

For Immediate Release
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**Rickman Center facility allows significant expansion of
HALO Foundation Transitional Living Program for homeless teens**

JEFFERSON CITY – The **Jefferson City HALO Learning Center** will expand its **Transitional Living Program (TLP)** into newly-acquired Rickman Center. Upon completion of facility renovations, the property will provide residential quarters for up to 30 homeless teens and two TLP staff members. TLP services will include comprehensive healthcare, behavioral health services and training that will help teens become engaged and contributing members of the community.

The 70-acre Rickman Center property, which includes a 24,000 square foot facility, was recently acquired by Farmer Holding Companies, and a long-term lease has been executed with the HALO Foundation. Improvements and renovations to convert the facility into living quarters have been broken down into two phases: the total cost for the Phase I remodel is estimated at \$500,000 and will include a reconfiguration of approximately 7,487 square feet on the main level, creation of living units, new flooring and paint, new bathrooms, and furnishings; the total cost for the Phase II remodel is estimated at \$800,000 and will include reconfiguration of the remaining 12,859 square feet on the lower level, creation of additional living units, new flooring and paint, new bathrooms and furnishings, a new roof for the entire facility, an office for TLP staff, a kitchen, new windows and a laundry room. HALO hopes to have Phase I ready for occupancy by June of 2016, with anticipated completion of all renovations for full capacity in December of 2016.

“The number of homeless youth living in high-risk situations in Jefferson City is astounding, and most people are unaware of what sorts of dire conditions these teens are facing,” said HALO Founder Rebecca Welsh. “I am blown away by the generosity of our community – without our supporters, a project of this magnitude would not be possible.”

Upon completion, the Rickman Center facility will allow HALO’s TLP to significantly expand from housing five homeless youth with babies to housing up to 30 youth. The new program will provide homeless teens with a roof over their head, food to eat, transportation and support to continue their education. According to recent data, there are currently 135 local youth in Jefferson City who lack a permanent residence and are in need of a stable living situation. The TLP will include a 3-month initial stay, during which time staff will work with the youth to determine the need for an 18-month long-term placement. After 18 months, youth will be connected to supported housing opportunities in the community. All identified homeless youth may continue to participate in the program as long as needed – receiving job skills training, placement assistance, meals, etc.

“There are over 100 teens in Jefferson City without a stable home environment,” Welsh said. “Many of them have experienced awful situations and faced challenges you wouldn’t believe. This program will provide them with the stability and support to develop the skills they will need to stay in school, have a job, and ultimately live a productive, healthy life.”

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One goal of the HALO Transitional Learning Program, in addition to providing a stable living environment, is to bring comprehensive health care services, including behavioral, primary and oral health care, onsite to the Rickman Center. This model will address both the access and transportation barriers that homeless youth encounter when seeking health care. The proposed health care services program will be available to all qualifying homeless teens in the service area, regardless of whether they are residing at the Rickman Center or participating in other programs supported through HALO's Jefferson City Learning Center. Youth will participate in programs that help them set achievable goals, learn how to manage their finances, attain a sustaining job or higher education, and learn life skills such as cooking, cleaning, and how to present oneself professionally. Ultimately, HALO TLP strives to move a young person from homelessness to an engaged and contributing member of their community.

HALO's TLP is geared toward pregnant, parenting and non-parenting youth between the ages of 16-21, and their dependents, who are in homeless or high-risk situations. The program participants have an income less than 25% of the median income for Cole County and most have no source of income outside of part-time employment. The typical TLP youth are not involved in the foster care system and cannot live with their biological parents due to situations such as: parents who are incarcerated, addicts, physically or emotionally abusive, take no physical or financial responsibility for their children, or parenting teens that are not welcome in their parent's home due to financial burdens or religious beliefs. Youth may be female or male, and there is no income requirement in order to receive services.

HALO will be raising funds to complete this project during 2016. Tax credits will be available for donations made to this program. HALO will host its largest annual fundraiser, the HALO Artreach Auction on March 4th, 2016 at Capital Mall. Tickets and sponsorships are available at www.halojeffcity.org

About the HALO Foundation

Featured on "American Spirit" of CBS Evening News, "Heroes Among Us" of PEOPLE magazine, and "The Today Show", The HALO Foundation provides housing, healing, and education to youth in the greatest need. Its goal is to empower youth to become contributing members of their communities. HALO is a volunteer-driven, grassroots non-profit with more than 80 percent of donations going directly to programs. HALO serves more than 1,000 youth each year. Domestically, HALO supports future-focused programming for at-risk youth to help set tangible goals for becoming contributing members of their communities. HALO currently has HALO Centers and TLP (housing) programs in Kansas City, and Jefferson City, Missouri, and programming in New York, Portland, and Los Angeles. Internationally, HALO supports 21 orphanages and programs in Uganda, Kenya, Mexico, India, Guatemala and Nicaragua. This includes providing food, water, shelter, clothing, education, art therapy, caretakers, and vocational training or college for youth in the greatest need. Learn more at www.haloworldwide.org.

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