

the **BLUEPRINT**

Winter 2022 Newsletter



every parent

wants a better future
for their family

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Dear Friends,

On behalf of Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County and the families we serve, I want to express my deepest gratitude for your support of our homeownership and Aging in Place programs. This year, we celebrate Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County's 25th anniversary of bringing people together to build homes, communities and hope. Over these 25 years, we have served over 139 local families through our homeownership, repair programs, and 106 families through our international tithe.

Together, our impact continues to grow. I invite you to join me in reflecting on what we were able to accomplish in the 2021-2022 fiscal year. We reached an affiliate milestone of serving 20 families! Thanks to your support, five local families achieved their dream of homeownership. Through our Aging in Place program, we partnered with 15 homeowners to make affordable repairs to improve safety and accessibility for seniors so they can remain in their home.



Lori Anderson,
Habitat Executive Director

Here is a snapshot from our Fiscal Year 2021-22 annual report:

	<p>10,510 volunteer hours</p>	<p>\$2.2M total revenue</p>	<p>Through our tithing efforts, 9 homes were funded internationally by Habitat for Humanity's global work</p>	<p>92 cents of every dollar goes straight to our mission</p>
	<p>Through the ReStore: \$132k was raised to support Habitat's mission</p> <p>2,960 donations were received</p> <p>463 donation pick ups</p> <p>219 tons were saved from the landfill</p>		<p>\$117k in-kind support</p>	<p>The Aging in Place program celebrated 5 years & 50 projects</p>
	<p>We partnered with 21 businesses and 15 churches</p>			

We partnered with West Central Minnesota Communities Action on our first Community Land Trust (CLT). The model includes a resale formula designed to keep a home affordable for future buyers.

Thank you to the multitude of companies, congregations, individuals, and foundations who have donated funds, materials, and services to help build the communities we all care about so deeply. Our work is far from over, and I hope you will continue to support affordable homeownership for low-income families. Thank you for your continued support.

With gratitude,

Lori Anderson

For more information, our recent audit, financials, and annual report can be found on our website at fhfdouglascounty.org/about-us/publications-financial-accountability.html

Home is much like a quilt

Home is more than a few rooms with doors and windows. A true home is made up of many pieces - often mismatched - but all well-loved and expressive, much like a quilt.

In 2010, Karen (Hildebrandt) Martinson was a single mother of two children, doing her best to provide for her family. Karen shared, “Single parenting is hard. You’re often empty – financially, emotionally, and physically. Sometimes you get ill just from the stress.”

One day, an “angel” knocked on Karen’s door, encouraging her to attend a meeting to learn more about Habitat’s affordable homeownership program. That angel said, “I’ll watch your kids. You go to the meeting. You are exactly the type of person they work with.” Karen took a leap of faith and attended the meeting. By the end of the meeting, Karen completed her application and had all the financial documents ready. A week later, Habitat called and shared they wanted to visit with her more about the program. “When they arrived at my home, they told me I was approved. Within two weeks, my life took a dramatic turn. I had been praying for somewhere to safely live with my young boys.” Nine intense months later, Karen became a homeowner. “Having my Habitat home gave me an opportunity to provide stability for my family. Stability for me as an adult was infused into my children. My home was a safe place. Jesus was everywhere in that house, from the many prayers shared during the build to the thoughtful comments people wrote on the garage walls, a Habitat tradition.”



Above: Karen holding the quilt she received in 2010.

During the home dedication, Habitat homebuyers and their children receive a quilt made by local quilters. Each adult quilt is sewn with a log cabin pattern with a red center to signify the heart of the home. Recipients of the quilts feel the impacts of these gifts, figuratively and literally. “The quilt given to me was so meaningful to me. I used to wrap it around myself when I needed to feel a little extra strength. It gave me so much joy to see it hanging on the wall of my home, allowing me to remember how the community cared about me and my family.”

Twelve years later, Karen’s Habitat experience has come full circle. Last November, she began volunteering to make the quilt tops that adult homebuyers receive. “I asked God for a way to give back. God gifted me quilting. I had wanted to quilt my entire life and this became my season to use this gift.” Karen hopes the quilts will remind each family that people care about and believe in them. “God put people in place to care for you. I hope they feel as much strength and comfort as I did from the quilt given to me.”



Far left: Karen and her boys at their house dedication.



Left: Karen in her sewing room.

2022 Build Update

2022 Faith Build Dedication

In mid-November, the dedication of the Faith Build home was celebrated. Brenda and her family enjoyed their first Thanksgiving in their new home!



Save the Date and Join Us!

Both Anniversary Build homebuyers will become homeOWNERS just in time for Christmas. Join us for a joint celebration of their homes.



2022 Cardinal Build

November 8 was an exciting day as construction started at the Cardinal Build home. We are grateful for the volunteers and crew leaders who, despite the wet, cold weather, have persevered to keep building.



Since 1997,
we've served:
139
families

80
new or
improved
homes

59
Aging
in Place
projects

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.

Welcome Heather!

Habitat is pleased to introduce our newest team member, **Heather Smith-Ahrens**. She joined the team in late September as the Director of Operations. In this role, Heather is responsible for implementing the strategic goals, managing day-to-day business operations, and increasing organizational capacity to serve more families. The position manages and supports construction, Homeowner Services, volunteer coordination, and the ReStore efforts.

Heather's family enjoys being a part of the Alexandria community where her kids, Kyler & Kaliyah, love to participate in baseball and dance.

Heather previously came from the banking industry and most recently worked for the non-profit REALTOR® Association where she enjoyed partnering with Habitat for Humanity throughout the year. She is excited to be a part of the team, bringing people together, to help in continuing to move forward the mission of homeownership in our community.



**Pictured above:
Heather Smith-Ahrens,
Director of Operations**

Give Home for the Holidays

How does Habitat homeownership impact families?

Habitat for Humanity is a hand up not a hand out. Once families are in a safe, decent, affordable place to live, they can predict their housing costs. A controlled house payment allows families to budget for goods, utilities, transportation, health care and even save for the future. Homeownership even creates wealth through an asset they can pass down to their children.

You can help local families achieve the dream of homeownership and impact their lives for generations to come when you donate to Habitat. Even better, **when you become a monthly donor, your donation will be DOUBLED by matching funds**. Give Home for the Holidays this season to support local families and participate in the DECA Community Giving project.



**Pictured above:
DECA students Ben
Swedberg, Jaelyn Miller
and Kylie Lattimer**

Why we give:



Pictured above: Habitat Board of Directors from 2012-2013 when both Chad & Julie served

"Habitat for Humanity's impact is visible and growing. Personally, I've seen the stability and security a Habitat home provided for a single mother and her family."

- Chad Coauette, monthly donor

"I love the work at Habitat. They help people learn to manage money and provide a sense of security for adults and children. Habitat is an amazing organization and having been part of their work has touched my heart."

-Julie Critz, 15 year donor

**Text
DOUGLAS
to 26989
to get
started
today!**

Contact Lori at 320-762-4255 to learn more about monthly giving.

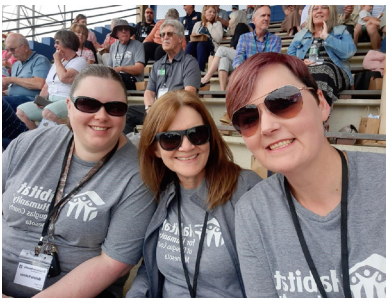


Wishing you
a **Happy**
New Year.



**Building strength,
stability and
self-reliance
through shelter.**

Save the date for the 2023 Hard Hat Events!



**May 10,
2023**

**Broadway
Ballroom**

**6:15 - 8:00 am
Breakfast
- OR -
4:30 - 6:30 pm
Happy Hour**