

Open Your  Help the Community

February 14, 2011

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501(c)(3) # 109342018

Dear H.O.C., Inc.,

It is with great appreciation that we write this letter to thank you for your generous donation toward the Caruso/Bode Home Renovation Project! We sincerely appreciate your monetary contribution of \$3,360.00 toward this project.

As you know, Open Your Heart, Help the Community, Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization of Northford, CT, dedicated to helping numerous individuals and families in the Connecticut Shoreline Communities. Our mission is to help families and individuals who are struggling in everyday life due to unforeseen circumstances. As an all volunteer group, we promote community service by inviting you to join in making the community a better place for everyone. Through community events and fundraisers, Open Your Heart seeks to raise funds and involve the community to make a difference in the lives of many.

Our goal for the Caruso/Bode project was to help Sam and Alex Bode, both young women in their late twenties who suffer from Friedreich's Ataxia and are wheelchair bound. For years, the Bode sisters traveled to and from their home to their minivan via an outdoor wooden ramp extending off their back door and leading down to the street where their minivan was parked street side. They had to struggle with the rain, ice, and snow when going up and down the ramp and in and out of their van. This struggle made transportation to and from the home time consuming and often dangerous given the on street location.

Open Your Heart was determined to help the girls avoid this daily struggle. For our very first project, we set our goal of building an attached, wheelchair accessible garage so the girls could access their home without having to endure and risk injury in the elements. In addition to the accessible garage, the architect proposed an additional 1,500 square feet of accessible living space – including a much needed dining area and living room space, and an upstairs gym for the girls to perform their necessary workouts.

Since October, 2009, when we broke ground and began work on the project, the help that we have received to see this project come to life has been unbelievable. We are so thankful to the many individuals, families, businesses, and community groups who have come together to and

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We are a non-profit, 501(c)3 corporation

donated money, time, labor, and materials to help build this project. We have been amazed and our hearts have been touched by the community's generosity and support of this project.

The garage and addition is truly amazing and will hopefully provide a wonderful place for the Caruso/Bode family to enjoy their time together and make wonderful memories with family and friends. This addition would not be possible without the tremendous support of the community. We thank you endlessly for opening your hearts and helping us provide Sam and Alex with an accessible garage and living space. It is because of you that this project a success.

While our focus of the last 16 months has primarily been the Caruso/Bode addition, we have also helped several other families in need. Thanks to monetary donations and the donation of an air conditioning unit, we were able to fix a well to provide clean water and install a necessary air conditioning system to allow for two premature twin boys to come home from the hospital. Additionally, we have helped this family cover out of pocket medical expenses.

We have provided essential toiletries, clothing, and toys to children in placement without homes or families. We have sponsored Christmas for two North Branford families by providing Christmas dinner and presents. We have collected clothing, gift cards, and food for two young girls who lost all their personal possessions and clothing in a house fire.

But for you tremendous support, it would be impossible for us to do these things to help these families in need. We sincerely thank you again for opening your heart and helping our causes.

Thank you for opening your heart,

Laura E. Whaley
Treasurer

Suzan A. Monaco
President

Allison DePaola
Vice President