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## **New Avenues for Youth Just Announced as Recipient of BofA's Annual Neighborhood Builder Award, for a New Initiative to Help Prevent & End Youth Homelessness in Portland**

*New Avenues for Youth will receive a \$200,000 grant & leadership training to expand services & geography to help thousands of Portland-area homeless & struggling youth.*

PORTLAND, OR. — Bank of America has just announced [New Avenues for Youth](#) as its 2017 Neighborhood Builder winner. The nonprofit is being recognized for its innovative work in addressing youth homelessness and its root causes, while delivering support and resources that enable at-risk, foster and homeless youth to overcome barriers and successfully transition to adulthood.

Through the [Neighborhood Builders](#) program, the bank provides one local nonprofit each year with a unique combination of leadership training, \$200,000 in flexible funding, volunteer support, and a network of peer organizations across the country. Last year's winner was Willamette West Habitat For Humanity.

"We recognize the critical role that local nonprofits play to build pathways to economic progress in the Portland community. Through our Neighborhood Builders program, we connect nonprofits like New Avenues for Youth to the funding and leadership development resources they need to further scale their impact," said Roger Hinshaw, Bank of America's Oregon and Southwest Washington Market President. "New Avenues has been around for 20 years and in fact, this year marks their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. That's significant, since they have a proven and time-tested model of successfully supporting youth-in-need. And with our support, they have a unique opportunity to strategically expand in East County, a part of our city that has high needs and not enough resources. So I'm very pleased that we're able to bring forward this support at a particularly strategic time."

Monique Barton, senior vice president of corporate social responsibility at Bank of America, added: "Over the years that we've partnered with New Avenues for Youth, our employees have donated hundreds of hours helping them carry out their important mission locally, and we've seen first-hand how impactful their work is," said Barton. "Based on the extreme need we know exists, we're excited to now be directing this six-figure support to New Avenues For Youth's East County campus, where the *Bank of America Youth Learning & Opportunity Lab* will help young people get the life skills and job training assistance they need. It's a very worthy cause that has the potential to make a real difference to local youth and families."

Ever committed to growing its impact, last year New Avenues determined that in order to have the greatest impact, they needed to evolve to Portland's shifting demographics and economics that have further displaced low-income communities. The organization is therefore extending its reach into East Multnomah County, where they are creating a service-delivery system that leverages a downtown infrastructure and reaches marginalized younger youth experiencing or on the cusp of homelessness — including those from communities of color and immigrant/refugee communities; commercially sexually exploited children; LGBTQ youth; and youth in foster care.

Known as the *Avenues To Opportunity Center*, New Avenues For Youth's new site is slated to break ground in May and be completed in August. It will be co-located on the Boys & Girls Club campus (at 16519 SE Stark Street). New Avenues' team is designing it to be a local hub to deliver drop-in services, education, job training, LGBTQ youth supports, housing support, and the PDX-Connect program, which serves youth transitioning from foster care.

"Given the juncture we are at in our organizational growth, this Neighborhood Builder award comes at an exciting time for us. It's an opportunity for New Avenues for Youth to make an even greater impact in our community," said Sean Suib, Executive Director of New Avenues for Youth. "With Bank of America's help, we have the ability to enhance our new 2020 Campaign, an initiative that will support our expansion into East Multnomah County in order to reach more marginalized younger youth who need a safe and stable place to call home and the care they need to thrive."

Suib added that New Avenues for Youth takes a holistic approach to addressing youth homelessness: through direct service, community partnership, advocacy and data-driven evaluation, the nonprofit helps youth ages 14-24 exit street life, and prevent those at risk of homelessness from ever experiencing it. "Since our inception in 1997, New Avenues has enabled thousands of at-risk, foster and homeless Portland youth to exit homelessness and realize their full potential. By providing basic needs and safety services combined with education and career training, New Avenues equips young people with the opportunities needed to become self-sufficient. This partnership will help that work continue at an even greater scale."

**About Bank of America's Neighborhood Builders Program:**

Since its inception in 2004, Bank of America's Neighborhood Builders program has helped nonprofits create greater impact in their communities and better prepare for the future by providing the tools and resources they need to develop stronger strategic plans, chart a succession strategy, navigate through tough economic times, and enhance their funding opportunities. Since the program's beginning 13 years ago, Bank of America has invested more than \$180 million in 900 nonprofit organizations across the country — and provided leadership resources and training to nearly 2,000 nonprofit leaders — and the program has been recognized as the nation's largest philanthropic investment in nonprofit leadership development. Neighborhood Builders is a demonstration of the bank's work to address issues fundamental to economic mobility in order to build thriving communities and illustrates how strong cross-sector partnerships and local community leaders can play a meaningful role in positioning communities for success. Learn more at [www.bankofamerica.com/about](http://www.bankofamerica.com/about) and connect with us on Twitter at [@BofA\\_News](https://twitter.com/BofA_News).

**About New Avenues for Youth:**

In 2017, New Avenues for Youth celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of delivering homelessness prevention and intervention services in Portland, with more than 20,000 youth served. New Avenues for Youth takes a complete approach to addressing youth homelessness and its root causes, delivering support and resources that enable foster, at-risk, and homeless youth aged 14-24 to overcome barriers and realize their potential. Since 1997, we have impacted the lives of over 20,000 youth through a range of services that address basic needs & safety, provide opportunities for education & career, and help youth achieve self-sufficiency. For more information, visit [www.newavenues.org](http://www.newavenues.org).

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*MEDIA NOTE: Please see available architectural renderings of NAFY's "Avenues To Opportunity Center" on its East County campus and the Bank of America Youth Learning & Opportunity Lab located inside — all of which is slated to be completed in August 2017.*