

I Am Now Plans Weekend Open House
by Pat Kimbrough
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High Point Enterprise

HIGH POINT – A High Point nonprofit facing difficult economic times hopes to raise community awareness about its work by opening its doors to the public this weekend.

I Am Now is planning an open house aimed at giving people an idea of how the organization tries to develop the potential of young men and women who are transitioning out of the foster care system.

“We want to make people more familiar with what I Am Now is, and they can actually come take a look at things hands on,” said I Am Now founder Travis Burrell.

The event will be held at the organization’s “Crossroads” house for young people who grew up in foster care but lack resources and support networks once they turn 18 and age out of foster care. In addition to transitional housing, the organization provides mentors and life-skills training geared towards self-sufficiency.

Burrell said there will be information at the open house about all of its programs.

The timing of the event is important because I Am Now has had difficulty finding the money to meet its monthly operating budget of \$13,500 to \$14,000. It receives some funding from Guilford County, but its representatives have been seeking other sources, such as grants and foundations.

The organization tries to fill a niche by providing services unavailable elsewhere. According to figures on its Web site, there are 180 homeless people between the ages of 18 and 23 in Guilford County.

Burrell said there continues to be strong demand for I Am Now’s services.

“We’ve been real busy lately with our non-resident program and mentoring program,” he said. “We’ve been getting a lot of calls from different agencies seeking mentors for young people and also somebody to do case management for folks who are not necessarily homeless but may have aged out of foster care and just need to be directed to resources.”

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I Am Now will host an open house from noon to 5 p.m. Saturday at 509 Ferndale Blvd. More information about the organization is available on its Web site, www.iamnowinc.com.