

## Help RYSE to the occasion

By Chris Treadway  
West County Times

A new, centrally located Richmond center providing programs and guidance for young people is awaiting a coat of paint this weekend before its official opening Oct. 18.

The RYSE (Richmond Youth Student Empowerment) Center next to the Macdonald 80 Retail Center at 205 41st St. was conceived and advanced by the community, which now has the opportunity to help with the final pre-opening brushstrokes.

Volunteers are needed to help prep and paint the 6,600-square-foot, county-owned building at work parties from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

"We've got a lot to paint," said center co-director Kanwarpal Dhaliwal. "The grand opening is next Saturday."

The center is intended as an alternative for 14- to 21-year-olds in West County to spending time on city streets, providing a safe place for recreation and social activities, educational and career training support, as well as programs such as performance and media arts.

RYSE has been several years in the realization, an idea that evolved from meetings about street violence and youth safety. Young people were central in coming up with the concept, and they will be prominent in how the center operates, said county Supervisor John Gioia, whose office worked to make the center a reality.

"This is one of the most exciting projects I've been involved with," he said, "especially with youth taking a leadership role."

Community members can see the center and learn about its planned programs such as tutoring and career support, health services and health education, media arts, performance arts and community-building at the opening celebration Oct. 18.

"Our plan is to have ribbon-cutting from 10 to 11:30, then have a kind of block party," Dhaliwal said. "All the partners providing programming are going to be there, and folks can see the space and get to know what we're going to do there."

On Oct. 20, the center will begin regular hours of 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. weekdays. It also plans to have selected programs and events on weekends.

For more details, call Dhaliwal at 510-579-1922 or co-director Kimberly Aceves at 510-206-5552 or visit [www.rysecenter.org](http://www.rysecenter.org).

SCOUT EXPO RETURNS: Boy Scout troops from West Contra Costa and Berkeley will be on the lawn at Memorial Park, 1331 Portland Ave. in Albany, for the Herms District Scout Expo from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday.

The annual event, moved from Point Richmond to Albany four years ago, is a chance for the public to see the opportunities available in Scouting and other programs. Joining the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts will be the Berkeley-Albany Girl Scouts and representatives from the Food Bank, the USS Hornet, the SS Red Oak Victory, Leave No Trace, REI, American Red Cross, Civil War re-enactors, the YMCA of the East Bay and the local chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Expect plenty of demonstrations, information and activities.