

the BLUEPRINT

Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County's Newsletter
Winter 2017



It Takes a Village: Kelsey's Story

Time and again, as we ask Habitat homeowners what brought them to Habitat, how they heard about the program or what inspired them to apply, the answer is often the same: a friend, family member, or coworker. Almost everyone needs someone to come alongside them and give them a little nudge of encouragement. This pattern held true with Kelsey, whose sister, Karla, volunteered on Alicia's home and learned more about the Habitat program and process. Laughing, Kelsey shared, "It really took Karla pushing me to do it... she didn't quite push me down the stairs, but close!"

Kelsey turned in her application shortly after, and the timing could not have worked out any better. Habitat was set to start the next build and Kelsey quickly planned her sweat equity schedule. She could be found swinging a hammer, installing cabinets, trim, or doors on nearly every day of her build. Even on days when she had to work, Kelsey would stop out in the morning to greet volunteers and bring a morning snack. Reflecting on the volunteers at the build, Kelsey said, "it is amazing to see how many people are here and want to help, I just can't believe how kind everyone is."

The involvement with Kelsey's build truly brings to life Habitat's mission of bringing people together to build homes, communities, and hope. Through the course of construction, 201 volunteers stepped foot on her lot on Pawnee Dr, logging over 2,000 hours. Group volunteers were sent from 3M, Saint Mary's Church, Douglas County Hospital, Friends of the Foshaug's, Life Right, Douglas Machine, Alexandria Industries, Massman Automation Designs, Edina Realty, First Lutheran Church,



Kelsey (left) with her sister Karla at her house closing.

Shalom Lutheran Church, Concordia Alumni, Kensington Bank, and Arrowwood Resort. In addition, many individual volunteers and crew leaders participated in making Kelsey's home possible.

After being in her home for a couple months, Kelsey shared that owning a home means that she and her daughter have security and independence. Since moving in, she has noticed her daughter having an extra sense of comfort. Kelsey jokingly shared, "this is really her house", and spoke of how it has always been important to her to have a safe and stable place to raise her daughter. The two are looking forward to decorating for Christmas, their favorite holiday.

To all of the volunteers and donors, Kelsey expresses her sincere appreciation, "I am beyond grateful for all you've done to help us. My doors are always open, stop by and visit to see how we're doing."

Habitat Welcomes New Staff

Meet Nicole

Nicole Olson became the Office Manager for Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County in September. She works with financial bookkeeping and administrative support.



Nicole has an AAS in Marketing and Sales Management from Alexandria Technical and Community College.

Prior to joining Habitat, Nicole worked at Elden's as an assistant office manager. We feel very fortunate to have her on our team!



Meet Tim

Tim Crabtree is a lifelong area resident and graduated from Jefferson High School in 2012.

He is currently pursuing an

Accounting degree from Alexandria Technical and Community College and joined Habitat through the work study program.

In his free time he enjoys hunting, fishing, and spending time with friends. Along with providing a friendly face for Habitat visitors, Tim has a wealth of Microsoft Excel and Access knowledge and has been a great asset as we launch our new database!

Dear friends,

No matter who we are or where we come from, we all deserve a decent place to live. In November, Habitat Douglas County sent a team of volunteers to the Big Build in Cambodia. Our team consisted of volunteers, donors, myself and two volunteers who had connections with our team members. Together we built, experienced the joy of giving and the power of working together.



It was a career highlight for me to see our tithe gifts and mission in action halfway across the globe. Thank you for your commitment both locally and globally to build strength, stability and self-reliance through shelter.

As you gather with friends and family this holiday season, take a moment to reflect on the Habitat homeowners who are celebrating their first Christmas in their new homes. Your hands, your voices and your donations make our mission possible.

With gratitude,

Lori Anderson

Lori Anderson
Executive Director



Multiply Blessings this Holiday Season

Holidays inspire us to gather, give thanks and count our blessings. Habitat homeowners have shared their appreciation for things that many of us take for granted: closets, a driveway, our own room, a back yard, a garage, a space to hold family gatherings, and the list goes on. This holiday season, you can give the gift of home and help multiply blessings for Douglas County families. Whether you have already given this year and want to do a little extra – or if you’ve been meaning to make a gift and it’s just slipped your mind – you can make a gift that has a permanent impact on families in our community.

There are many ways to make your tax-deductible gift – choose the option that is right for you.

- Gifts of cash, check, or credit card – use the enclosed envelope or stop by in person – we’d love to see you!



- Sign up for our monthly giving program – regular monthly gifts help our mission grow by providing consistent, steady funding for the building and repair of homes. Convenient, smaller monthly gifts really add up for big impact. Call Nicole at 320-762-4255 for more information or go online to hfhdouglascounty.org and click ‘give now’.

- Designate your Thrivent Choice dollars – visit thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call 1-800-847-4836 and state “Thrivent Choice”
- Planned giving opportunities – consider including Habitat in your Estate Plans or take advantage of the many available planned giving options and reap the tax benefits before year-end.

There are so many wonderful ways to give of yourself during this season of giving. Thank you for making a difference through your support of our mission!

New Construction Warehouse Takes Shape

A huge thanks to everyone who has helped make the new warehouse come to fruition! The new warehouse is located on Habitat’s campus behind the office and ReStore. The sale of the old warehouse on Melvina Lane allowed the funding for the new construction. Relocating to this space provides many advantages including time savings for our construction manager and crew leaders, a space to provide sweat equity flexibility for our homeowners and indoor training opportunities for construction volunteers. In addition, having the warehouse on campus will free up about 500 square feet in the donation receiving area for the ReStore. We are excited to get everything moved and begin utilizing this space!



The Cambodia Big Builders Are Back!



Habitat Douglas County's largest big build group is back from their trip to the Battambang Province of Cambodia. During their service abroad they helped make compressed earth blocks as well as lay them to construct the homes. When the team wasn't building, they could be found playing games with local kids, enjoying the cuisine, and visiting tourist attractions.

Michelle Olsen, the trip's team leader shared, "Many of us here have never known the hardship and insecurity experienced by the home partners that we worked alongside. It's not because we are better people, work harder, or have higher moral values. It's

due to the circumstances of our birth, something that none of us have any control of, for better or worse. We don't 'deserve' our privilege any more than Hach Saveth, our home partner, 'deserves' her hardship. We are all called to use our gifts to serve each other. Hach served us as we were serving her. She carried bricks, brought armloads of water and electrolyte drinks for us and, just when we thought we couldn't continue in the blazing heat and humidity, she gently place a cold towel around our necks. It was just one of many examples of love in action that we experienced during our week in Battambang."

A huge thank you to the nine volunteers who used their time and talents to serve others as well as to Thrivent Builds for their sponsorship of international build events.



Shop the ReStore for DIY Inspiration and Treasures

The Habitat Douglas County ReStore is home to many items full of potential and possibility. Whether it's upcycling an old dresser, recovering an old chair or refinishing a table, be sure to shop the ReStore for your DIY needs!



Work in progress!

This upcycle example comes from Angela, who was looking for a nice, sturdy play kitchen for her daughters, and decided that DIY was the way to go. She received a dresser from her father-in-law and then set off to find the pieces to make the kitchen come to life.

In her blog, she writes, "The first thing I did was make a trip to our local Habitat for Humanity ReStore to find some bits that I could use. The ReStore is my go-to place for DIY projects. I can usually find unique items at a low cost, and the bonus is that the sales go back to support the building of houses for people in our community.

Double win!

"At the Restore I scored the sink basin for \$10, a small cabinet door for \$3, a towel bar for \$1, and a couple of hinges for 50 cents each. When I told them what I was working on, they generously gave me some old burners, oven knobs and a sink faucet (which apparently they are not allowed to sell). I totally felt like I hit the jackpot!

"For the items I couldn't find at Restore, I searched the home improvement store in our town. There I purchased a large metal handle for \$8, a sink strainer for \$4, and 10 feet of white particle board shelving at a cost of \$20.

"I had the rest of supplies I needed on hand – black and white paint, miscellaneous lumber, nails and screws. My grand total project budget was \$47!

"I have been so happy with how the play kitchen turned out, and the girls love it just as much as I imagined they might. The beauty of DIY is that your creation will be unlike any other, and there is no right or wrong way to approach it. Just have fun, and make it your own!"

To read Angela's full article, including a step by step guide, visit her blog at arrowhillcottage.com/diy-play-kitchen-from-an-old-dresser.

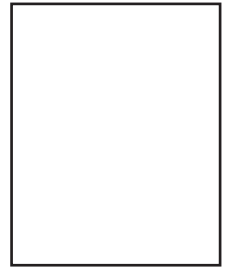
For more inspiration, check out the examples on our website of projects created from ReStore materials at hfhdouglascounty.org/content/diy, and be sure to share your own DIY creations with us by emailing photos and project descriptions to restore@hfhdouglascounty.org.



Finished and ready to cook up some fun!



1211 N Nokomis NE
Alexandria, MN 56308



OUR *Mission*

Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.

OUR *Vision*

A world where everyone has a decent place to live.

OUR *Core Values*

- **Compassion.** Acting with selflessness to demonstrate Christ's love.
- **Stewardship.** Serving others with the gifts entrusted to us.
- **Relationships.** Building community through meaningful partnerships.
- **Family.** A foundation of love and safety.
- **Optimism.** Empowering hope and possibility.



Save the Date!

Habitat After Christmas Party
Habitat for Humanity ReStore
Saturday, January 6, 2018

- 5:00 pm social hour and ReStore open for shopping
- 6:00 pm dinner – please bring a potluck dish to share