drop-in center: Sacred Space.

"I wanted to create a real, live tangible place where we could plant seeds of peace in a neighborhood and lift up the community," Whitefeather said. "I wanted to call it Sacred Space for a reason, because it implies exactly that."

The center provides basic needs like food, clothing, school supplies and a safe place to be with art, mentoring and creative activities after school and on weekends. For kids who need

more intensive help with employment, housing or mental health services, Sacred Space can refer them to partnering agencies or nonprofits that can provide such assistance. Sacred Space is a harm reduction center for the populations most vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation.



SACRED SPACE

3841 4th Ave., Sacramento
(formerly the New Direction Christian Center)
Hours: weekday afternoons, evenings and Saturdays



RUTHIE'S PLACE

Opening: Summer 2019
3519 Broadway, Sacramento



TRANSCENDENT BOUTIQUE AND ART GALLERY

Grand Opening: April 27
3401 2nd Ave., Sacramento

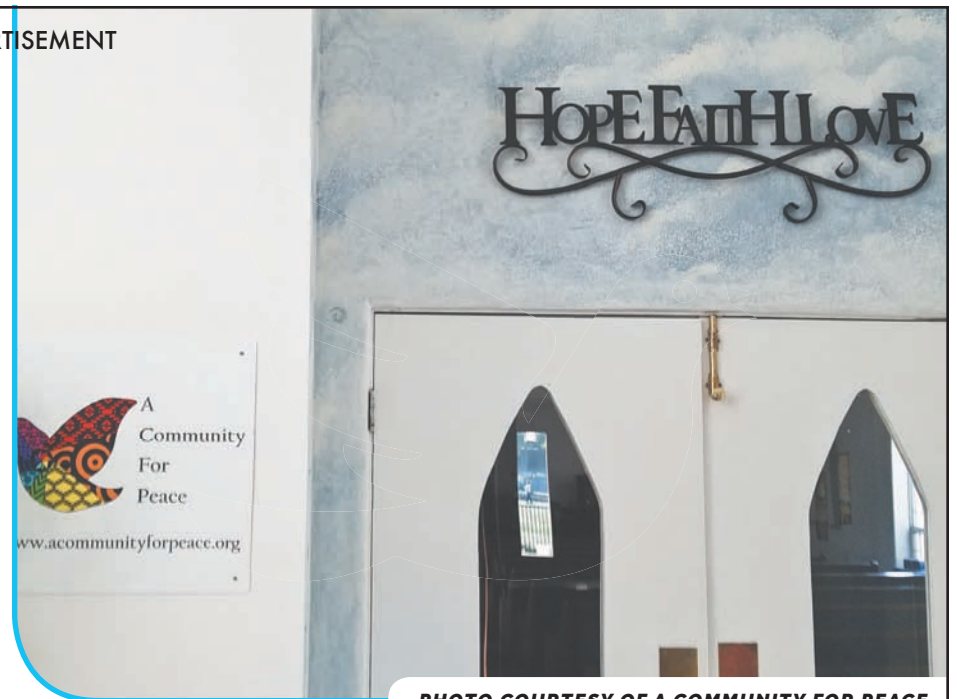


PHOTO COURTESY OF A COMMUNITY FOR PEACE

RUTHIE'S PLACE THRIFT STORE

Ruthie's Place, slated to open in summer 2019, will be more than a place to find affordable clothes. Named in honor of WNBA Hall of Fame member and domestic violence survivor Ruthie Bolton, the store will provide foster youth with work experience and job training, something many foster youth need to succeed but have difficulty finding.

"It's a store for foster youth, run by foster youth," Whitefeather said. "I want foster kids to learn everything there is about owning a business, how to be an entrepreneur and expose them to every aspect of how they can be self-reliant and independent."

TAPESTRY AND TRANSCENDENT BOUTIQUE AND ART GALLERY

LGBTQ victims of intimate partner violence face unique challenges when seeking help. ACFP's TAPESTRY program provides emergency housing, legal advocacy, counseling and other services through an all-LGBTQ staff that reflects the community it seeks to serve. The unique program will be housed together with Transcendent Boutique and Art Gallery. Set to open in April 2019, Transcendent will cater to the community's gender-diverse members with customized clothing and wigs, makeup accessories and more.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL THE OAK PARK OFFICE AT (916) 917-5450