

Click here to get **\$3 off** any FRAM air filter.
FRAM[®] Offer ends 3/31/09.



Tribune

EAST VALLEY • SCOTTSDALE

October 7, 2008

Cup O' Karma fuels fresh start for abused women in recovery

By Brittany Gonzales
 For the Tribune



HEALING POWER: Cup O' Karma employee Camille Askerneese serves organic green tea to Cornelius Hanna of Mesa. Askerneese is one of several survivors of domestic violence who work at the cafe, which helps victims of violence and sexual abuse living in shelters.

Tribune

Cup O' Karma is doing more than selling coffee at the shop that opened in June. It is also offering a new start for the women who run it. The people working the counters and whipping up organic cups of coffee are residents and volunteers with a local nonprofit agency that helps women escape domestic violence and sexual abuse.

Cup O' Karma was founded in part by MonaLou Callery with the intention of offering women who are in recovery an opportunity to regain and relearn job skills.

At any given time there are up to four women working at Cup O' Karma who are participating in the job training program. The women work 20 hours a week for three months in the shop, which is near Dobson Road and Southern Avenue across from Mesa Community College.

"It has been a really good thing," said Helen Sawyer, a worker at Cup O' Karma. "All I am getting from them is love."

All of the proceeds that are generated go toward assisting women and families who have been victims of domestic violence or sexual abuse. Cup O' Karma was created by the National Advocacy and Training Network, which uses income from the shop to help support its programs.

The main project is Support, Education, Empowerment, and Directions (SEEDS). SEEDS provides shelter and substance abuse treatment for its residents.

Cup O' Karma is expected to generate about \$35,000 per year for the program, according to brochures from the

organization.

Luis Prado recently donated his coffee shop, formerly known as Into the Bean, to the national advocacy network. In June, they changed the name to Cup O' Karma: Community Café for a Cause, and opened its doors.

Kathy Hess, the daytime manager at Cup O' Karma, called Prado an "angel" for his donation.

"He could have sold it to anyone, but he was willing to donate it for a dollar," Hess said.


Hess said that the women who stay longer in the shelters and work hard are the ones who end up staying away from their old behaviors of substance abuse and abusive relationships.

"We give each other the strength to change what is needed to be changed," Hess said.

Hess said Cup O' Karma has had a positive impact on the women by being "a steppingstone to build self-esteem."

"People keep coming back because of the cause, and it really is a great cup of coffee," said Hess.



 © 2008 Freedom Communications / Arizona. Permission granted for up to 10 e-mails. All rights reserved.

You may forward this article or get additional permissions by typing http://license.icopyright.net/3.7220?icx_id=127587 into any web browser. Freedom Communications / Arizona and East Valley/ Scottsdale Tribune logos are registered trademarks of Freedom Communications / Arizona. The iCopyright logo is a registered trademark of iCopyright, Inc.