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Grants to Help Fund Behavioral Health Transition

The ongoing transition of Asante Rogue Regional's Behavioral Health Unit to a "Sanctuary Model" of care got a shot in the arm recently when three grants were received – including an anonymous, \$250,000 donation from an Oregon foundation – to help with a makeover of the existing unit.



The Asante Foundation received the anonymous grant from a Portland-based foundation – along with separate \$50,000 grants from the local Arthur Dubs Foundation and the Oregon Community Foundation – to be used in the Behavioral Health Unit's renovation and redesign.

In its letter of application for the larger grant, the Foundation suggested that the redesign could increase the unit's capacity from the current 18 beds to as many as 27 beds. The unit's average daily census has risen to more than 17 beds in the past couple years.

The project, including temporary space for patients during construction, is expected to

cost a total of \$6.2 million. The three recent grants totaling \$350,000 will be added to at least \$210,000 that had been raised previously for the behavioral health project, and the Foundation plans to contact several community partners for additional support.

Preliminary plans call for construction to begin as soon as next fall and for the project to be completed in 2017.

The Behavioral Health Unit – built in 1972 as an institutional facility that promoted seclusion and security for mentally ill patients – is the only inpatient behavioral health facility in Asante's nine-county service area. The goal of the renovation project is to change the local behavioral health model by creating a comfortable, secure space in which patients can heal.

The Sanctuary Model, a trademarked treatment method that originated more than 30 years ago in the Philadelphia area, uses an evidence-based and trauma-informed approach to develop relationships between patients and caregivers. It focuses on providing healing environments in which patients can overcome the root causes of their issues.

A trauma-informed organization is one that recognizes the effects of past trauma and takes a system-wide approach to mitigate trauma-related stress.

The renovated behavioral health facility described in the Foundation's grant application would accommodate Asante's transition to the Sanctuary Model.

"This new environment will foster peace, comfort, openness, and trust, which collectively has been
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shown to decrease agitation and assaultive behaviors,” the application letter stated. “The recent addition of a Comfort Room (in the Behavioral Health Unit), where patients can sit and relax with weighted blankets, nature sounds, and calming colors, has proven to significantly decrease anxiety levels.”

The renovated facility, which will be built in the footprint of the existing Behavioral Health Unit, will provide more private space for patients during their admission and physician interviews. It will also eliminate glass barriers in the unit to foster interaction between patients and staff, and the patient rooms will be redesigned to increase privacy, quiet and comfort. The remodeled facility will feature warm colors and welcoming, homelike furnishings.

For more information about the project, or how to donate, contact [Debbie Daggett](#) at the Asante Foundation.

Asante News is published every Tuesday. Deadline for submission of articles is every Friday. Send via e-mail to asantenews@asante.org.
Question or suggestions: Call Communications and Marketing at (541) 789-3510 or extension 13510.