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November 13, 2017

Greenville's Christ Church Episcopal and Triune Mercy Center announced the launch of Jasmine Road, a new 501(c)3 organization with a mission focused on providing a path to freedom and a haven for healing to local women who are trapped in a cycle of sexual exploitation and addiction. Jasmine Road will offer a holistic residential restoration program for adult female survivors of sex trafficking, prostitution and addiction, including two years of rent-free housing, trauma-informed therapy, counseling services, education and job training. Greenville's newest nonprofit is modeled after the very successful Thistle Farms, a community of survivors in Nashville, TN.



"When Becca Stevens, founder of Thistle Farms, came to Greenville in 2015 and spoke at Christ Church about the successes they have achieved we knew this was something we needed to explore for Greenville," said Kathryn Norwood, Chairperson of Jasmine Road's Board of Directors. "With Greenville sandwiched between two of the top cities for human trafficking in the country, Atlanta and Charlotte, we knew we needed to help provide a way out for local women caught up in sex trafficking, addiction and prostitution."



Photo: Becca Stevens (left), president and founder of Thistle Farms in Nashville, TN, and Kathryn Norwood, Chair of the Board of Jasmine Road in Greenville, prepare to speak at Jasmine Road's inaugural luncheon. Greenville's newest nonprofit launched in late October and will offer a holistic residential restoration program for adult female survivors of sex trafficking, prostitution and addiction.

A partnership of Christ Church Episcopal and Triune Mercy Center, Jasmine Road formally launched today before a sold out crowd at an inaugural luncheon at Furman University's Younts Center. Stevens was the featured speaker, sharing individual stories of success and the positive impact Thistle Farms' unique program design has had on the program's participants and the community as a whole. The Thistle Farms president was recently named a 2016 CNN Hero and was honored by the White House as a "Champion of Change." She is an international voice for the growing global movement for women's freedom and a champion for the marginalized.

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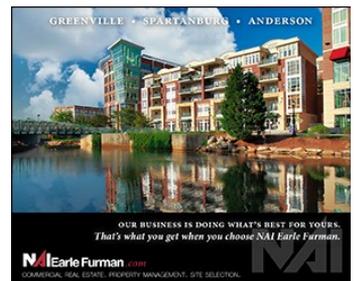
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"It takes a lot to end up on the streets in prostitution...a lot has to go wrong," shared Triune Mercy Center's Deb Richardson-Moore. "A lot of the women we see have lost every relationship in their lives. When we heard about Thistle Farms we realized this might be the answer and offer the model needed to successfully and gently help these women redirect their path while providing what they need for a new start."

Renovation will soon begin on Jasmine Road's first safe house with a scheduled opening date set for the first half of 2018. Once participants begin healing in the residential program, they will begin working in an innovative Social Enterprise designed to assist in the development of employment and social skills that will prepare them to eventually gain employment at a living wage.

"We will announce Jasmine Road's Social Enterprise in early 2018," said Norwood. "We will create a financially viable business that will provide protected, nurturing employment opportunities to women recovering from sexual exploitation, until they can transition into competitive employment. We will also offer products and services that will provide a platform for sharing our mission and funding for the nonprofit."

"In addition to two years of housing without a financial burden, trauma-informed therapy, and drug and alcohol rehabilitation, Jasmine Road participants will also receive financial literacy and vocational training," explained Jasmine Road Executive Director Marie Majorais. "Healthcare services will be provided through Jasmine Road's valuable Healthcare Partner, Bon Secours St. Francis Health System."

"The safe haven and comprehensive array of services offered through Jasmine Road will allow women to begin a journey toward transformation and a better life and have a positive impact on Greenville as a whole through a decrease in recidivism and costs," said Norwood. "By offering women survivors a strong community of advocates and partners we believe we will bring about generational change leading to the betterment of Greenville."

About Jasmine Road

Jasmine Road is a nonprofit organization incorporated in Greenville, SC, in 2016 with a mission to offer women who are trapped in a cycle of sexual exploitation and addiction a path to freedom, a haven for healing, and the opportunity to flourish, leading to generational change and the betterment of our Greenville community. For more information, please call 864-325-6916 or visit www.jasmineroad.org. For additional background information on our sister organization, Thistle Farms, please visit www.thistlefarms.org/pages/media.