

COLUMBUS BIZ INSIDER

FIRST LOOK: OSU Star House center for homeless youth's \$2M new home

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An around-the-clock drop-in center for homeless youths is moving out of a run-down house on North Fourth Street into a 14,000-square-foot facility that's been renovated with a state-of-the-art kitchen with Cambria countertops, a basketball court, computer lab and quiet room.

Terry O'Connell, the former executive vice president of Time Warner Cable, is president of the board of the OSU Star House. He's been the chief fundraiser for the \$2 million project.

Click on the slideshow for a photo tour of the new facility and to see what the current house looks like.

Star House, which is part of Ohio State University, helps homeless youth between the ages of 14-24, not only with basic needs like a meal and a place to shower and wash their clothes, but also tries to connect them to housing, employment opportunities, education and mental health and or substance abuse therapy.

O'Connell said there have been dozens of cash and in-kind donors, which are listed below.

The building at 1220 Corrugated Way in Columbus used to be the home of the Middleton Printing Co. It's been converted into a new 24/7 drop-in center with amenities that also include a medical room, large laundry area and more rest rooms and shower facilities.

There's also a recreation room with a basketball court and warehouse space that will be used for a social enterprise operation. The social enterprise will involve a small prefabrication business providing daily earning opportunities for Star House youth, along with basic living skills and on-the-job training.

The center serves 60 to 70 kids each day, or approximately 60 percent of the estimated homeless youth in Central Ohio between the ages of 14-24.

"With the support of a caring community, we are now able to move out of a rat-infested, 1,800-square-foot rental property into a beautiful facility," O'Connell said. "The statement this community is making to both the Star House staff and to our homeless young people is people care about them. They are no longer alone.

"That, perhaps more than anything, may prove to be the most-important thing of all about this endeavor. When people care, trust begins," he said. "When the element of trust begins, healing follows. Once our youth heal, they exit street living and enter mainstream society. That will be the major objective of this new facility into which the Star House is about to move."

The project involved several corporate partners, including Lowe's which donated outdoor landscaping, patio furniture and helped with some of the kitchen appliances.

M&A Architects and Miles-McClellan combined efforts to design and renovate the facility and provided significant in-kind donations, O'Connell said.

Tracie McGarity Interiors donated hundreds of hours identifying local companies who donated most of the interior finish material including flooring, carpeting and wall and floor paint material from Sherwin-Williams.

Other financial backers included the city of Columbus, the McConnell Foundation, Robert J. Anthony Fund, Charles Blessing Fund, Anthony Charles Fund and the Endowment for Community Enrichment Fund.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday.

Other donors include:

- Cambria
- Closets by Design
- Continental Office Environments
- Crane family/ Crane Group
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The \$2 million renovation of the new Star House facility includes a state-of-the-art... more

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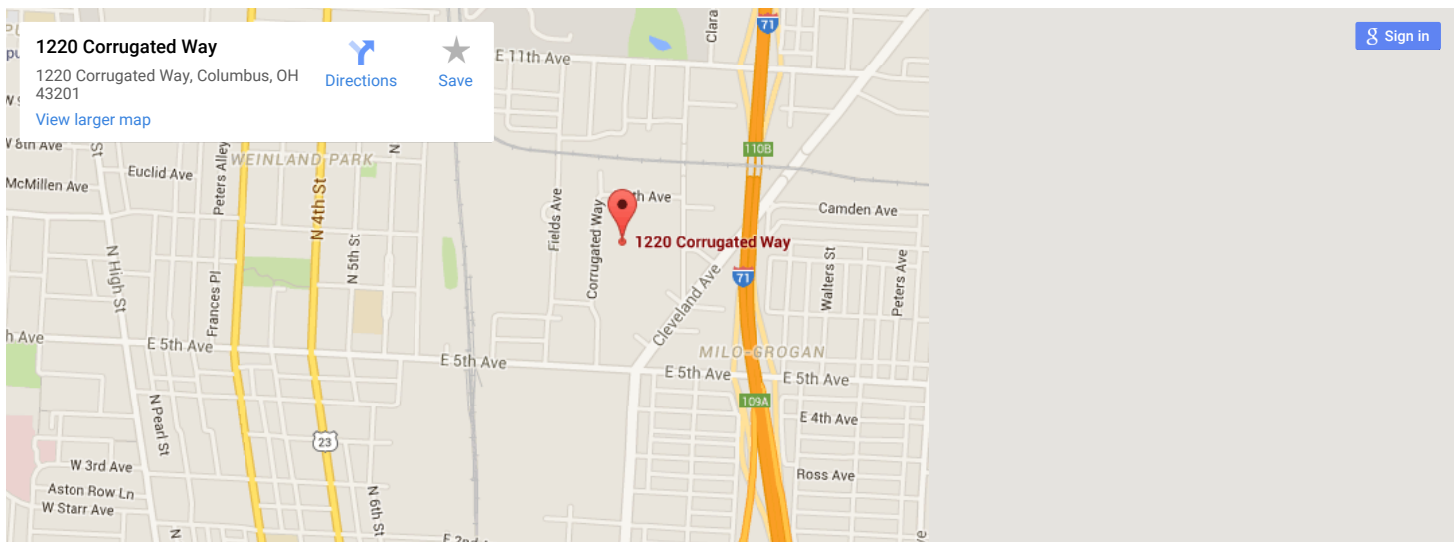
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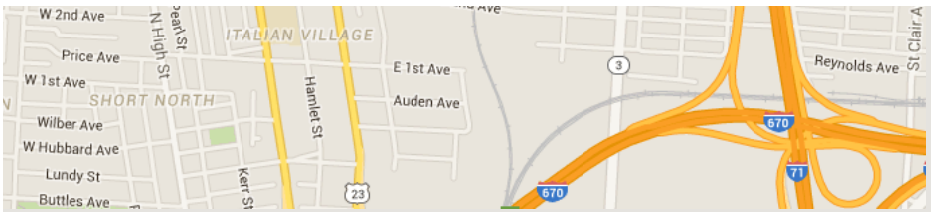
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