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HOPE 4 YOUTH PARTNERS TO OPEN PATHWAYS 4 YOUTH, A YOUTH OPPORTUNITY CENTER, IN ST. CLOUD

ANOKA, Minn. – HOPE 4 Youth, working in partnership with the Rotary Clubs of the greater St. Cloud area, is pleased to announce the opening of a youth opportunity center, Pathways 4 Youth (P4Y), in February 2018. The youth opportunity center, a replication of the HOPE 4 Youth Drop-In Center in Anoka, will also serve 16 - 23-year-olds experiencing homelessness, and will be located in the Youth for Christ building, Suite 260, 203 Cooper Avenue N. in St. Cloud.

The center will be open 2 - 7 p.m. Monday-Friday to help homeless youth access vital resources including social services and case management, health services including an on-site clinic, food, clothing, computers, lockers, showers, laundry facilities, mailing address, and an evening meal; all resources that have helped change the life trajectories of many of the youth who have walked through HOPE 4 Youth's doors.

"Through thorough research and feedback from area social service agencies, law enforcement, and school systems, we learned that there is an unmet and growing need for this type of resource center," said Tim Wensman, Rotary member and Board Chair of P4Y. "It is estimated that there are between 125 - 150 youth between the ages of 16 and 23 who are homeless on any given night in the greater St. Cloud area."

After researching and touring other homeless youth-serving organizations around Minnesota, Rotary leadership decided that HOPE 4 Youth, a 501c3 nonprofit that also provides pathways to end youth homelessness, headquartered in the north metro suburbs of the Twin Cities, was the model that would best fit the St. Cloud area.

"Nearly five years after opening HOPE 4 Youth's doors, more youth than ever before are walking through our doors and finding the services and resources they need to become independent, self-sustained and housed adults," said Lisa Jacobson, Executive Director of HOPE 4 Youth. "When Tim and other Rotary members reached out to partner with us on this project, we knew that we could help recreate the success we have seen in our youth."

HOPE 4 Youth has been and will continue to be a key partner providing the processes, procedures, systems and oversight that will assure a successful launch and sustainable youth opportunity center. Pathways 4 Youth will partner with many local social service agencies including Catholic Charities of the Diocese of St. Cloud and Stearns County Department of Human Services to help coordinate care for the youth and not duplicate the services that are currently available. Volunteers from the Rotary clubs of the greater St. Cloud area, along with other service clubs, organizations and community members, will provide ongoing support and at the center.

Pathways 4 Youth has already been established as a 501c3 nonprofit organization and HOPE 4 Youth and the St. Cloud Rotary have developed a business plan to ensure its long-term sustainability.

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“Our main goal is to help these young people navigate a path to grow and become contributing members in our communities,” Wensman noted.

"The young people experiencing homelessness in St. Cloud deserve the same chance to succeed as the youth in our community and if we can help them do that then of course we are going to help," added Jacobson.

About HOPE 4 Youth

HOPE 4 Youth, a 501c3 nonprofit organization located in Anoka, Minnesota, serves youth experiencing homelessness in the north metro suburbs by meeting basic needs, as well as helping youth find jobs, finish school, secure housing, and access health and wellness services. The Drop-In Center is open M - F, 2 – 7 p.m. HOPE 4 Youth also provides transitional housing to homeless youth at HOPE Place. Mission: providing pathways to end youth homelessness. Vision: that all youth feel safe, valued, and supported while reaching their full potential. This begins with meeting their basic needs and leads to giving them the tools and resources to thrive. For more information, please visit HOPE4YouthMN.org.

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