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—Format.....Opinions
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Notes from editor (not for publication):

HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

Building housing, building hope

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

‘This is not only the right thing to do; it is also the smart thing to do. When families are secure, our schools are stronger, our businesses are more stable, and our whole community prospers.’

####END SUBHED####

TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

Brattleboro and the greater Windham region have always been places where neighbors look out for one another. We see it in our classrooms, our local businesses, our health care workers, and in the countless volunteer hours that strengthen food shelves,

11 youth programs, and community events. Caring for one another is
12 part of who we are.

13 But today, our region faces a growing challenge: Too
14 many families do not have a safe, stable place to call home.
15 Rising housing costs, combined with wages that can't keep pace,
16 are leaving hard-working families — those who teach our
17 children, care for our loved ones, and keep our restaurants,
18 farms, and small businesses running — without secure housing
19 options.

20 That is why Winston Prouty was honored to announce a
21 transformational \$1 million donation to open a family shelter on
22 our campus.

23 That investment means that parents and children facing
24 homelessness will have a safe place to land, and a chance to
25 regain stability and dignity in a time of crisis. But this is about
26 more than a building — it is about creating hope and about
27 affirming to families that they are not alone.

28 Every family deserves the peace of mind that comes from
29 knowing where they will sleep at night. Housing is not only a
30 moral imperative, but also the foundation of strong schools, a
31 resilient work force, and thriving communities.

32 The family shelter is a critical first step, but it cannot be
33 the last.

34 * * *

35 AT WINSTON PROUTY, we are committed to a broader
36 vision: developing affordable workforce housing on our campus.
37 Meeting the immediate need for shelter is essential, but long-term
38 solutions will allow families to thrive and our regional economy
39 to grow. Safe and stable housing ensures that parents can keep
40 jobs, children can succeed in school, and communities can stay
41 vibrant.

42 We know this work cannot be done alone. This \$1
43 million gift is a powerful beginning, but the road ahead requires
44 partnership — between nonprofits, local government, businesses,

45 and community members across Windham County and beyond.
46 Each of us has a role to play.

47 Homelessness is not an abstract issue. It touches real
48 families — our neighbors — who could be any one of us if
49 circumstances were different. By investing in housing, we send a
50 clear message: In Brattleboro and throughout our region, we
51 believe every family deserves a place to belong.

52 This is not only the right thing to do; it is also the smart
53 thing to do. When families are secure, our schools are stronger,
54 our businesses are more stable, and our whole community
55 prospers.

56 As we take this important step, we invite you to join us.
57 Together, we can make Brattleboro and Windham County a
58 region where families don't just get by, but where they truly
59 thrive.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

60 **CHLOE LEAREY** is the executive director of Winston
61 Prouty Center for Child and Family Development in Brattleboro
62 and serves as the steering committee chair of the Vermont Early
63 Childhood Advocacy Alliance, as well as on the boards of the
64 Vermont Community Loan Fund and Brattleboro Memorial
65 Hospital.

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

####BEGIN MAXISSUE####

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####END MAXISSUE####

LINKS:

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####END LINKS####

VIDEO:

####BEGIN VIDEO####

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####END VIDEO####

LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

####BEGIN LOGLINE####

69 Winston Prouty Center announced a \$1 million donation
70 on Oct. 11 to establish a family shelter aimed at addressing the
71 growing housing crisis and providing stable living conditions for
72 families facing homelessness in the Windham County region.
73 Commentary by Chloe Learey in Voices (Viewpoint).

####END LOGLINE####