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Bonding Over a Love for Community: 826 @ 626

by Max Barnes (OCII Media & Public Relations)

The partnership forged between 826 Valencia (“826”), an educational non-profit founded by author Dave Eggers & teacher Ninive Calegari, and affordable housing nonprofit Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation (“TNDC”) has fortuitous roots.

826 Valencia, with its highly impactful 826 Valencia literacy program, was looking to broaden their writing and literacy offerings to another outpost in San Francisco and targeted the Tenderloin for initial expansion. While finalizing plans for a second outpost in the Tenderloin, 826 was approached by TNDC to team up for a response to a Request for Proposals to develop 626 Mission Bay Blvd North (“626”). Each of TNDC’s 39 Buildings has their own on-site services or partners with another organization to support residents. In the case of 626, they identified 826 Valencia for their expertise with youth. The team of TNDC and 826 was selected to develop the parcel, with 826 actually signing a letter of intent for the Mission Bay South location before their location in the Tenderloin even opened, essentially carving out plans for two new 826 Valencia outposts simultaneously.



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“The newest 826 in Mission Bay, will continue our mission of providing writing services to young people who might otherwise not be able to afford them,” Bita Nazarian, Executive Director of 826 Valencia said in a phone-call last week. The idea is for 826 to establish a foothold in the eastern-most part of the city so that it can serve more low-income communities in the SOMA, Potrero Hill, Dogpatch and Bayview neighborhoods. The Mission Bay center will have a retail component to complement the tutoring, similar to the flagship “pirate store” on Valencia with a storefront modeled after an enchanted forest as it seeks to further activate Mission Bay’s 4th street corridor.

826 Valencia is looking for donors, volunteers, creatives, and partnerships to make this center a success. For more information, contact missionbay@826valencia.org