



High Mountain Youth Project NEWSLETTER

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LINCOLN COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

www.highmountainyouth.org

February 2018

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High Mountain Youth Project Evening Drop-in Center - Open!

On Monday, February 5th, HMYP board members heard the long-awaited words from the Village of Ruidoso: "You are good to go!"

It's been a long road, but HMYP's Drop-in center has finally opened to provide resources to teens experiencing homelessness. "The delays over the past few months have been more than frustrating", said board member, Rita Combs, "the closer we got to having all the 'I's dotted and T's crossed', the more anxious we all were to get our center open!" The (nearly) 2400 square foot condo on Mechem Drive looks pretty much the same outside, but MUCH different inside than it did just four months ago. One of the most common comments from visitors is that it feels surprisingly "homey" for a large, commercial space.

As you enter the back door of the condo (from Porr Street) the large, empty room that once needed some attention, now has a beautiful, new, (minimal, but functional) kitchen, where HMYP staff and volunteers can prepare snacks and meals and a laundry closet where teens can do their laundry. Donations earmarked for the new kitchen made the renovation possible, and because not all of money donated for the new kitchen was used, remaining money went toward purchasing wire shelving, free-standing, stainless steel islands and storage units that can be moved to a new location when the time comes. The work to install the kitchen (other than plumbing and electrical) was done by HMYP volunteers. High Mountain Youth Project is extremely grateful for the donors and volunteers who made the kitchen possible.

An open house is being planned for Sunday, March 4th from 1 – 3 p.m. so that friends, supporters and the public can visit the new Drop-in center.

ABOVE: Volunteer Greg Gardner stands in front of the (repaired) wall after electrical wiring for the kitchen was added and the wall was patched.



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To protect the identity of our donors, HMYP has been advised to discontinue listing our donors in our newsletter. Future newsletters will not include a donor list. We want all of our donors to know we appreciate each and every one of you!
 Thank you so much.

Kiwanis Club Donates Computers and Printer to High Mountain Youth Project

Soon after High Mountain Youth Project announced their new location for their Drop-in center last fall, Ashley Dalton, President of the Ruidoso Kiwanis Club, contacted board member, Rita Combs, with a simple question: "What do you need for your drop-in center?" Because one of HMYP's primary goals is to help teens experiencing homelessness stay in school and focus on their studies, it didn't take long to determine where their generosity could make a significant difference. In mid-January, the Ruidoso Kiwanis Club presented High Mountain Youth Project with three laptop computers and a printer (with a generous supply of ink cartridges).



L to R: Carolyn Durrett, Kiwanis Club member, Ashley Dalton, President of the Kiwanis Club, and Laurie Benavides, President of HMYP.

The designated study area at the Drop-in center provides a comfortable space where teens can do their homework and receive tutoring. Now, thanks to the Kiwanis Club, the students have the computers needed to do research and homework to help them be successful in school.

"Eat, Drink and Be Mine" Dinner Event

On February 7th, the White Apron Society's, "Eat, Drink and Be Mine" eight-course dinner and fundraiser for High Mountain Youth Project truly provided a dining extravaganza for sixty fortunate diners. Wine pairings donated by Noisy Water Winery complimented each course. High Mountain Youth Project would like to acknowledge the hard work of Event Planner (and board member), Pam Tomlin who coordinated the evening, the White Apron Society chefs, Noisy Water Winery and EVERYONE who made the evening a spectacular event.



L to R: Chef Shawn of Shawn's Eatery; Chef Mike, R.D. Hubbard's private chef and chef at Kokopelli; Chef Brendan, executive chef, Ruidoso Downs Race Track's Jockey Club and founder White Apron Society; Alan, Chef Shawn's son; Chef Michael Harris, sous chef Ruidoso Jockey Club. Photo by Bill Frenchu.

HMYP board president, Reverend Laurie Benavides spoke briefly and announced that the evening Drop-in center would open the following day. Mayor Tom Battin also spoke, sharing his support for the program that will provide resources to teens experiencing homelessness and his appreciation for the dedication of the individuals who are making the Drop-in center a reality, despite many obstacles. Mayor Battin then presented Reverend Benavides with the Village's permit that allows the Drop-in center to open.



Chefs being introduced: L to R: Aidan Gochenour, expo; Justin Besancon, Spencer Theatre; Michael Aguilar, Ranchers; Chef Shawn's son Alan; Zachary Huffman, Sacred Grounds; Mike James, personal chef to J.D. Hubbard and Kokopelli's chef; Randy Narveson, Alto Country Club; Chef Shawn, Chef Shawn Eatery; Michael Harris, sous chef Ruidoso Jockey Club; Brendan Gochenour, executive chef Ruidoso Jockey Club and founder White Apron Society. Photo by Bill Frenchu.

Ten unique golf umbrellas, hand-painted by local artists were auctioned off during the evening. Bidding on the umbrellas began on February 1st at Sacred Grounds Coffee and Tea House where they remained on display until the dinner.

Plans have already begun for next year's White Apron Society's dinner with hopes of expanding the number of guests who can be served. HMYP offers their sincere gratitude to everyone who made this year's dinner a huge success.

Program Assistant Joins Evening Drop-in Center Staff

Mrs. Mary Storey has accepted the position of Program Assistant for High Mountain Youth Project. Mary has spent years dealing with adolescents, being a mother, a certified nursing assistant and a licensed foster parent. Mary is detail-oriented, self motivated, caring and empathetic; she has excellent communication skills and is able to prioritize responsibilities based on need and works exceptionally well under pressure. She has already completed training that will prove valuable at the Drop-in Center, including Mental Health of Adolescents, Adolescent Development, Mental Health First Aid, Trauma Informed Parenting and Trust Circle. HMYP Board of Directors believes that Mary Storey is an excellent addition to the evening Drop-in Center. HMYP would like to thank all of the individuals who submitted applications for the part-time program assistant position.



Behind the Scenes:

HMYP Board Elections: At the December 5th annual board meeting, four new board members were elected to the High Mountain Youth Project Executive Board. Re-elected (returning) board members, Rev. Laurie Benavides, Rita Combs, Luisa Rodriguez, Pam Tomlin and Judge Angie Schneider welcomed new board members Vivian Isaacs, Pauline (Polly) Staski, Dr. Clayton Alred, and Don McMasters. Although newly elected officer/ treasurer, Don McMasters has resigned from the board due to work commitments, the board appreciates the work Don did for HMYP during his brief term of service and wishes him well. HMYP board members who recently left the board are as follows: Mary Reeve, Leon Kranz, Beth Rabourn and Dr. Gina Langley. It should be noted that Leon Kranz and Beth Rabourn have been on the HMYP Board of Directors since its inception in 2014. HMYP is extremely thankful to each of these dedicated individuals who gave their time, energy, support and guidance to help our organization move forward and realize our many successes.

HMYP Training Days and "Work Days": Throughout December and January, volunteers received training to prepare for staffing the evening Drop-in center. Training sessions facilitated by Program Manager, Ted Allen took place on December 13th, January 6th and January 17th.

Volunteers also gave their time and energy on several afternoons to provide assistance to get the Drop-in Center ready. Several volunteers assisted at the center for an "assembly day", where drapes were hung, student lockers, shelving, and kitchen islands were assembled. Volunteers also helped with sorting, recording and arranging kitchenware and a final cleaning at the Drop-in center prior to opening made the center ready for teens. HMYP thanks all of the wonderful volunteers who helped make the center ready for opening day!



We envision a loving and caring community where all youth are protected, empowered, loved, respected and treated with dignity.

Our mission is to involve the communities of Lincoln County, New Mexico, in providing a comprehensive safety net for high school students experiencing homelessness.

A Note from the Editor:

If you wish to "unsubscribe" to our newsletter, or if you are receiving the newsletter in printed format and wish to receive it electronically, please email your request to: info@highmountainyouth.org. For additional information about our organization, email us at the address above, or visit our website at: www.HighMountainYouth.org.

It is with your kindness and generosity that our organization will meet its goals. You can make your tax-deductible donation by sending your check to: High Mountain Youth Project, P.O. Box 2646, Ruidoso, NM 88355, or by donating online through our website.

The High Mountain Youth Project Advisory Committee meetings are normally held the fourth Wednesday of each month. Please check our website: www.HighMountainYouth.org to verify date and time of the next Advisory Committee meeting. Questions regarding upcoming meetings may be directed to our email: info@HighMountainYouth.org.



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