

Partnerships make Mission Possible House a success

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In just over one year since the non-profit Mission Possible was formed, director Daphne Cortese-Lambert is amazed at how quickly the organization's grand vision is coming to fruition.

Even the organization's latest project — the Aug. 16 installation of a therapeutic vegetable garden at their new homeless women's transition home Mission Possible House — drew more volunteers than she could have hoped for.

“I was amazed by the turnout,” Cortese-Lambert said of the 40 total volunteers who helped out throughout the day. “In the middle of a pandemic, when everyone is so shut in, this shows their humanity and the community coming together.”

Cortese-Lambert attributes Mission Possible’s success to the numerous partnerships behind its programs. For example:

- First Baptist Church donated the home and land for Mission Possible House.
- Ace Hardware donated all the materials to build raised vegetable beds.
- Good Earth Organics donated 10 cubic yards of Zen blend soil.
- The Children’s Garden at the Family Resource Center helped design the space.
- Elkhorn Herbals and Wild River’s Permaculture Guild donated vegetable starts.
- And True North Organizing Network and the Permaculture Guild supplied the volunteers.

“We are grateful for the generosity of these community-minded businesses and for the individuals working together, giving of their hearts and time, in the midst of a pandemic to make a positive stride forward,” Cortese-Lambert said.

The Mission Possible House took in its first residents July 7. The house looks to aid homeless women who have pre-existing health conditions, especially those that make them more susceptible to COVID-19, and who have a desire to learn. During their stay, Cortese-Lambert said the goal is turning their lives around in three months. The newly installed garden is part of that plan.

She said through the spiral herb garden, the women will learn the power of cooking with fresh herbs, learn the medicinal quality of other plants, and learn about their overall health. Residents will also learn about canning, eating healthy for the long run and hopefully produce enough food to share with the homeless community.

Good Earth Organic's Lee Spivey shared Cortese-Lambert’s enthusiasm about Mission Possible House’s goals through healthier gardening.

“All of our employees and customers alike can attest that gardening has a direct and scientifically proven link to reducing stress and improving mood as well as reduction in symptoms of depression and anxiety,” Spivey said. “Growing a plant to fruition provides a great sense of accomplishment that can be carried and applied to many life situations while improving confidence all around. Our company was built on a passion for community while helping our neighbors grow stronger together.”

Cortese-Lambert said Mission Possible helps 128 people a month get access to a variety of supportive services. She added that the non-profit is already looking forward to its next big project — a 52-bed shelter at 1130 Harold St., Crescent City.

“We’re just needing a release of funding,” Cortese-Lambert said. “We’re also looking at solutions about other sheltering options and partnering with people to ensure the community stays safe this winter.”

To learn more about Mission Possible, go to <https://delnortemissionpossible.org>.