



RAISE THE BARR

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A Groundbreaking Collaboration in West Sacramento Paves the Way for Affordable Housing and Single Parenting Student Support

WEST SACRAMENTO, CA – In an unprecedented partnership, Raise The Barr (RTB), Brinshore Development, Operative Office, and Yolo County Housing have come together to bring a groundbreaking project to life. The "Huddle on 5th" is an 18-unit residential property located at 221 5th St in West Sacramento, designed to provide essential supportive services and affordable housing to eligible single parents enrolled in higher education. Breaking ground on October 26th, 2023, this transformative project is slated to open its doors by the end of 2024.

The primary objective is to eliminate the obstacles that often hinder the pursuit of a post-secondary degree while juggling the responsibilities of parenthood. Notably, this is the first building of its kind dedicated to addressing the unique needs of single-parent students in California.

The "Huddle on 5th" will cater specifically to single parents enrolled in local colleges, offering them a path to achieving a college degree and securing a family-sustaining wage. To achieve this, residents who remain enrolled in local post-secondary institutions, trade, or technical programs will benefit from income-based housing, alongside a comprehensive program crafted around RTB's whole-family model. This model places significant emphasis on peer-to-peer support, mental health and wellness, healthy relationships, job training, career development, and financial empowerment. Its central focus is on alleviating financial burdens, stabilizing expenses, and fostering self-sufficiency. Since 2016, RTB's methodology and leadership in the Student Basic Needs Movement has produced a 96% success rate in keeping its members enrolled through graduation.

Lori Barr, CEO of Raise The Barr, reflecting on her own journey, shares, "It has been our dream to create a space like this, dedicated to students who are also parenting on their own, dreaming the same dreams as their non-parenting peers of attaining a college degree and building a prosperous life, but encountering far more barriers while they do the work to achieve this dream. We know colleges alone cannot solve the critical need for housing and supporting basic needs for their students, and that is where we come in. Our desire is to work with other like-minded stakeholders to create a better future where all students have their most basic needs met so they

can focus on achieving their academic goals, and eventually thrive, especially those who have children watching.”

As the project partners anticipate finalizing the tenant selection process in early 2024, RTB will initiate a series of workshops and learning opportunities to raise awareness and engage interested students. Prospective tenants will be identified through these workshops, with move-ins scheduled to occur upon the completion of construction.

Karly Brina, Vice President of Brinshore Development expressed her gratitude for this collaboration: “We appreciate our relationship with Operative Office and Raise The Barr. Through this partnership, we were given a worthwhile opportunity to change the lives of parent-scholars and their children, which will impact and enhance the trajectory of their lives in a positive way.”

Work on this project began in June 2020, when Operative Office first acquired the quarter-acre site, which was previously a single-family home. Emily Ware, Director of Development of Operative Office details the formula that enabled the groundbreaking: “Our success in turning this small site into such a dense and impactful project is largely attributable to the City of West Sacramento’s development-friendly zoning, their willingness to co-invest in nearby infrastructure, and their best-in-class approach to both housing and economic development. The project also owes a great deal to Yolo County Housing’s willingness to contribute project-based vouchers for 100% of the income-restricted units, as well as Yolo County Housing’s direct referral program—this is a rare combination in California, and both components are crucial for the execution of Raise the Barr’s model. The project benefits as well from a steady effort by many staff members at the California Department of Housing & Community Development, whose combined efforts resulted in an Infill Infrastructure Grant to the project. And finally, thanks to creative and thoughtful work by the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee, the California Debt Limit Allocation Committee, and their respective staff, the project also received an allocation of 4% federal tax credits, state tax credits, and multifamily revenue bonds, each of which serve as foundational building blocks for the project’s financing. R4 is serving as both lender and tax credit investor to the project.”

To learn more about the project partners please visit the following websites:

- www.raisethebarr.org
- www.brinshore.com
- www.westsacramento-chamber.com/list/member/operative-office
- www.ych.ca.gov/