

Center of Hope symbolizes collaboration

Facility will unite services to help reduce homelessness

FEBRUARY 26, 2009

For nearly eight years, community and government groups have worked together on a shared vision to assist people who are homeless.

Friday, the fruits of their labor will be evident during a community open house for the Sister Mary Alice Murphy Center for Hope, a \$2.5 million, 10,000-square-foot facility that unites resources for the homeless. Murphy is a longtime advocate for indigent and homeless people who also helped found CARE Housing.

The Center for Hope is many things, but it is not a homeless shelter. The facility was created to address immediate and emergent needs of homeless people while also addressing the causes behind their situations. The center also will work to keep individuals and families in their current housing to avoid a cycle of homelessness. Resources include mental health counseling, employment resources, housing assistance, parenting support and more. Only those using one or more services will be allowed access to the facility, which will be managed by the Larimer Center for Mental Health.

"What it really does is bring together a lot of community services that already exist so that someone can get all those services without having to go to 16 different places," United Way CEO Gordan Thibedeau told the Coloradoan in 2008.

The collaborative nature that built this project is the same approach that will sustain it in its mission to reduce homelessness in our community. Now, that's a message of hope.