



Serving the West End Community

"One important route for reconstructing socialist feminist politics is through theory and practice." ~ Donna Haraway, *Cyborg Manifesto*



Overview

West End Ministries is a safe haven for all kinds of people. There is a women's shelter, better known as Leslie's House, space for the Boys and Girls club for children, and a church for the community of High Point. There are also several different services West End provides for the community, such as the food pantry with weekly distribution, life skills classes for anyone interested, and a free community meal on Thursday evenings. Within the campus of West End there is the ministry ran thrift store, Leslie's House, a library, a work out room, a computer room, a woman's center, and a full kitchen. West End utilizes all of their space and ability to better the surrounding community, and with the help of a few employees and volunteers the programs are run with efficiency.



The food pantry at West End Ministries, Inc. Photo Credit: Malorie Buccigross.

Leslie's House

"Leslie's House is open to women without dependents 18 years of age and older. Leslie's House offers 22 emergency shelter beds, hot meals, toiletries, case management, Life Skills classes and most importantly, hope. Residents have a safe place to stay while stabilizing their lives and making plans for the future."

This ministry can be examined in light of *The Second Sex* by Simone De Beauvoir. "Man occupies the role of the self, or subject; woman is the object, the other. He is essential, absolute, and transcendent. She is inessential, incomplete, and mutilated." This blames all women who are submissive for this role that women now fall into, but working at Leslie's House has taught us that you do not know what anyone has gone through. It taught us that no judgment should be placed onto anyone, if they are strong enough to accept that they need the help of Leslie's House they deserve respect and encouragement.



Molly holds a great conversation with a local citizen regarding the many activities at West End. Photo Credit: Molly Myers.

West End

Recently, multiple grocery stores have closed in poorer areas of town creating what are known as "food deserts," or areas where at least 33 percent of residents live more than one mile from a full-service grocery store and more than 20 percent of residents live below the poverty line. This is a very prominent issue in Guilford County, and as many residents are unfortunately very aware, the city of High Point has 6 areas that are considered to be food deserts. Both the West End Ministries staff and volunteers have devoted a lot of time to the stocking and organizing of the food pantry, and the filling and delivering of food boxes. The food pantry is located inside of the West End Community Center and is home to food items from many groups, mostly non-perishables. The foods in the pantry make up the contents of the food boxes. Community members can receive these food boxes of canned and other food items that are equivalent to a week's worth of groceries from the food pantry every Thursday afternoon between 3:00-5:00 p.m. or in emergency situations.



Area in blue is the West End community which the Ministry serves. Photo courtesy of the City of High Point.

Reflection

- "My work at West End literally helped me to see how feminist theory can help inform the distribution of aid to people in need." – Sam Kizer '14
- "I have grown as both a service worker and individual through my helping of others and the providing of one of the essential needs to live: food." – Malorie Buccigross '16
- "The best part of working at West End has been the personal connections I've made; it's a blessing to be able to work with such a genuine and well-meaning community." - Shannon Curley '15
- "I learned so much more about myself and the community than I originally expected. I feel a sense of responsibility to continue doing my part in High Point." - Erin House '15



Katey and Hannah work on sorting clothes to be distributed to Leslie's House or the West End Thrift Shop. Photo Credit: High Point University