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Help Children's Home Society receive \$500,000 Kresge Foundation grant

By Community Submission
 August 04 2009

VERO BEACH -- Children's Home Society of Florida Treasure Coast Division is honored and even more motivated by the challenge that the prestigious Kresge Foundation has put before them - raise \$1.2 million by June 30, 2010, and Kresge will award the final \$500,000 needed to reach the \$5 million capital campaign goal to build and endow the Youth Transition Center.

The \$5 million capital campaign has currently raised \$3.3 out of \$4.5 million needed in order to receive this Kresge Challenge Grant. Every gift to the Youth Transition Center counts toward the challenge, which aims to spur giving at all levels and encourage first-time donors and businesses to come forward.

Kresge Foundation is one of the nation's largest, most widely respected and selective charitable foundations. In 2008, the foundation awarded 342 grants totaling \$181 million. The Youth Transition Center, currently under construction on Children's Home Society's Vero Beach campus, will provide eight independent living apartments for up to 20 youth who "age out" of foster care on the day of their 18th birthday and are no longer eligible for most state assistance. The Center will also create opportunities for an additional 40 youth (ages 18-23) in the CHS Transitional Living Program to earn a higher education, learn life skills, find stable jobs and safe housing and make a positive transition into adulthood. The Youth Transition Center is the only facility of its kind on the Treasure Coast, serving youth from Indian River, Martin, St. Lucie and Okeechobee counties.

The challenge grant has been Kresge Foundation's signature funding method for more than eight decades. Through the program, the Kresge Foundation encourages non-profit organizations to find innovative ways to strengthen their base of community support, promote board and staff diversity, and the much-needed momentum to raise funds during a recession.

"We are extremely grateful to the Kresge Foundation for helping CHS finish out the homestretch of this campaign," said Lawrence Brooks, Executive Director, Children's Home Society of the Treasure Coast. "The YTC project has evolved



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The Kresge Foundation, located in Troy, Mich., awards facilities capital as a challenge grant to help nonprofit organizations build their base of private financial support as they conduct capital campaigns to build or renovate their facilities.

Grants are awarded to organizations that specifically address the needs of poor, disadvantaged and disenfranchised in six fields of interest: health, the environment, arts and culture, education, human services, and community development. Grant recipients must be experienced in delivering effective programs, have talented and motivated leadership, and possess the ability to mobilize private resources to achieve sustainable transformation.

"Children's Home Society of Florida was selected as a grant recipient based on their experience doing excellent, innovative work on the frontlines and the unmet need for a transitional living facility in the Treasure Coast community," said Rip Rapson, president of the Kresge Foundation. "The challenge grant is intended to help organizations strengthen the long-term sustainability of their institution and to become more practiced in strategic planning and development."

Bill Bryant and Associates is building the Youth Transition Center through environmentally conscious and sustainable building practices. A Hard Hat Party and tour is scheduled for November 2009 with the facility's grand opening in January 2010. Numerous innovative fundraisers are planned, including the "Diva Wears Rag Street" event in Martin County in August, a designer show house in winter 2010 and several challenges aimed at inspiring business and neighborhood involvement, collectively embracing the communities that CHS serves.

For more information about the CHS Youth Transition Center or to make a pledge or donation towards the Kresge Challenge, please call (772) 489-5601 or visit www.youthtransitioncentertc.com.

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