

Veteran's program up and running in Lexington

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Contributor

It seemed a shame that the property should be going to waste. The former Babcock facility for children with disabilities (the Oakwood Group Home) contained a large piece of land, an administration building, cottages and outbuildings.

It was conveniently located in Lexington, close to Columbia, a city with a variety of services for a variety of people in need.

The place sure needed a lot of work, but if the right people came in, they could really do something with it and utilize it for the benefit of others. It turns out this facility was waiting for another divine appointment of Christ Central.

As previously reported (see Wagener Monthly August 2008), Christ Central was approached by the government VA program for this state about providing care for qualifying veterans needing housing, counseling, training and other services.

The Lexington facility was just the thing to get the ball rolling. In typical Christ Central fashion, doors were divinely opened, resources became available, and within an astonishingly short amount of time, the program was up and running.

The talented folks at Christ Central have already refurbished two of the cottages on the property, and, according to Al Kulp, the head administrator of the facility, things are already up and running.

The goal is to refurbish two more cottages each 90 days until they are all habitable, with a total of 96 veterans being served in six more months.

About the facility

The administration building, six cottages and outbuildings make up the property. Each cottage has eight bedrooms, with two people sharing a room.

There is an on-site house manager on duty 24 hours a day (with these folks working in shifts of course) to oversee and provide mentoring for residents.

The cottages have kitchen, dining and laundry facilities, where many residents learn everyday life skills for the first time.

There are also devotions and personal enrichment time each day at each cottage.

As for the residents themselves, they have each been pre-screened, qualified by the VA program and are deemed "ready" to make the transition from being homeless for whatever reason (be it serious injuries, drug or alcohol problems, etc.) to being ready to make a change and be self-sufficient.

Each person has a caseworker and receives services provided by a variety of sources, all approved by the VA program and caseworker. In addition, the Christ Central folks at the facility also conduct detailed interviews with the residents to further determine what they can do to complement and supplement the services and training already being provided.

Of course, from Christ Central's standpoint, the most important element to be provided to these people during such a critical and transitional time is the love of Christ.

Unconditional acceptance in a safe, loving and non-judgmental atmosphere can go as far as any traditional treatment program, as missions have proven for centuries.

Typically, a resident will live at the facility for one year, although, of course, a person would be accommodated for a bit longer if he needs more time to transition, as long as he is making progress for the final goal of self-sufficiency.

Perhaps the most exciting prospect of this new endeavor is the way in which partnership with others not only ensures success but also fulfills Christ Central founder Pastor Jimmy Jones' initial vision.

As always, Christ Central desires to be a resource to every community they are a part of.

In this case, working with government entities, local city organizations and others in the immediate community for the common good of rehabilitating, training and

healing people who have served our country and are in need fulfills the edict of Christ to love and serve one another perfectly.

How can you help?

While Christ Central receives a per diem payment per person for this program, there is no recompense for maintenance, upgrading buildings, etc.

Fundraising for the upgrade and remodeling of buildings on the facility to bring them up to code regarding safety, occupancy, etc. is a high priority for Christ Central.

As always, volunteers who think they have skills to contribute to these folks in need are always welcome!

For more information, contact Christ Central at (803) 564-5902.

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