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'Everyone always needs help'

January 12, 2009

By **FRANK ABDERHOLDEN** fabderholden@scn1.com

A local business owner in Gurnee who went through hardship in her youth held a fund-raiser Saturday for Daisy's Resource and Developmental Center and her own Pay It Forward Foundation.

Karuna Talwar, local owner of DirectBuy, 4081 Ryan Road, said her altruism is the result of her background. Her family left India and was homeless for awhile in Australia.

"We really only had the clothes on our backs," she said.

Contact Daisy Daisy's Resource and Developmental Center
 1919 Dr. Daisy M. Brooks Drive, North Chicago
 (847) 473-4898;
<http://www.daisyrdc.com/>

She will always remember the sign that gave her and her mother hope: Salvation Army. "If it wasn't for them, I wouldn't be here today," she said. "I told myself that one day I would do something big. This is my dream coming true," she said.

She started Pay It Forward to provide shelter to anyone and everyone. She

hopes to find some land in Gurnee or nearby and build a homeless shelter.

"Right now I am building awareness," she said.

She envisions offering educational services and training to help the homeless get back on their feet.

"You do it when the time is right. Everyone always needs help," she said, adding that it will be a legacy for her son, Blake. She expects to use her DirectBuy, which she has owned for 8 years, to help cut costs at the homeless shelter by using its catalogues to purchase things at manufacturers' price.

Daisy's Resource and Developmental Center is very similar to Talwar's dream, but it is for young women 17 to 21 years old who need help with their dysfunctional lives, some of them including a poor childhood, homelessness, drug abuse, alcohol abuse or an unwanted pregnancy.

Daisy Brooks and her husband, Wadell, said that by the time these women leave the center, they are well educated and have a career. Most importantly, they are able to take on social interactions with the community.

The girls are referred to her by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

"Fund-raising supplements the costs for girls. It gives us an opportunity to do extra stuff," she said.

The center offers instruction in areas including cosmetology, child development, certified nursing assistant, English as a second language and basic office skills. The school has been operating for 35 years and has four life experience doctorates.

Brooks thanked Talwar for her support, donating money at their local telethon, and then holding Saturday's fund-raiser.

"She was an angel that fell from the sky," Brooks said.

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