



Cliff Grassmick / Staff Photographer

Lutheran Church of Hope Pastor Scott McAnally points out drawings in November 2017 of the housing project that will be built next to the church. Anchor House will be for youth who age-out of the foster care system.

Foster care project will partner with Habitat for Humanity

Anchor House will assist eight youth

Staff Report

In an effort to address the need for affordable housing in the greater Denver area, Lutheran Church of Hope has teamed up with Luther-

an Family Services Rocky Mountains and Thrivent Financial to build a transitional apartment complex for youth exiting foster care without a permanent family.

The building, to be located on land owned by Lutheran Church of Hope, is called Anchor House, and will be built in conjunction with Flatirons Habitat for Humanity.

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It organizations have formed a 501c(3) nonprofit corporation for Anchor House.

This May, in honor of National Foster Care Month, the team is spreading the word about the building project through its new website, anchorhouseco.org. Monetary donations will fund not only the construction of the building itself, but also the acquisition of appliances and other essential items for the youth who will move in.

As young people — because of age — leave foster care, Anchor House will provide them with the opportunity to continue to develop skills needed to make successful transitions to independent adulthood and to become contributing members of their community.

It is projected that more than 200 youth will emancipate from foster care in Colorado in the next year. Anchor House will accommodate eight youth.

“Through no action of their own, children aging out of foster care are faced with many real life, adult decisions and situations that take place almost overnight,” said Dawn Davis, president of FirstBank North Metro, and former foster child. “Housing is of top priority as many are faced with immediate homelessness as soon as they turn 18. We support children through the education and foster systems, but have not done an adequate job of thinking through how to get them to the next step of productivity in society.

“This type of housing is an integral first step to give these kids a hand up,” she said. “They are the most resilient group of people you

will ever meet, and it is factual truth that by providing housing and supportive services, they can and will change the world for all of us.”

Brian Brant, vice president of Child and Family Services at Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains (LFSRM) said this is about more than affordable housing.

“Anchor House is an important extension to STEP, our teen-focused foster care program which is committed to helping young people be better prepared to navigate the world successfully after foster care,” he said. “We know that no matter how many skills and competencies they develop in foster care, young people still need guidance, support and encouragement along the way.”

“Anchor House will allow us to stay connected to coach young people through the challenges they face after leaving foster care,” Brant said.

The Anchor House Board, Lutheran Church of Hope, Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains, Thrivent Financial, and Flatirons Habitat for Humanity are committed to creating affordable housing and supportive programs for individuals leaving the foster care system, so they can realize their full potential as self-sufficient adults.

Anchor House will be available to emancipated youth regardless of race, religion, gender or national origin. Groundbreaking for Anchor House should be in late 2018 or early 2019.

To learn more about Anchor House or to donate, visit the website.