

May 15, 2017

Homeless Women and Children Are Focus of Christian Aid Center Campaign

Walla Walla, Wash.—The Christian Aid Center-Walla Walla Rescue Mission (CAC) launches Gift of Grace campaign to build a \$4.85 million center for women and children. The new facility will provide increased shelter capacity to meet demand, and create an environment for more effective programming. Beyond providing emergency shelter and meeting basic needs, the ultimate goal of the CAC is to help guests change their lives and end the vicious cycle of homelessness.

According to the Walla Walla County Point-In-Time Survey for 2016, there are more homeless women than men in our community (292 women compared to 275 men). And 40 percent of them are children under the age of 18.

Homeless women with children in Walla Walla have limited options for shelter. Even though, the Christian Aid Center has never turned away a man due to lack of space. On a typical week, an average of eight women are turned away, not counting their children.

In addition to the lack of space, the current dilapidated state of the CAC facilities for women and children present other challenges such as expensive maintenance, limited accessibility, and insufficient security and safety.

A new building will offer a safe, supportive space for guests to take steps out of homelessness. The 17,000 square-foot facility will house 16 flexible living-units, a dining room, classrooms, living rooms, a childcare center, and administrative offices. It will replace current structures across the street from the main building on W. Birch Street.

The CAC Board of Trustees has saved approximately \$1 million in seed money for this project. “This has been a strategic goal of the Board for many years, but now with the growing demand and the failing facilities, it has become a need we couldn’t put off any longer;” says LeAnn Tupper, CAC Board chair.

The campaign has already received early support from a wide variety of individuals and foundations; including a \$700,000 grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank, and a \$400,000 grant from the highly regarded M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust. The fundraising efforts have recently reached 75 percent of the goal, leaving just over a million dollars to raise.

Groundbreaking is scheduled to take place in late summer. And the new center is expected to open its doors in the Spring of 2018.

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Press Kit:

For a complete press kit, which includes digital files, please go to christianaidcenter.org/gogpresskit.

Letters of endorsement available upon request.

About the Christian Aid Center:

With more than 70 years of rescuing and restoring lives in the Walla Walla Valley, the Christian Aid Center—Walla Walla Rescue Mission (CAC) is one of the first places that hurting individuals seek when in time of need and despair. In 1946, CAC started as a soup kitchen and chapel for men, and in time evolved into a homeless shelter.

Today, while we still address the same basic needs of sheltering and feeding needy men, women and children; we also offer the opportunity for real-life change through long-term programming.

Last year, 341 individuals stayed in our shelter for a total of 11,306 bed nights. We also provided breakfast and dinner daily for anyone in our community who was hungry—resulting in more than 37,000 meals served.

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