

'Poverty Tour' Opens Eyes Of Furman Student

Sophomore Soccer Player Kate Myatt, Furman Football Team Join Forces In Home Renovation

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By Angelia Davis, The Greenville News

A Furman University leadership program gave [Kate Myatt](#) a view of Greenville she never knew existed.



Kate Myatt and members of Furman's football team have combined to tackle poverty in Greenville.

It was that "poverty tour" of Greenville that inspired Myatt to help Greenville Area Interfaith Hospitality Network purchase and transform a duplex on Gower Street into a single-family transitional house.

When the house is ready this fall, GAIHN will allow a homeless family to live there while looking for employment and permanent housing, said Tony McDade, executive director.

Myatt is one of 10 Furman Leadership Ascent students helping GAIHN with the project. But she is described by Chris Colvin, Furman's assistant athletics director, as "sort of the backbone to the project, along with GAIHN."

A sophomore majoring in economics and a soccer player at Furman, Myatt said students in the leadership program are required to design and implement a community service project during their second year.

But Myatt "has taken this project and run with it and taken it far above the norm," Colvin said.

McDade said Myatt has personally raised \$4,000 for the project. She also enlisted the help of Furman's football players and athletic department, who spent three afternoons demolishing a portion of the home and removing interior walls.

"She wants to make a difference, and obviously she's doing that. She's made a huge commitment of her time," McDade said.

GAIHN provides emergency shelter, food and transitional housing to homeless families through a network of 28 congregations across Greenville County.

Last year's poverty tour of Greenville, Myatt said, "was really eye-opening, especially after living in Greenville for nine years and not having any idea of the conditions that existed so close to home."

"That's what started the idea of working with the impoverished population of Greenville," she said.

McDade said the house cost \$25,000. The Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina provided all the money and also gave funds for services for the families who will live there, he said.

Covenant United Methodist Church is investing \$16,000 in the renovation.

Meanwhile, St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church and St. Matthew and Buncombe Street United Methodist churches are chipping in \$3,000 each so the house can be operated for a year, McDade said.

The Greenville County Redevelopment Authority has also committed \$5,000 for the project, he said.

"We can't say enough about Furman's football team, the coaches and the athletic department. They are making a difference that will last. There will be homeless families living in this transitional house for 40 years at least," McDade said.