

Interfaith House gets a makeover, courtesy of some helpful designers

It's bright. It's colorful. It's updated and perfect. Thanks to the creativity of three talented interior designers, the family day room at Interfaith House (headquarters of Interfaith Council for the Homeless of Union County) in Plainfield, now serves its multiple functions beautifully.

The large room stands up to heavy traffic and usage (up to 16 people at a time) and was refurbished from floor to ceiling. The room is used as a waiting room, eating area, meeting space for two after-school programs and for families gathering at the end of the day before heading to the overnight shelter.

"When I heard about Interfaith and their work with the homeless, I wanted to help them transform the "day room" into a new multi-tasking family/community room -- a space I envisioned to be as warm, inviting and hardworking as Interfaith's staff," said interior designer Amy Yin of Amy Yin Interiors of Short Hills. "We take pride in designing beautiful spaces that make you smile and bring you joy. Given the budget, this project was a challenge but I knew we could succeed with ingenuity, tricks of the trade and designer resources."

Kolbe Clark of Rooms by Design of Hillsborough was happy to get involved. "After listening to Mary Robinson, director of External Affairs, talk about Interfaith's mission and the work they're doing, I felt lucky to be part of the project. Mary's enthusiasm was contagious and I felt privileged to be able to use my talent for an organization that is making such a difference in people's lives."

Yin and Clark obtained furnishings, either donated or deeply discounted, worth \$10,000. The window treatments were made by Kelley Evens of Kelley's View of Branchburg.

"When Amy asked me if I would make the window treatments, I was happy to help her and Interfaith. I believe that it is important for all businesses to give back to their communities. It is these types of partnerships that keep our neighborhoods thriving."

Yin, Clark and Evens donated their design fees and commissions to help make the most of the budget. A grant from the Westfield Foundation provided funds to purchase the furniture.

"It was an honor to work with Interfaith," Yin said. "The project was so rewarding, knowing that we helped provide a safe place (if not for a few hours a day) where homeless children and adults could get the help they need and feel at home."

Interfaith Council for The Homeless of Union County, headquartered at 905 Watchung Ave. in Plainfield, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for the homeless and those at risk of homelessness. It provides emergency shelter through the Interfaith Hospitality Network, transitional and permanent housing, education and other supportive services.

For more information about Interfaith Council, visit www.interfaith-council.org or contact Mary Robinson, director of External Affairs, at (908) 753-4001, Ext. 20.

-- Submitted by Sayyidah Garrett

from the Courier News website www.c-n.com



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Designers involved in the renovation of the family day room at the Interfaith House in Plainfield are, from left to right, Kelley Evens of Branchburg, Kolbe Clark of Hillsborough and Amy Yin of Short Hills.



The finished family room at the Interfaith House.