

CONTACT INFORMATION

Medard's House Youth Center
Saundra Colello, Co-founder, Executive Director
Cell: (717) 578-3181
Email: saundra@medardshouse.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Open House and Renovation Unveiling

NEW CUMBERLAND, PA, JUNE 13, 7PM – 9PM. Medard's House Youth Center is excited to announce that Senator Mike Regan; Representative Sheryl Delozier; and the newly appointed New Cumberland Mayor, Thaddeus Eisenhower; will be on hand to help unveil our Garden-to-Table Program teaching kitchen, which is four times larger than the previous kitchen. Each will briefly discuss the necessity for a facility such as Medard's House to directly address the mental and physical wellbeing of adolescents in the wake of COVID. An added bonus to this event, will be the debut of our rock-climbing wall in the gymnasium.

Medard's House Co-founder and Executive Director Saundra Colello is fond of saying, "Live local; give local," throughout the halls of Medard's, and today her sentiment shines through. Medard's House expansion plans have been ambitious from the start, but so has their perseverance. As with most nonprofits, Medard's House has not been immune to the impact of the COVID pandemic. Small and large supporters alike have not been able to charitably give like they have in the past due to financial, emotional, and personal hardships. The devastation of small businesses, lack of staffing, and the deaths of loved ones, has tremendously leveled the donor field; however, there is hope. "We have had the same mission and organizational goals since opening our doors in 2015," said Medard Kowalski, Co-founder of the Center and President of the Board of Directors. "The difficulty that arises with lofty goals is demanding financial and staffing needs," he finished. While Medard's House leaders are first to say they are exceedingly grateful for the federal, state, and local relief grants coming their way, it is hard when smaller nonprofits do not have the reserves to bankroll a project outright. It becomes a waiting game as to when funding will arrive to begin the next project and pay previous bills. The kitchen is being funded by several campaigns and a 2021 educational grant to coincide with the introduction of the Garden-to-Table Program. This popular new program teaches students how to create a naturally fertilized soil through compost, plant, tend, harvest, and reap their own crops from a garden they created on the property. To synchronize with the beginning of the new school year in the fall, students will learn harvesting techniques, food preservation such as pickling and canning, and how to create scrumptious dishes in the kitchen lab for their peers and families. "This kitchen has been a long time coming," added Colello, who started the whole concept of Medard's House around her dining room table feeding teens. What is unfortunate is that any resident or organization who had previously scheduled projects or renovations planned, were forced to prolong them for months; and in some cases, years or indefinitely due to the exorbitant cost of construction materials. It can get disheartening when you know what you have envisioned will directly impact the betterment of the community and our youth," offered Kowalski, adding "If we can finally get this incredible kitchen built during a pandemic, can anyone say a skate park 2023?!"

Attendees to this event are encouraged to enjoy light refreshments, a jazz band, and tour the property to see where Medard's House started, as well as the goals actualized and brought to fruition. There are several copies of professional specification plans in the common area for guests to view. "We are proud of our progress and excited for our future," Kowalski added. This is but the beginning of what Medard's House has in the works for its surrounding communities. "We had to prioritize, and I knew we had to start with the kitchen no matter the wait for funding. The kitchen is and always will be the heart of our organization," Colello said. "There isn't anything that can't be shared, addressed, or solved within a group of socially-oriented teens, sharing a hot meal, and holding hands around the table in prayer," finished Colello.