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## **Starr Commonwealth Partners with U.S. Federal Government to Provide Safe Haven, Alleviate Humanitarian Challenge at Border**

**Albion, Michigan, April 9, 2021** – In response to an urgent request from the U.S. federal government, Starr Commonwealth is opening its Albion campus to help alleviate the developing humanitarian challenge at the southern border.

A leader in healing trauma and building resilience in children, Starr has signed a facilities agreement to allow the Administration for Children and Families to utilize its 350-acre campus as a safe haven. ACF intends to provide temporary shelter for up to 240 unaccompanied migrant children ages 12 and younger as it works to unite them with their family or sponsors.

To protect the safety of the children, Starr has been asked not to share certain details about their arrival and care.

“For more than a century, our campus has served as a safe haven for children in need,” said Starr President and CEO Elizabeth Carey. “We have again been called to open our hearts and our campus as a refuge – this time to children arriving without parents or guardians at our southern border.

“When asked to help, we said yes – immediately and enthusiastically, just as our founder, Floyd Starr, would want us to do. We have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support from the Albion community and beyond, with so many kind and generous organizations and people reaching out with offers of help and messages of encouragement.”

Starr has 17 cottages that can house up to 240 children and caregivers. The campus also has a gymnasium, cafeteria, school buildings, chapel, ball fields, track and a lakeside park.

ACF is providing bilingual caregivers who have a background in child welfare or development to care for the children while on the Starr campus. The organization expects each child will stay 30 days or less.

All children will be screened for COVID-19 prior to traveling to Michigan. They will also be screened for COVID again upon their arrival to campus. Those testing positive will quarantine in one of two cottages on campus so their illness does not spread.

“Our expertise in healing trauma and building resilience can truly benefit the children who will be coming to our campus,” Carey said. “Many of us have all watched the heartbreaking pictures on the

nightly news of children who have been abandoned in the desert, far away from home and without their families, and wondered how we can help. Starr has safe beds, secure cottages and a campus of caring people – this is how we can, and must, help.”

Founded in 1913 as a home for runaway boys, Starr Commonwealth has grown and evolved over the decades to provide community-based programs, education and behavioral health services that create and promote universal hope, boundless love and limitless success for children. While the nonprofit ended its residential treatment program last summer, it has retained its licensing with the state of Michigan while determining the next chapter for campus.

From its headquarters in Albion, Starr blends three key focuses – healing trauma, addressing racism and encouraging positive growth – into a comprehensive model of working with youth that is unique in the nation. Unlike other agencies that focus on trauma and resilience, Starr also offers tangible tools for teachers, social workers, health care professionals and others on the front line of working with children. Many of its [classes](#) are available online.

For the second year in a row, Starr Commonwealth has been selected as one of the Best Nonprofits to Work For. For more information, visit [www.starr.org](http://www.starr.org).

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