In Tulsa, Oklahoma, helping others began with a dream—DREAM Room360.

In life, it is often difficult to find time to pay it forward. However, co-owners of ELEMENT360 Design, Tracy Huntington and Phara Thomas, have illuminated the lives of inspirational families with their DREAM Room360 project.

The idea started sixteen years ago with Phara Thomas' son, Riley. At age three, Riley was diagnosed with leukemia and from that day forward, Thomas knew it was going to take the strength of Riley and the people around him to rise as victors in this battle—and they did. As a result of strenuous medical science research and a bone marrow transplant from Riley's selfless sister, a now nineteen-year-old Riley stands healthy and vibrant. "When you have been in a situation where you realize it does take a village, you feel compelled to pay it forward," said Thomas.

How did the idea get transformed into a successful "pay it forward" program? With the help of Thomas' business partner, Tracy Huntington, the innovative DREAM Room360 project was born. After attending school one day, Huntington's children spoke of a ten-year-old classmate named Wiley. Wiley had four brain surgeries as an attempt to relieve headaches while his father battles cancer. Upon hearing this, Huntington and Thomas approached the family. The group talked about the family's story and the hope and strength they use to fight courageously every day.

Huntington and Thomas left the conversation wondering what they could do to help and with a spark of imagination, DREAM Room360 set fire. As a "pay it forward" project, DREAM Room360 meets with a family in need and discusses the room they want redesigned. The program offers their unique design expertise, and with the support of local vendors and private donations, the family is presented their freshly renovated and redesigned room.

Thomas explained the challenge of starting out, “It was difficult to truly make others realize the importance of what DREAM Room360 stands for and how much it impacts the families who need it most." But after the first family project, the mission was solidified.

The first DREAM Room360 family requested a new and improved family room because it is the one place they could gather around and enjoy their time together. Although the process took a few months to meet with the family and receive adequate funding to fulfill the project, the final unveiling made the journey all the more satisfying.

The family room incorporated relaxing colors, functional furniture, and creative use of space. In contrast to their formally red color scheme, the new blue and gray hues evoked a more soothing environment. An ample amount of seating was used ensuring the family could always have a place to relax together.

The reaction from the DREAM family was more than expected, “Oh my! Love, love, love the living room! Such a drastic change, but so very wonderful and perfect! It is so much cozier, brighter, and very uplifting—so beautiful. You ladies have a real gift! We are forever grateful. You have blessed us with a whole new perspective and lift.”

“We feel completely blessed that we were able to help someone who needs uplifting. Makes us feel amazing” said Huntington. DREAM Room360 is scheduled to renovate one fabulous room every year for deserving families. If everything goes as planned, another admirable family will have a newly designed room this fall and the project will also be expanding to include Arizona.

For more information about DREAM Room360 and donating to help the cause, visit ELEMENT360 Design’s website www.element360design.com.