

Published: Nov 18, 2005 12:30 AM

Modified: Nov 18, 2005 05:23 AM

Raleigh women's shelter is a go

Red Hat CEO helps save project

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Red Hat CEO Matthew Szulik and his wife, Kyle, made a sizable donation that will help The Healing Place of Wake County open a shelter and treatment center for homeless, drug-addicted women and their children early next year.

Two months ago, The Healing Place's plan to convert a former office building into the treatment center was derailed after Hurricane Katrina siphoned off charitable contributions. The shortfall totaled about \$500,000 and delayed the opening date of the facility until at least late spring.

But thanks to the Szuliks' contribution and other private donations, The Healing Place for Women and Children will now open Jan. 15. "We got most of it with the gift," said Allen Reep, director for development at The Healing Place, a nonprofit. Reep declined to name the specific amount the Szuliks contributed.

"Dozens of Healing Place supporters responded," he said. Before Katrina, officials had hoped the new center would open in December. "We are still opening a month late, but we are able to open," said Reep, who added that the public's contributions after learning of the delay were "immediate" and "gratifying."

The Szuliks of Raleigh gave the donation in honor of Mrs. Mary Ann (Claude) McKinney, Kyle's mother, Reep said in a statement.

"It's a tremendous tribute to his mother in-law," Reep said.

"When informing us of their gift, the Szuliks said they wanted to ensure that homeless, addicted women would be able to access The Healing Place's recovery program as soon as possible, especially with the advent of severe winter weather."

The Healing Place for Women and Children will be at an eight-acre site in Raleigh near Umstead State Park. The \$4.4 million project will provide 88 beds for homeless women (and their children) who are recovering from substance abuse.

The facility will also provide detox and 12-step recovery programs, similar to those offered at the The Healing Place center for men near downtown Raleigh.

The center for women will open on the fifth anniversary of the opening of the men's facility.

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