

HOPES
Center
Engaging People, Empowering Solutions

1247 Villa (short-term office)
Racine, Wisconsin 53403
262.633.0751

The Honorable Gary Becker
The Mayor's Office
730 Washington Avenue
City Hall Room 201
Racine, Wisconsin 53403

July 8, 2008

Dear Mayor Becker:

The Racine Dominicans are currently planning a new ministry, called the HOPES Center to serve primarily the City of Racine. One of the HOPES Center's ministerial services will be to provide counseling to people who are challenged by problems associated with drug and alcohol addiction and have limited means of obtaining these services. I am sure you are aware that the findings from the Partnership for Access to Care and Treatment (PACT) indicate that the need for these services is great in our community. I have also been in conversation with Ms. Debbie Jossart, Racine County Human Services and Ms. Cheryl Buckley, Homeless Assistance Leadership Organization (HALO) who also acknowledge that despite efforts to meet these needs there is a call for for additional services in our community. Ms. Jossart and Ms. Buckley are in support of this Racine Dominican ministry and are willing to help it become a reality.

I recently spoke with Mr. Joseph Heck from the Department of City Development. Mr. Heck indicated that there are funds available for counseling services in the Contingency Local Options Fund. Mr. Heck also suggested that I contact you to ask that you consider forwarding to the Community Development Committee a request that the Racine Dominicans be considered for these funds. The HOPES Center planners would greatly appreciate any assistance that you can provide us. We are concerned about the challenges that are present in Racine and believe that we, who as Racine Dominicans have called Racine home since 1862, have a deep responsibility to respond to the needs of our community.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Ann M. Pratt, OP
Executive Director
HOPES Center

cc: Mr. Joseph Heck
Department of City Development
cc: Lisa Kane, OP
HOPES Center Steering Committee Chair

enc.



Engaging People. Empowering Nations

Healing
 Opportunity
 Peace and Justice
 Ecology
 Spirituality

Vision: The *HOPES Center*, attentive to the Spirit, will be a vibrant hub where a diverse and inclusive community will collaborate to shape a future where healing and wholeness, peace and justice and spiritual wellbeing will flourish.

Mission: Focusing on the dignity and worth of all people by valuing a spirituality rooted in justice, the mission of the *HOPES Center* is to build awareness of the causes and consequences of poverty and to employ collaborative multi-dimensional approaches towards their alleviation.

The *HOPES Center* is envisioned as a hub for ministry designed to focus on—economic, ecological, and spiritual—poverty through an integrated and holistic collaborative service system. The concept for the *HOPES Center* was created out of a desire of five Racine Dominican Sisters to create a ministerial opportunity where Sisters and Associates could work collaboratively with other service providers in Racine to address the life challenges faced especially by people in the central city. It is hoped that this new ministerial endeavor will provide the Racine Dominican’s with a different kind of visibility and many opportunities to engage in collaborative efforts.

The *HOPES Center* will be anchored on the first floor by a *Cup of Hope*, a Fair Trade coffee shop and *JUST TRADE*, a Fair Trade store. *Cup of Hope* will be used to help create an atmosphere that will support the vibrant hub for the diverse and inclusive community the *HOPES Center* wants to encourage, especially for the 20 and 30 year olds. *JUST TRADE* will act as a vehicle to both involve the wider Racine community in socially conscious consumption and as a 21st Century classroom for poverty education at a global, national, and local level. These social entrepreneurial ministries will also provide partial financial support for the *HOPES Center* ministries.

The Healing and Opportunity ministerial areas of the *HOPES Center* will provide direct services to assist those who struggle to obtain needed services because they are either uninsured or underinsured. Services will focus on removing barriers that make it difficult for them to live in dignity. The Peace and Justice ministerial area will focus on advocating for systemic changes that contribute to the cycle of poverty. The Ecological ministry will blend urban ecological advocacy with practical solutions for living ecologically sustainable lives in an urban environment. The Spirituality ministry will have an emphasis on supporting young adult’s quest for spiritual identity and community and provide them with leadership opportunities.

The five *HOPES Center* integrated and holistic ministerial perspectives include:

Ministry Area	Program Possibilities Include:
Healing	Counseling, Healing Arts, Poverty Circles
Opportunity	Access to education and employment: adult mentoring
Peace and Justice	Global, National, and Local Advocacy on Poverty Issues
Ecological(Urban)	Urban Challenges to Earth’s Ecosystems.
Spirituality	Exploration, Leadership and Dialogue