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Habitat Breaks the Cycle of Generational Poverty

Attend a Habitat home dedication and you see joy in the eyes of the children, and optimism in the eyes of the parents. You leave with a sense that things are about to get a little easier, and a lot better, for the family buying the home.

Now, as Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity (TCHFH) celebrates 30 years of work, we are excited to share new, hard evidence that the Habitat model of homeownership is indeed breaking the cycle of generational poverty for families.

The numbers come from Wilder Research, which has been turning out well-respected reports for nearly a century. Wilder worked with Habitat for Humanity Minnesota to survey more than 400 Habitat homeowners all around the state. In many ways, the

data confirms what Habitat supporters have always believed in their hearts: Habitat homeownership is linked to greater success in school, improved job opportunities, less reliance on government assistance programs, and dramatic increases in self-esteem. (See the specific results on the infographic on pages 4-5.)

Over the past three decades, thousands of children have benefitted from growing up in safe, decent, affordable Habitat homes in the Twin Cities. The question of “How can we ensure that even more children have this same opportunity in the future?” is the driving force behind a new strategic plan that is being developed to guide TCHFH’s work through 2020.

Thank you for helping improve the lives of so many families over the past 30 years. Please continue to volunteer time, donate money, and advocate for the



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mission of eliminating poverty housing from our community. The difference you’re making grows greater with each child who moves into a Habitat home.



Thrivent Gifts 8 Homes

#1 all-time sponsor increases its lead with 2015 donation

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Habitat ON & OFF the Hill

Housing advocates gathered to lobby for policy changes

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ReModeled ReStore!

New space showcases furniture staging and DIY

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DEAR FRIENDS,



For 40 years, Sue Haigh has held many important jobs related to planning and creating affordable housing in the Twin Cities.

Go online to www.tchabitat.org/haigh to see videos of her talking about what's changed over the years and the unique assets Minnesota has to address this societal challenge.

In April, just as the first home foundations of spring are being poured, Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity will mark 30 years as an organization. This milestone has me joyfully reflecting on all the families, and all the children, who are better off today because of the countless volunteers and the generous financial donors who've supported this mission for three decades. It's so rewarding to hear people who've owned their Habitat home for years confirm that our work is indeed helping break the cycle of generational poverty.

We are looking ahead to a busy summer build season and a chance to continue living our values of community, integrity, and putting faith into action. Volunteer crews will soon be working on the first of 33 Habitat townhomes on land donated to us in Hugo. Thrivent Financial, which has sponsored and built more Twin Cities Habitat homes than any other group, will help fund eight more homes this year. Several more homes will be going up in the economically challenged pockets of Minneapolis and St. Paul where

our work, along with the strength of our families, is helping to stabilize entire neighborhoods.

Unfortunately, the economic landscape for Minnesota families in the bottom half of society remains bleak. Wages aren't rising, but housing costs are, and access to financing is extremely limited. This 30th anniversary comes at a fateful moment because, right now, we are hard at work on a new Strategic Plan to guide our efforts through the year 2020.

Help us dream big! Your support and your level of engagement will determine the scope of what we can accomplish. Please continue to partner with us in this critical mission and be a part of helping Twin Cities families for the next 30 years.

Warmly,

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HABITAT HERALD

Contributors to this issue: John Hagerman, Becky Engen, with design by Erin Ahlstrom and edited by Matt Haugen.

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Spring cleaning? Donate your stuff to the ReStore!



We pick up large items! Visit restore.tchabitat.org to schedule.



Thrivent Promotes 'Living Generously' with Donation of 8 Homes

Minnesota-based Thrivent Financial is the #1 all-time sponsor of Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity homes, and in 2015 its lead is going to grow even larger with a commitment to help on eight more homes. Several low-income families' homes will also be repaired through the Thrivent Builds Repair partnership.

Thrivent Choice®: A Member-advised Grant Program

If you're a Thrivent member you may have Choice Dollars® that you can assign to help Twin Cities Habitat, and it won't cost you anything. Find out by calling 800-THRIVENT (800-847-4836) and say "Thrivent Choice" or log in to your MyThrivent account.

In the past year, Thrivent members directed \$10,000 Choice Dollars to Twin Cities Habitat through this program. We love that. Our goal for 2015 is \$20,000.

Create a Thrivent Action Team

Action Teams receive \$250 grants to bring Thrivent's mission to life by doing projects that benefit our community, like organizing a day of volunteering on a Twin Cities Habitat home. Thrivent members can lead two Action Teams per year.

Organize an Action Team online at thrivent.com or call 800-THRIVENT and say "Fraternal" when prompted, or send an email to fraternal@thrivent.com.

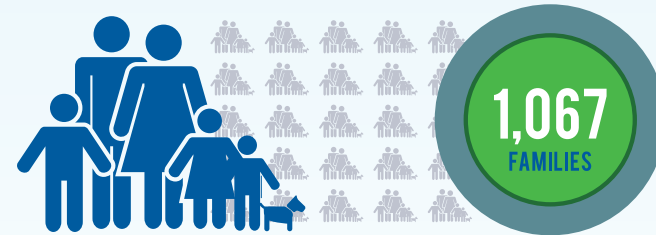
Habits of a Highly Effective Habitat

Repair Homes



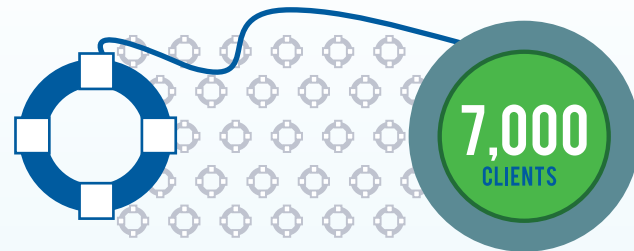
Yearly *A Brush with Kindness* projects: 125
 Clients include the elderly, veterans, people with disabilities, and single parents

House Families



Avg. Family Size: 5-6 individuals
 Monthly Housing Payment: \$700-900
 Housing Payment capped at ≤28% of income

Forestall Foreclosures



Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention boasts an overall success rate of 70%

Shape Public Policy



Advocacy program started in 2008
 Hundreds of Housing Heroes taking action!



Minnesotans save **\$6.4-9.3M annually** on decreased government assistance spending for MN's 2,200 Habitat homeowner families.

Gov't Assistance Before & After Habitat*		
	Before	After
Reliance on Welfare	26%	3%
Food Support	57%	27%

* Results from Wilder Research and Habitat for Humanity Minnesota survey of 400+ Habitat for Humanity homeowners.

What Our Homeowners Say Since Buying Their Homes

- "Our lives are better" - 92%
- "We feel safe in our home" - 91%
- "My children's grades improved" - 65%
- "My children's study habits improved" - 75%
- "My children's school attendance improved" - 40%
- "We get along better as a family" - 74%
- "I feel connected to the community" - 78%
- "Someone in our home got a better job" - 35%
- "We spend more time together as a family" - 76%
- "I feel more confident about paying for college" - 74%



VOLUNTEER
www.tchabitat.org

DONATE
www.tchabitat.org/give

ADVOCATE
www.tchabitat.org/advocate



The Legacy Thomas Built

Tom Thomas excelled in the field of consumer research, rode a Harley, loved his nieces and nephews, and gave generously to charities. He was compassionate to others and liked supporting many different causes. Tom was a man who prided himself on conducting research and making well-informed decisions.

When Tom was diagnosed with cancer in 2012, he wisely made plans so that his money would honor his values after his death. The \$200,000 he left to Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity in 2013 means more families, and more children, will have a safe, decent, affordable place to call home in the future. That's a great legacy.

To get help including Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity in your estate plans, please call Kate Loe at 612-305-7128.

Housing Hero Advocates Win National Award



TCHFH staff members (left to right) Rebecca Lucero, Craig Norton, Stephanie Nelson, and Jill Kilibarda were joined by Katie Brown from the University of Minnesota Habitat Chapter for Habitat on the Hill in Washington D.C. in February. They met with members of Congress to push for better housing policies and more support for affordable housing. During the trip, TCHFH's Advocacy Program was recognized with a "Top 3" award, thanks in part to the hard work of the green-shirted Housing Heroes. Be a Housing Hero yourself! Now is the time to act while the Minnesota Legislature is still in session. Find the easy actions to take by visiting www.tchabitat.org/advocate.



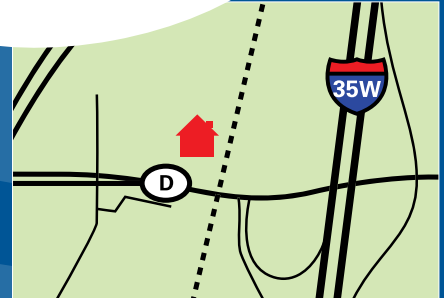
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