Habitat for Humanity® Lake-Sumter, Florida





- Matthew Desmond



Habitat of Lake-Sumter has long recognized the challenges low-to-moderate income homeowners face. While we are blessed to live in an area booming with promise and opportunity it also means that housing affordability is stretched to the max. As we explore and execute innovative strategies for housing solutions we value the partnerships of so many stakeholders. So whether you are a partner family, a volunteer, or adonor, we are grateful for your partnership and know that it takes all of us together to make a change.

As your HomeTown Habitat we pride ourselves on the fact that we keep all of your contributions local to help families right here in our community. "Thank you" are words that seem so insufficient in expressing our gratitude for your involvement in this great mission, but we want you to know that without you many families in Lake and Sumter counties would be without an affordable option for housing.





Home. It's key to unlocking the future, not just for a child and a family but for communities everywhere. Studies have shown that children of home owners have better health, graduation rates, and fewer anti-social behaviors. Home ownership also leads to increased participation in community and civic activities. In other words, home ownership is where the seeds of good citizenship are planted, seeds that can grow into a new generation of leaders in our communities.

But what's the key to home ownership? Access and opportunity... which are often in short supply for low income families.

That's where we come in. Habitat of Lake-Sumter provides the opportunity for low income families to access home ownership by working with them through an often confusing and complicated home-buying process. As they commit to doing the hard work to get their mortgage approved, we're right there with them. Whether you are stirred by housing issues, children's health, educational opportunities, or civic engagement, they all have one thing in common: everyone needs a place to call home.

"Home is Key" has been our motto for several years, and that's not going to change any time soon. What we will change, however, is the key to the front door of someone's potential: a door they own instead of rent.

Lee Owen
Board Chair





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29 FAMILIES SERVED



IMPROVING SAFETY INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY ENHANCING BEAUTY MAINTAINING AFFORDABILITY

SERVING LOCAL LOW-INCOME | 2015 **FAMILIES SINCE**





"The new ramp has made our lives so much easier and we are Forever grateful." - Hannison Family





Thomas Davis lives independently as an adult with special needs. He grew up in Coleman, FL in a home that had been in the family for over 60 years. This childhood home was a safe space that he cherished dearly – but with a bad roof, leaking windows, and floors that were falling apart, he needed some help bringing it back to life. Considering his options, he filled out an application to take advantage of Habitat's repair program. After the Habitat team met with Thomas and visited his home, work began on preparing and approving his application. Thanks to Team Depot, who both sponsored and volunteered on the project, Habitat had all the resources needed to complete the job.

The project consisted of interior and exterior work and took about 2 months to complete, the final product ripe with character. Thomas loved to garden and had asked the team to put up a trellis rail in the front drive so he could start some new plants upon his return home; the volunteers were happy to oblige. To close out the partnership, there was a small, intimate dedication to celebrate Thomas' return home and to thank all those who put their labor and love into the project.

"The restonation of this home means more to us than you will even know. Built by the hands of our father, we grew up with love, family, and Faith. It is more than a house, it is our parent's legacy."

- Karen D. Bennett, Donothy Harris & Thomas Davis

HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM



BUILT HOMES IN: EUSTIS, LADY LAKE & LEESBURG



PROMOTING STRENGTH
PROMOTING STABILITY
PROMOTING SELF-RELIANCE
THROUGH SHELTER

SERVING LOCAL LOW-INCOME FAMILIES SINCE

1989





Living in a confined apartment in Wildwood, Amanda Strickler always desired a better home for her boys. Sometimes a single mother faces obstacles, but despite these challenges the dream for a stable place for her family never wavered.

While working her job as a bank teller for Citizens First Bank in Spanish Springs, Kent Adcock, the President and CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Lake-Sumter, walked in. The two engaged in a conversation in which Amanda mentioned her desire for a new home, and Kent encouraged her to consider the help of Habitat.

The Stricklers' new home began to take shape back on July 14, when a guest list of about 50, including Amanda's parents, Malcolm and Barbara Strickler, gathered to watch as Habitat volunteers laid the foundation of the future home.

As the sun rose over the trees and illuminated the home site, Amanda saw something beyond a simple concrete slab. "It's just amazing," she said over and over again as her new home was starting to take shape.

Her co-workers and supervisors, decked out in T-shirts, hard hats and safety goggles, stood by her side, ready to get their hands dirty for a colleague and friend. "I feel so blessed to have a community that would do this," Amanda said. "Nothing is stronger than the heart of a volunteer."

As the crowd began work on the home, Amanda fought the tears that filled her eyes as she watched her new life begin.

Just five days after the foundation was in place, the skeletal structure of the walls already was up and, by early August, the roof was in place.

"I just can't wait to spend the night with my boys and set up the couch and sit down," Amanda said at the time. "I just can't wait to see the boys play in the front yard."

After months of sweat equity the house was nearing a finish and they had finally set the date for the official home dedication ceremony — Dec. 20, a day that would change the Strickler family's lives forever.

Amanda's parents were among the many volunteers that worked on her home. They were amazed and proud of how far Amanda has come on her journey. Having such a strong support system in the community makes the experience extra rich for them.

"She's struggled the last couple of years as a single mom ... and this is part of her drive to make a better life for herself and her boys," Barbara said.

Come mid-December Amanda was mentally beginning to place furniture in the house as she faced Kent Adcock during the dedication ceremony. During the presentation, he spoke about the new life that the home would offer the Strickler family. "Habitat has built you a house," he said to Amanda, "but you and your boys are going to make it a home."

Near the end of the ceremony, Amanda was called to the front of the crowd and handed the keys to her new home. People gathered around the family, offering hugs and congratulations. Amanda's smile said what her words could not: "Thank you."

VETERANS VILLAGE



BROKE GROUND ON: NOVEMBER 5, 2016



DEDICATED FIRST
HOME TO THE
VONHOLD FAMILY







Reed and Michele Vonhold were the first homeowners to move into the Veterans Village this past May. As a Coast Guard veteran, Reed couldn't be happier to be part of a community of fellow veterans.

"This is truly a dream come true," he said.

The Vonholds, married for 43 years, had been living in a one-room apartment since having to sell their prior home in 2003. Although they weren't actively looking, the opportunity to partner with Habitat fell right into their laps. During a prayer group at their church, which is coincidentally off the same road as the Veterans Village in Umatilla, Florida, they asked their peers for support.

"We'd like you to start praying for us; we're looking for a house," Michele told the group.

Michele said Lee, a member of both the prayer group and the board of directors for Habitat, asked if either of them were veterans, and excitedly introduced the idea of the Veterans Village.

"We had no idea the Lord was preparing us for this place," she said.

Fast-forward several months later and the Vonholds are happily moved in to their new home, after celebrating their dedication with friends and volunteers. They're excited to have a new place for family gatherings, a place to share meals and memories.

"The journey wasn't easy, but we are so glad we are here," said Reed.





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