

UCAN Transitional Housing: A place to call home

Mariposa Villa opens as place for people to live after drug treatment

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May 3, 2007



WINSTON — Talina Moore had never lived in a new place before. Lately, she hadn't had much of any place to live, taking quarter with friends, on couches, or in hotel rooms while her three daughters stayed in foster care.

She had lost her house with her boyfriend in Myrtle Creek because she had been using drugs and couldn't make rent. She's now been clean for 20 months, but still had no place of her own to go.

"My main issue is having housing," the 25-year-old Moore said. "The goal is to have (the kids) back before school starts."

Wednesday morning, she became the first tenant of Mariposa Villa, having first pick of a three-room flat with all-new appliances.

"I like it. I think it's beautiful," Moore said. "I already made the rule: No shoes in the house."

Mariposa Villa, off Gregory Avenue in Winston, is a new transitional housing project by Umpqua Community Action Network of Roseburg. It's designed for people coming out of alcohol and drug treatment who cannot otherwise find a stable place to live.

It opens this month across a small parking lot from New Vista Village, UCAN's other housing project for recovering addicts.

Mariposa has six two-bedroom and three three-bedroom apartments, each with bright white walls and energy-efficient lighting and heating as well as several with solar panels on the roof.

"You really can't put someone in a run-down tenement and expect them to do well," said Barbi Dunham, a volunteer coordinator with UCAN.

The building was built for \$1.6 million through state and federal grants. The Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians provided the playpen in back for the tots.

“One approach to helping out with the meth problem is to give people a place to be,” said Jody Ahlstedt, a program director for UCAN.

Moore and the other tenants will pay rent based on income, set according to income levels of either 30 or 50 percent of the median income so that no one pays more than 30 percent of their income.

A case manager will oversee the tenants to make sure they are staying clean and building a plan for their lives.

Referred to UCAN by ADAPT or Drug Court, recovered addicts and alcoholics can stay at Mariposa for up to two years.

“We are going to definitely develop a sense of community between the two housing developments,” said Paula Williams, the apartment manager for both Mariposa and New Vista.

Moore said the child welfare program is helping her with furniture, since she doesn’t have any. She’s still with her boyfriend, but he’ll be in a house by himself. This place is for her.

“I’m focused on getting my kids back,” she said.

Her oldest daughter will finish up the year at Green Elementary. The other two are not in public school yet, but she hopes they can all move in with her this summer before the next school year. Two brand-new bedrooms will be waiting for them.

“Someone getting their kids back, getting their lives together, that’s what we’re about,” Ahlstedt said.



Jody Ahlstedt, a program director for Umpqua Community Action Network, shows off the solar energy converters next to the meters at Mariposa Villa in Winston. Behind her is the unfinished toddlers play area.

ANDY BRONSON / N-R staff photo