



UNLOCKING PURPOSE FOR THE VULNERABLE

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**PETRA AUTOMOTIVE ANNOUNCES PETRA CARES, A NEW NON-PROFIT TO HELP YOUTH AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE**

Cypress, Texas – Petra Automotive Products, Inc. is pleased to announce the launch of Petra Cares, our new non-profit organization dedicated to helping young adults aging out of foster care by providing job training and placement in the auto repair industry.

Every year, more than 300 youth age out of the foster care system in the Houston area. The statistical outcomes for many of these young adults are bleak, with homelessness, incarceration, and extreme poverty in up to 80% of those emancipated from state oversight and care.

Petra Cares intends to change these outcomes by providing free auto mechanic training and job placement for up to 20% of those youth, starting with our inaugural class in January 2023. Our eight-week course is delivered in partnership with Lone Star College and will provide transportation, course materials, tools, childcare, technical training, and life skills to ten students at a time. Upon completion, students are matched with employers via the Petra Automotive Products, Inc. car dealership and repair shops business network. “Education breaks the cycle of poverty. Petra Cares wants to be a conduit of quality education and meaningful employment to this marginalized group of young people,” says Arnold Gacita, President of Petra Automotive Products and Petra Cares board member.



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## THE BACKSTORY

*I have always believed that we need to give back. When I was a young child, I saw a TV special with Bob Hope. It was Christmas time, and Bob Hope was entertaining the troops and was asked why he did this? He responded that he had to do it and felt that he had been blessed so much throughout his life that giving back was the least he could do. That resonated with me - even as a child. I have been blessed throughout my professional career; I believe we're distributors of God's wealth. I think that it's essential to give back. So, throughout my career, I have always given in some way. I was heavily involved (and still am) with Giving Hope out of New Orleans; in fact, in 2019, we built an orphanage together in Brazil. My intent was to duplicate that. To build an orphanage around the world every year. However, when we put our Petra Cares board together, God led us in another direction. We were shown a need here in Houston that nobody was attending to or, in our case, even knew existed – help for foster kids aging out of the system. These kids have never been adopted and have hopped from house to house; they feel they have no purpose. They feel unwanted. We know they are God's children and have a purpose. Of the kids that exit the foster care program, 80% of those that do not attend college will be dead, in jail, or homeless within three years. This is unacceptable! Staggering!*

*These young people have been dealt an awful hand. They need somebody to hold them and show them that they have a purpose, to teach them how to live a fulfilled life and be good citizens of our society. Petra Cares will change generations. Lord willing, and with your help, we will revise the statistics. We will not allow 80% of foster kids exiting the program to die, be homeless or end up in jail. We are not!*

*We will take 60 of these kids next year and bring them to Petra's Headquarters in Cypress, Texas. In partnership with Lone Star College, we will teach them how to be a Level 1 Mechanic. This eight-week program also includes two weeks of life skills training. After graduation, we will work with local dealerships to get them job placement, earn a substantial income, and begin their life's purpose. If needed, we will provide transportation and daycare through partnerships with many foster care housing charities like the Tejano Center.*

*Nobody is doing what we're doing. Great charities counsel foster kids, house them, transport them, and encourage them. But, as far as we know, no organization will take them, love them, move every excuse out of the way to train them, and help them find their career path and purpose as Petra Cares does.*

*– Arnold J. Gacita*

## ABOUT

Established in 2021, Petra Cares is the charitable arm of Petra Automotive Products, Inc. Our mission is “unlocking purpose for the vulnerable,” and is achieved by removing barriers to educate and empower parentless and parenting young adults. For more information, contact Arnold J. Gacita or visit [petra-cares.org](http://petra-cares.org).

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