

Unique haven for healing victims of sexual exploitation, human trafficking under construction in Greenville

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By Ashley Minelli

GREENVILLE, SC (FOX Carolina) -

Creating a light for women who've lived their lives in the dark has become Marie Marajais' life mission.

"Victims need to have a voice and many of these women don't... We want to be able to show them a way and a lifestyle that's completely different than what they're used to," said Marajais.



Jasmine Road is a future haven for women who've escaped sexual exploitation and human trafficking (Source: JasmineRoad.org).

Marajais is the executive director of [Jasmine Road](#), a future haven in the Upstate for women trapped in a life of sexual exploitation and human trafficking. The home is a partnership between Greenville's Christ Church Episcopal and Triune Mercy Center.

"We are creating this program with Jasmine Road to really fill a need and a very specific niche that just does not exist. There's not a lot of places for these women to go," said Marajais.

The Jasmine Road home is currently undergoing a massive renovation. Once it's complete, five women will start their healing journey there with the help of several community organizations, including health partner Bon Secours St. Francis Health System.

"All of the trauma and layers of abuse that that woman might have experienced, addictions, the homelessness, the poverty. We want to take all of that and holistically care for this person and provide them with love and resources for two years rent free," said Marajais.

It's what comes after that two years that Marajais is most excited about, an opportunity for survivors to land gainful employment through Jasmine Road. It's a model that's based after [Thistle Farms](#) in Nashville, which is a home where women can go to heal and then transition to earning a living through Thistle Farms retail line and products.

"The most important piece following that time is the social enterprise in which we hope to create a business that will help sustain our operations while also giving them a nurturing and protective environment to earn a living wage and work," said Marajais.

Marajais said the type of business Jasmine Road will run is still yet to be determined.

The home is scheduled to open in May 2018. Marajais also added that the women living there will be on a regimented schedule but the home will be authority free.

Marajais said the overall goal is to expand to multiple homes in the next 5 years and provide support for 25 women at a time.

See Video: <http://www.foxcarolina.com/clip/14046070/unique-haven-for-healing-victims-of-sexual-exploitation-human-trafficking-under-construction-in-greenville>