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### Moorpark architecture students help design a new hospice

By Alicia Doyle  
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Photo by Chuck Kirman

Mark Gulkarov, left, looks at the work on display by Zaid Soudani, at the second Our Community House of Hope fundraiser, held May 8 at the Wood Ranch Country Club.

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For the Moorpark College students who designed a home for low-income people in their final days facing end-of-life care, it was more than an assignment to earn credit toward certification in architectural drafting.

“They were able to hear, learn about and see hospice patients and relate that to the type of end-of-life care and environments they would want their own loved ones to experience if they were in a similar circumstance,” said Sunni Piquet, professor in the drafting technology program at Moorpark College.

“Working on such a loving project has brought a thoughtfulness to their work that would be hard to foster otherwise.”

Eighteen students created renditions for Our Community House of Hope, a planned hospice facility being designed to serve the isolated and low-income population in Ventura and northwest Los Angeles counties.

The student designs — featuring detailed floor plans and three-dimensional perspectives — were on display at Designs of Hope 2009, a fundraiser at the Wood Ranch Country Club in Simi Valley. The second in a series of planned benefits, the May 8 event raised roughly \$5,000 that will add to about \$60,000 raised so far toward a short-term goal of \$250,000.

“Every day that goes by, the numbers of community members suffering and dying alone is growing; how can we not pull together to make this House of Hope a reality here?” said founder Teresa Wolf, a registered

nurse who has worked in the hospice field for 12 years.

She and her work partner, Ruth Klein, a nurse formerly in the Danish healthcare system, have a long-term goal of raising \$5 million for a “dream home” that will serve Conejo Valley, Simi Valley, Moorpark, Camarillo, Calabasas and Malibu.

“Our immediate goal is to raise \$250,000 to begin operation in rented property and serve those in need of a home and care in the last three months of their lives,” Wolf explained. “All of our

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services will be free of charge to our patients and their families.”

As of now, “we have great hopes of opening in 2010 in rented property,” Wolf continued. “We have two possible vacant board and care homes we could move into right now in the Thousand Oaks, Westlake area.”

Last fall, interior design students from CSU Northridge partnered with OCHH to create their senior design projects, which were featured at the first OCHH Designs of Hope fundraiser in November.

“We were so proud to be involved with the university and to have seen these young people begin to understand the real need for this type of care home,” said Wolf, adding that the collaboration with CSUN was so successful, OCHH organizers decided to partner with Moorpark College architecture students as they took on their semester projects.

For research, “Dr. Piquet and her students took a field trip to Sarah House, a unique social model, end-of-life care home in Santa Barbara, to gain some insight,” Wolf said, adding that those from OCHH who accompanied the students “witnessed a profound shift in the students’ perspectives. It became clear that they began to understand how significantly a compassionate, caring hospice home such as Sarah House, or our own envisioned House of Hope, will ease a person’s final days.”

For additional information on Our Community House of Hope, visit <http://www.ourhouseofhope.org>.

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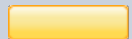
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