

Oct. 21, 2020

Phoenix Talent Schools & Rogue Retreat Partnership

Brent Barry, Superintendent

PTS Rising: Care, Compassion, Clarity and Courage

Our Phoenix Talent community has suffered tremendous devastation from the Almeda wildfire that swept through the area in early September. Close to 30% of our school families have lost their homes. Jackson County officials report that the fire destroyed more than 2,400 residential structures. The statistics are sobering. Yet, through our schools, extended community and partners, our families are slowly finding their way forward.

Rogue Retreat and Phoenix Talent Schools have established a creative partnership to help meet the immediate need for affordable housing by seeking donations of RVs and trailers for our families who have been displaced by the fire. We know that meeting this most basic need is crucial.

In the early days following the Almeda fire, one of our families who lost their home was connected with a donated fifth-wheel travel trailer. The family of six has a free RV hook-up at the Jackson County Expo where they can also find food, clothing and other resources. They are so grateful. It gives them hope for their future.

Working with Rogue Retreat on this effort is a natural fit for Phoenix Talent Schools. Our missions of serving the community and rebuilding lives with compassion, courage and creativity make for a partnership that will make a difference for our families.

Here is how it works:

- Rogue Retreat and Phoenix Talent Schools are seeking donors through social media, websites, media and word of mouth.
- Donors call Rogue Retreat and information gets passed on to Phoenix Talent Schools to determine if the RV or trailer is in good working order.
- Phoenix Talent Schools then match a displaced family with the RV or trailer.
- Rogue Retreat will help the donor handle the transfer of ownership details to the family, and a tax write-off for the donor.

In another amazing turn in this partnership, we recently connected Rogue Retreat with one of our graduates who lives in Washington state. They will donate \$5,000 to cover the transfer of title fees.

Our schools, spared in the fire, are going to be central to restoring the communities of Phoenix and Talent. I have seen our staff and community partners demonstrate their love for our families by doing whatever it takes to help. Thousands of donations of clothing, hygiene items, school supplies and food have been distributed in communities where our families have sought refuge. Extended community, the Red Cross and FEMA have contributed to supporting our families through the many details of rebuilding their lives. It has been incredible to witness this generous response.

We are learning from the experience of other communities who have suffered through wildfires, that rebuilding will be a long-term effort, likely taking five or more years. We will be there for our families and the broader community as the recovery and rebuilding process unfolds.

If you would like to donate an RV or trailer to school families, please contact:

Rogue Retreat at 541-499-0880.