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GOLDEN HOUSE CUTS RIBBON ON NEW, EXPANDED FACILITY

More Space Available to House, Serve Those Impacted by Domestic Abuse

GREEN BAY, WI — The Golden House Donald J. Schneider Family Residence Center and Mulva Family Foundation Outreach Center cut the ribbon today on its new 34,000-square-foot facility, increasing the amount of space available to serve victims of domestic violence in Brown County.

Located on University Avenue on the same site as its prior facility, the building includes increased space for client programming and residential living space. Golden House now includes 20 private client rooms, each with its own bathroom, allowing the organization to provide more shelter for victims and their families.

“Golden House can now help more people, whether it’s providing a safe place to stay or providing much-needed counseling,” said Executive Director Cheeia Lo. “Our new space doubles the capacity by adding nine more bedrooms, providing more than 6,000 additional nights of shelter for more than 150 victims each year.”

With lead gifts from Patricia A. Schneider and the Mulva Family Foundation, donors to the On the Rise campaign made the project possible, said Dina Borremans, development director for Golden House.

“The demand for Golden House’s services continues to increase. Prior to the pandemic, we knew more room was needed,” she said. “We thank everyone who supported us along the way as we moved towards this goal. This is truly a place made possible by our donors.”

In addition to more client bedrooms, the new facility includes shared spaces for all clients including a resource room with computers to use for housing searching, job searches and work on resumes as well as space for support groups and outreach; a children’s playroom; a teen room; and a serenity room that clients or staff can use for meditation or self-reflection.

There is also increased outreach office space, providing the organization with more opportunities for advocacy and mental health services, collaborative wellness and educational opportunities, prevention activities for children experiencing domestic violence and survivor-

driven support programming. Golden House's mental health therapist and children's therapist also have their own space to meet with clients.

Stephanie Prevost, Golden House's associate director, said the additional space allows staff to provide improved service to clients.

"We see people at one of the lowest points in their lives. They are scared — not just for themselves, but for their children. Most people do not realize there are more children living at Golden House than there are adults," she said. "This space will allow us to shine some light into our clients' lives. Our clients will feel physically lighter thanks to all the windows and expanded space but also emotionally lighter as we provide them with the help they need."

The expanded facility raises Golden House's profile in the community, allowing more people to know about its services and how it can help victims of domestic violence.

"For too long, domestic violence cases have increased in our community," Lo said. "As we raise awareness about the free, local help available to victims of domestic violence, we hope our continued work with our partners will help eradicate it from our community."

Commitment to help

Golden House began as a 24-hour telephone helpline in 1979. Known as the Brown County Task Force for Battered Women, the helpline was operated entirely by volunteers who would help victims find a safe place to stay at a moment's notice. The first shelter for women and children was created in 1981 in space rented at Our Lady of Charity. By 1982, the agency grew to include support groups, community counseling and children's programming. It also changed its name to the Family Violence Center, Inc.

In 1984, a permanent shelter was made possible through the donation of a five-bedroom home by Thomas H. Lutsey. He was the owner and president of Gold Bond Ice Cream and the new shelter became aptly known as "Golden House."

As the program grew and services were added, the Family Violence Center outgrew that first Golden House and a capital campaign was conducted in 1992 with great support from Thomas H. Lutsey, who helped create the first building on this site, which opened in 1993. In 2006, the organization changed its name to Golden House, Inc., a more positive name, which continues the legacy of the Lutsey family.

Prior to the pandemic, Golden House was already bursting at the seams and leaders began to look at expansion ideas, said Sara Abel, chair of the Golden House Board of Directors and co-chair of the fundraising campaign, along with WG&R Furniture CEO Jim Greene. Then, COVID-19 struck and Golden House saw its need dramatically increase.

"We realized Golden House needed more than just an expansion, but rather a new, larger facility to better meet the community's needs," she said.

Golden House broke ground on its new facility in August 2022. Immel Construction served as the general contractor for the building, which was designed by Berners Schober.

'It takes a village'

Community members, organizations and area businesses joined together to support Golden House's new facility. The honorary co-chairs of the On the Rise campaign were Patricia A. Schneider and Tom Lutsey, son of Thomas H. Lutsey.

In addition to lead gifts from Mrs. Schneider and the Mulva Family Foundation, other major donors include:

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A full list of donors can be found at Ontherisegb.com.

To date, the On the Rise campaign has raised just over \$8 million of the total \$10 million goal, Lo said.

“If you have not yet given to the campaign, please consider doing so. If you have already made a gift, please consider increasing it if you’re able. If we all work together, we can reach our goal,” she said.

ABOUT GOLDEN HOUSE

What started as a 24-hour telephone helpline in 1979 to assist victims of domestic abuse find a safe place to stay has evolved into a comprehensive program that serves, helps and protects victims of domestic violence in Brown County and their families. Golden House is a nonprofit whose mission is to provide safety and support for victims of domestic abuse while leading efforts to end domestic violence in our community. Since 1993, Golden House has operated a facility at 1120 University Ave. on Green Bay’s northeast side, including an emergency shelter for women, men and children. The shelter is among several free and confidential safety, support, housing and prevention education services provided by Golden House to victims of domestic violence. Learn more at goldenhousegb.org.

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