



Walnut Avenue

— FAMILY & WOMEN'S CENTER —

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A strength-based
family center

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Walnut Avenue Family & Women's Center Launches Expansion of Shannon Collins Memorial Garden

Santa Cruz, CA, February 15, 2016 - Walnut Avenue Family & Women's Center (Walnut Avenue) is excited to launch the expansion of the Shannon Collins Memorial Garden in late February 2016. "We want to create a space that embodies the values and ideals that Shannon Collins lived," said Heather Putnam, Director of the Memorial Garden project. "It is important that we engage those who participate in Walnut Avenue programs—and the community at large—while supporting Walnut Avenue's goal of healthy families," added Assistant Director, Violet Smith.

Shannon's Garden was established in partnership with LELO in October of 2013, in memory of Shannon Kathleen Collins. Shannon was a Santa Cruz resident and business owner who ardently supported Walnut Avenue, women's rights, and women's empowerment. The garden expansion will be developed in the grassy lot adjacent to Walnut Avenue. A strong and vibrant community of volunteers and supporters has organized around the Memorial Garden since 2013, and are committed to supporting the expanded vision.

Organizers will work with the longtime sponsor of the Memorial Garden, LELO, and many other supporters in the Santa Cruz community, to build a multi-functional space that will include community garden plots, a retreat area, an events area, picnic space, and a children's area. Local contractor, Eric Hammer of Hammer Construction, has joined as an advisor for the project. The first action is the construction of a four-foot-high wooden neighbor-style fence (replacing the existing chain link fence) to beautify and secure the garden. Completion of the expanded Memorial Garden is expected in the next two years.

Walnut Avenue Family & Women's Center provides support and services so that women, children, and families will have the opportunities and skills to thrive. For more information about the garden plans, volunteering or contributing opportunities, please visit www.wafwc.org/shannoncollins or contact Heather Putnam hputnam@wafwc.org.