Fundraising campaign to help extend services

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Nov 20, 2017

The Momentum Center for Social Engagement launched a crowdfunding campaign aimed at raising $80,000, which would allow it to be open seven days a week, offer services to teens and purchase a wheelchair-accessible van. Pictured: Members participate in a dance at the Grand Haven center.

In an effort to offer more services, the Momentum Center for Social Engagement is reaching out to the community.
It launched a crowdfunding campaign aimed at raising $80,000, which would allow the Grand Haven center to be open seven days a week, offer services to teens and purchase a wheelchair-accessible van.

The center, which opened in April, provides recreational and social opportunities to adults with mental illness, disabilities and addiction.

So far, a little more than $11,000 has been raised toward the fundraising goal.

Extended Grace Executive Director Barbara Lee Van Horssen said that if everyone who has been touched by addiction, disability or mental illness donated just $5, they would have more than enough funding. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, one in five American adults live with a mental illness.

In addition to donations, the center receives about $240,800 annually from Community Mental Health through the countywide mental health millage, which was approved by voters in March 2016.

Momentum Center members currently pay a $1 membership fee, which helps staff track engagement and fulfill people’s need for an affiliation, Van Horssen said. Almost 100 residents are members.

Residents and members have also volunteered to teach classes such as tai chi, yoga, finance and cooking. Member outings and events come at no additional charge.

Van Horssen said that research shows the most important thing for being healthy is having a human connection. Throughout the past few months, she has watched members form friendships and step outside their comfort zones.

“That’s what we’re all about,” she said.

Although some events require membership, others are open to the public, such as the Inspire! events, town hall meetings, and free dinner and movie nights. The public is also welcome at Just Goods Gifts and Café, which is housed at the center. It sells fair trade and social cause
Donations to the campaign are accepted online at: www.youcaring.com/momentumcenter-919821; or mailed to The Momentum Center, 714 Columbus Ave., Grand Haven, MI 49417. Checks should be made out to Extended Grace.