



## Teaching crafts, life lessons



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Kathy Peterson, Tequesta decorator and television personality, shows Christina Fisher how to sew the fabric for a pillow in her newly designed room. Peterson is participation in a program, Project H.O.P.E. where decorators "give back" to the community by using their skills to teach others how to make their homes more comfortable and personal. Christina and her roommate live in a Villages of Hope duplex designed for young people who have "graduated" from foster care and are learning to live on their own.

## Decorator inspires and empowers young women on their own

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There's a Chinese proverb that says, "Give a man a fish and you'll feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and he'll eat for a lifetime."

Tequesta resident Kathy Peterson, well-known both locally and nationally for her design and craft television shows, is teaching young women in the Villages of Hope in Palm Beach Gardens how to "fish."

But in this case it is how to sew, do crafts, use paint to transform found or second-hand objects.

She is giving them skills to transform their cozy duplex into a comfortable and personal home.

Christina Fisher, one of the young women at the Villages of Hope has already made the top to a new bed quilt that will be the pink, green and white focal point of her bedroom.

"Before we got started on the project, I would have told you that this would take a year. Now, I think we'll be done in about a month," said Fisher, 19. "I think learning how to sew, and do crafts for the house is the most fun. I've learned from Kathy to have a positive attitude, that you can fix mistakes and that it is fun to decorate and make things for your home that you can be proud of."

Peterson said the project will also include new bedspread and

curtains for Christina's room and that of her roommate, as well as some projects for their living room and kitchen.

"We'll be making curtains, reupholstering a chair in the living room and the chairs in the kitchen, and creating pillows to go with the donated couch for the space. We're even going to paint artwork to go over a non-functioning window. We've had donations of rugs and supplies

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from local businesses that help make this possible. When we are done, it will be comfortable and inviting and it will reflect the girls' personalities," Peterson said.

Peterson is helping the young women through a program called "Project H.O.M.E.," spearheaded by the Decorators Alliance of America, where those in the organization, which included home decorators, re-stagers, window treatment specialists and other

professionals help within their own communities.

"I love to inspire people and empower them," said Peterson. "If you can teach someone to do something, they then take ownership of the project as the girls are doing. You can already see the girls shine as they complete each project. We've had beautiful donated fabrics, and I've created a cohesive look to make the projects. Blues and greens will be used in the main areas and in her roommate's room, while Christina's room will have pinks and greens, so the green is a common color throughout the home."

Peterson said she was looking at a way to reach out to the community. "Villages of Hope just touched my heart. These are young women who are coming out of foster care. The girls have to qualify for these homes, they have to have a job and pay rent and take responsibility for their duplex."

Peterson brings years of experience to this volunteer project, including being the author of five books, the most recent being "Kathy Peterson's Great Outdoor Decorating Makeovers," and co-hosting "The Balancing Act"

on Lifetime television five days a week. For 10 years, she was the host of "Town and Country Crafts with Kathy Peterson" and she has been a guest host on HGTV and the DIY networks.

Despite her schedule, Peterson doesn't intend to leave Villages of Hope behind when this project is complete.

"Villages of Hope immediately embraced the idea of Project H.O.P.E. and said they were 100 percent behind me. Because of this, I'll probably end up mentoring one or more of these girls."