

**DENVER'S LONE COMMUNITY CENTER FOR HOMELESS WOMEN, CHILDREN,
AND TRANSGENDERED INDIVIDUALS RECEIVES SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARD**

*The Gathering Place, a Nonprofit Serving Metro Denver, Earns National Recognition for
its Impact and Growth*

PHILADELPHIA, PA, September 25, 2014—This morning, Opportunity Finance Network (OFN) announced that The Gathering Place—Denver's only daytime drop-in center for women, their children, and transgendered individuals experiencing homelessness or poverty—is this year's awardee of the Justice Grant. OFN, a national network of community lenders, awards the Justice Grant annually to an organization whose mission supports economic, political or social justice in the U.S.

According to the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative, in January 2014 there were 5,812 individuals experiencing homelessness and 2,230 people at-risk for homelessness. Women and children are one of the fastest-growing segments of the homeless population.

The Gathering Place serves approximately 270 people daily and provides them a variety of services, programs, and resources, such as:

- **Basic Needs**—provides three nutritious meals a day and serves 5,700 meals every month; laundry and private shower facilities; computer, phone, and mail access; a rest and nap area; a food pantry; a clothing bank; temporary shelter referrals, along with a long-term housing stabilization program; and physical and mental health screenings.
- **Personal Growth**—a GED and job readiness program; computer instructional classes; The Card Project, a social enterprise initiative where women make money from creating one-of-a-kind greeting cards; a writer's group; and other classes in the arts.

Chrystel Cornelius, Executive Director of First Nations Oweesta Corporation, which nominated The Gathering Place for this year's Justice Grant, said the organization deserves special recognition for its essential work transforming lives in the Denver metro community.

"The Gathering Place serves some of Denver's most vulnerable residents through local community support and grassroots change. As an advocate for Native communities, Oweesta knows about the challenges extreme poverty and violence present, so we are thrilled to honor how this organization helps its clients overcome those obstacles with dignity," said Cornelius, whose organization is a Member of OFN.

OFN will present this year's Justice Grant Award to The Gathering Place on Thursday, October 16, during OFN's 30th Anniversary [Conference](#) in Denver.

For more information, or if you would like to attend the Justice Grant Award Ceremony at the OFN Conference, please contact [Stefanie Arck](#) at 215.320.4306.



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About The Gathering Place

The Gathering Place offers a community of safety and hope where positive relationships, choice, and essential resources transform lives. TGP is Denver's only daytime drop-in center for women, children, and transgender individuals who are experiencing homelessness or poverty. Its current fundraising event, Canstruction® Denver, runs from September 20-October 2 at the History Colorado Center. Learn more: www.tgpdenver.org

About Opportunity Finance Network

Opportunity Finance Network, the leading network of private financial institutions, creates growth that is good for communities, investors, individuals, and the economy. Members of OFN are community development financial institutions (CDFIs) that deliver responsible lending to help low-wealth and low-income communities join the economic mainstream. Through 2012, OFN's Network originated more than \$33.3 billion in financing in urban, rural, and Native communities, and financed development/rehab of 960,000 housing units, started or expanded nearly 94,000 business and microenterprises, and helped create or maintain nearly 600,000 jobs. More information is available at: www.ofn.org