



## *For Immediate Release*

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## Wind Youth Services Closes Emergency Shelter

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### ***Goodwill Sacramento Valley & Northern Nevada offers Challenge Grant***

**Sacramento, Calif., February 26, 2016** -Wind Youth Services, the only service provider in Sacramento County focusing solely on runaway, homeless, street youth and transition age youth, has been forced to close their adolescent shelter for lack of funding.

Unless operating funds can be quickly raised, Sacramento is at risk of losing the only emergency shelter specifically for teens ages 12-18. Wind Youth Services has a facility, so the beds and shelter are already in place, but the necessary funding to operate is not.

"This is one of the most vulnerable homeless populations in the Sacramento area," says Suzi Dotson, executive director of Wind, "these at-risk young people are dependent on our services as they strive to move from homelessness to a stable living situation."

Approximately \$150,000 is needed to reopen and operate the youth shelter. Goodwill Sacramento Valley & Northern Nevada has offered the first \$10,000, with a community challenge to businesses, churches, politicians and individuals to help reach the goal. "Goodwill is committed to helping the displaced and disadvantaged," commented Joseph Mendez, President and CEO of Goodwill, "this is why we

responded immediately with a check and a challenge to the community to join us and help move our young people off the ground and into the available beds."

Over the last two years, Wind's adolescent shelter has provided safety and emergency shelter for nearly 200 Sacramento teens who have often escaped a home where they were victims of physical or sexual abuse, suffered from extreme poverty, were kicked out for their gender or sexual identity or a combination of the above. "For too long," says Dotson, "Wind has struggled to operate Sacramento's only adolescent shelter program with inadequate support."

Interested parties can donate directly on the website at [www.windyouth.org/donate](http://www.windyouth.org/donate) or checks can be mailed to Wind Youth Services, 1722 J Street, 3rd Floor, Sacramento, CA 95811.

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***Wind Youth Services provides supportive services and opportunities to youth experiencing homelessness as they pursue self-determined lives of stability and independence.***

**Wind** was first opened in 1994 by the Sisters of Social Service in a small space located next to Loaves and Fishes. In 2001, the Wind Youth Services Shelter opened its doors in Carmichael as a result of grants from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Runaway and Homeless Youth Program and the United Way. In 2004 when the need for increased space was realized the Shelter moved to a larger 12-bed facility in North Sacramento.

In 2003 the Wind Education Program was developed and operated from a facility across the street from the Center. This program provides an on-site accredited junior high and high school program that is in collaboration with the Twin Rivers Unified School District Community Collaborative Charter Schools. The students attend school five days a week, twelve months a year, earning credits toward graduation and improving their academic and social skills.

In 2007 the Wind Staff's dream was realized when the Wind Youth Center opened and housed both the Day Center and Education programs under one roof, effectively removing the children from the adult homeless population. This dream became a reality through the hard work and dedication of the Board of Directors, staff, local businesses, foundations and individuals who generously raised over \$700,000 for the Capital Campaign.

