

A CHARITABLE LIFE

Transition's Gate

Transition's Gate exists to assist women and children by providing charitable support and resources to organizations, both domestic and foreign, engaged in activities and services which provide safety, counseling, health care, shelter, training and programs or restoration which will lead to healthy reintegration into society.

Many of Spokane's charitable organizations limit themselves to serving people within the Inland Northwest. After all, doesn't the old saying "charity begins at home" hold true?

Nancy Mortlock, president of Transition's Gate, couldn't agree more. Her vision for global mission work began in the confines of her Spokane home, where international missionaries often joined her parents around the dinner table. Choosing to stay in Spokane, Nancy married, raised two sons, and has worked three decades in the field of medicine. All the while she has found a way to extend charitable giving beyond the borders of her hometown.

Reaching Women in Romania

In 1999, Nancy traveled to Romania on a church mission trip where she was first introduced to her translator, Paula Oprea. Despite cultural differences, Nancy and Paula developed a strong bond, enabling them to jointly assist Romanian women—providing clinical care, teaching health classes, and administering leadership retreats.

After traveling to Romania multiple times, Nancy became aware of the vast number of women affected by domestic violence. While the Romanian government is working to improve legislation against perpetrators, spousal abuse has been tolerated for hundreds of years, making it difficult for at-risk women to find safety. Convinced of an overwhelming need to help, Nancy took a bold step of faith.

In 2007, Nancy and her board of directors founded the non-profit organization Transition's Gate with the purpose of "providing charitable assistance to women and children trapped in the consequences of domestic violence, abuse, poverty or other misfortune."

The first type of charitable assistance Nancy and her board plan to provide involves purchasing a building which will function as a counseling center in Romania. Paula, who continues to live in Romania, will be the director of the center. Nancy and Paula have recently visited a number of Romanian colleges in hopes of recruiting counselors, social workers, psychologists, and administrative assistants to help begin the center this year. Goals for the center consist of including a residential shelter by 2010, as well as a health and education rehabilitation center by 2012.

Closer to Home

Although Transition's Gate currently addresses the needs of women in Romania, their mission statement makes it clear that the organization is open to assisting women of all nationalities. A visionary by nature, Nancy perceives the organization will have a number of projects in years to come, some of which may provide



Paula Oprea, Judge Patti Walker and Nancy Mortlock

direct assistance to women in Spokane.

Meanwhile, Spokane has benefited greatly from having the presence of this unique charitable organization within our community. Last May, Transition's Gate hosted their first large event, "Tulips and Tea," at Gonzaga University. District Court Judge Patti Walker, first to share, described the devastating effects of domestic violence within our community. The room, chock-full of female attendees, became incredibly silent as the judge addressed the issue at hand by saying, "The reality is people die. They die often." Followed by a hopeful update from Paula Oprea of the progress being made on the Romanian counseling center, as well as musical entertainment by the Spokane women's band Door of Hope, the morning proved to be an inspiration to all.

Transition's Gate is currently planning another destination event for the next year: "The Beauty of Women 2009," in participation with The Gallery of Thum, features a juried art competition, art show, and floral competition. Much of the art will raise awareness of Transition's Gate while also donating substantial funds to the organization. The event, planned to occur on an annual basis, will take place on June 5, 2009.

Aside from supporting this event, Transition's Gate is always interested in working with organizations or individuals to raise awareness of their mission. Nancy and Paula are well known throughout Spokane for their informative and moving presentations. Why not gather a group of friends together and hear about Transition's Gate for yourself? 🌟

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