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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NEO Youth Center Open House & Light the Way Kick-off**

**KNOW & GO**

**WHO:** NEO Youth Center

**WHAT:** Lights On Afterschool Open House & Light the Way Campaign

**WHEN:** Open House - November 7th from 5:30-7:30pm, Campaign – ongoing from November 1 November 30

**WHERE:** NEO Youth Center, 139 Joerschke Drive, Grass Valley

**INFO:** To donate or for more information [www.ncneo.org](http://www.ncneo.org) or call 530-470-3869

Wednesday, November 7, the NEO Youth Center invites the community to a free Open House, to celebrate Lights On After School, the nationwide event that aims to raise support and awareness for after school programs. The event will include light refreshments, a silent auction, corn hole contest, and an opportunity to see the youth center in action.

NEO, which stands for New Events and Opportunities, was founded 10 years ago, in 2008 by two local youth. Their mission, to encourage healthy choices among peers by providing positive spaces to thrive. For the first six years, NEO acted as a pop-up youth center hosting over 70 events each year throughout the community. The NEO Youth Center opened their doors March 2015 providing free after school programming, workshops, and events for teens and young adults ages 11-25 years old. The Youth Center has over 600 members and sees about 150 visits per week. After, just three years, NEO has outgrown their current space and will be expanding the youth center from 1500 square feet to an expansive 5000 square feet facility with an attached yard and outdoor space. Plans for the youth center renovation and expansion are under way. At the Open House attendees will get an exclusive sneak peek of the new space.

Wednesday’s Open House also kicks off “Light the Way,” NEO’s annual monthly giving campaign, which is designed to help create a stable ongoing funding base to support the Youth Center. “We believe that all youth deserve to grow up happy and healthy, that’s why we create a positive and engaging community for local youth,” explains co-founder and director, Lynn Skrukrud, “The entire community can play a role in helping youth thrive. For as little as $5 a month you make a difference in the lives our kids.” NEO believes that everyone can become a hero for youth. New and past donors can pledge anywhere from $5 to $500 per month, to ensure a safe and supportive environment where local young people can continue to play, explore, learn, and grow, through the help of their peers and a network of adult mentors. These tax-deductible donations also help cover the basic Youth Center operations, add more staff to serve the growing numbers of youth and increase the number of enriching activities.

Through the campaign, NEO currently raises nearly $3000 per month. This is essential to the success of the Youth Center, but it is more vital than ever with the expansion of the youth center. Their goal for this year is to have a total of $4200 per month when the campaign concludes on November 31st.

Keeping the lights on after school not only lights up a room full of activities, where conversations take place, passions are explored, and needs are met, but it lights up the lives of local youth and adds to the overall health and vitality of the community.

Stop by on Wednesday for NEO’s Open House to see where and how donations will be spent, meet staff and board members, hear from the youth who attend the Youth Center, and enjoy an array of fun activities for the entire family.

For more information on the event or the Light the Way campaign please visit [www.ncneo.org](http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ncneo.org%2F&h=bAQHZRyU-&enc=AZP6iT2vW0C3BoOAUHb7759xlwq1TAKYkjHuCddVzoUU1zpRK3DSnUkJK4Chq41QnNI&s=1) or call 530-470-3869.

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