

HABITA UPDATE

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY, ORANGE COUNTY, NC

SPRING 2005

Safe Homes and Bright Futures for Four Homeowner Graduates

“God Almighty has brought me
The love of family has supported me
The joy of friendship has uplifted me
And with the guidance given by the Holy Spirit,
I have arrived.”

— *Inscription from graduation invitation*

The inscription on Darlene Laws’ graduation invitation says it all. The journey to graduate from North Carolina Central University with a BA in Sociology has been long and yet rewarding. Four years ago, Darlene went back to school part-time. She began taking one class a semester and worked up to taking three per semester. She says her full-time

job at the UNC Hospitals Pharmacy was a blessing in disguise. “I could go to school during the day and work after school. I also had seven days on and seven days off, so I used the seven days off to get ahead on school. I called it my sacrifice time.” But even working full-time, Darlene found the energy and enthusiasm to be actively involved in campus



life. She served as treasurer of the campus Sociology club.

Darlene Laws is a Habitat homeowner and as such has journeyed on the road of faith and hard work before. “The process is similar in that I set a goal that I would become a homeowner and then I set a goal that I would get my degree.” When asked if it would have been possible for her to finish school in the place she lived before owning her home, she said: “It would have been a lot harder where I used to live. The thing about where I live now that really

brought me through this is the quiet of the neighborhood. The calmness allowed me to shut out distractions.”

According to an article in the June/July 2002 issue of *Habitat World*, “doctors, psychologists and educators have discovered that we cannot learn when we don’t feel emotionally safe. Substandard housing threatens this sense of security and becomes a liability in the academic life of a student.”

For Renee Cooper, owning a Habitat home provided a secure and peaceful place for her and her daughter, Justice, to study.

Five years ago, Renee and Justice lived in an “unsafe, drug-infested, and physically unkempt” apartment complex. Renee feared walking to her door at night as unfamiliar men loitered in the complex on the nights she came home from her second-shift job. Justice was not allowed to play outside. In the winter of 2000, Renee found out about Habitat for Humanity and was approved for the process of homeownership. Since becoming a Habitat homeowner, Renee has completed her Doctor of Pharmacy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Renee says of her home in Chestnut Oaks, “My home is affordable, safe and very peaceful. Home-ownership has allowed me the freedom to study in peace and not have to be distracted by noisy neighbors or loud parties.”



Habitat for Humanity of Orange County is committed to eliminating poverty housing. By providing safe homes for parents to raise children and pur-

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John Tyrrell receives 2005 Alice Miller Award at Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

His wife Kathy managed to keep it a secret so he was certainly surprised when his name was announced – and later quite choked up. On April 7, John Tyrrell was awarded HHOC's highest volunteer honor, The Alice Call Miller Award, named after one of HHOC's most beloved volunteers and founding mother.

Immediate past Board President John Tyrrell was the recipient of the Alice Miller Award, given each year to Habitat's most outstanding volunteer. Susan Levy, Executive Director, in remarks noted, "As much as I greatly appreciate the skills and expertise that John has brought to this organization and shared so willingly, what I value most about John is that he is a deeply humanistic individual who cares passionately about the well-being of other people. John has brought me to tears on more than one occasion, when he himself has been moved by the tangible and intangible ways that Habitat changes lives, not just for our homebuyers, but also for our volunteers.

John has been instrumental in our growth from the time that he became involved with Habitat thirteen or so years ago. He served first on the Long Range Planning Committee, and was involved in creating our first strategic plan. Then he served as a Board member for a total of almost a decade, including serving as President twice."

"I'm the one who got the most out of this," John said in his heartfelt acceptance of the award, "it's been a lot of fun. You are my family. This small Orange County affiliate does a heck of a lot. I am amazed at the outpouring of faith and effort as we come together to help others and by how much good and light there is in each one of us. I think the world could benefit from our example and would be a pretty swell place."



John Tyrrell reacts to the announcement that he is the recipient of the Alice Miller Award, given annually to our most outstanding volunteer.



Hand-Me-Ups store manager Peggy Sanford and Inge Newton, HMU Board member



Linda Heffernan was honored for her work with the Partnership Committee.



Construction volunteers Nancy Gadient (left) and Richard Larriva



Families enjoyed the food, catered by Top of the Hill restaurant.



Habitat for Humanity Unveils New Look

Earlier this month, Habitat for Humanity International launched this new logo to share with its 2300 worldwide affiliates, including Habitat for Humanity, Orange County. This new logo was designed in the spirit of our previous logo with input from partners all over the world. It incorporates the ideals of partnership, shelter, and action and reflects the principles that shape the Habitat movement.



HHOC will slowly implement this new look and logo into our materials. And while our look may be changing, our mission is steadfast: to build simple, decent, affordable homes in partnership with families who need them.

The Carolina Club Seeks New Members to Help Habitat

Between May 3 and July 31st, new members who join The Carolina Club can help build Habitat homes right here in Chapel Hill. New members can satisfy their \$300 initiation fee with a \$150 payment to The Carolina Club and a donation of at least \$150 to Habitat for Humanity of Orange County.



"This is really exciting," says Carolina Club Community Relations and Membership Director Vandora Davis. "Before we even launched the membership drive, I had two checks in my hand for Habitat from new members who heard about what the Club is doing." She says the Habitat partnership appeals to Carolina Club members because they are committed to serving as good stewards in their community.

Make the most of this unique opportunity to renew your ties to UNC and Chapel Hill (or to build new ones!) and to help Habitat build homes for families in need! Please contact Vandora today at (919) 962-3803 or vandora.davis@ourclub.com for more information. Thank you Carolina Club!

Looking for Volunteer with Financial Experience

One of our homeowner associations could use some help in setting up a system for assessing and collecting dues. Just a few hours of your help over a few months would get them up and running. Call Marckita at 932-7077 ext. 13 if you're interested.

No Will, No Way

Every day, countless numbers of individuals die *without a valid will*. Many people will work more than forty years to accumulate assets and will spend ten years conserving what has been accumulated, but will not take two hours to carefully plan for their distribution.

Carefully planned distribution benefits those we leave behind. Having no plan leaves survivors with untold heartache. Catherine Marshall wrote about her experience some years ago in her book entitled *To Live Again*. She told of her enormous hardship when her husband Peter Marshall, Chaplain of the U.S. Senate, died without a will. It did not have to be that way.

Some simple preparation for those we love and leave behind can make the difference between heartache and peace. A will or a trust, along with documents directing last wishes with regard to health care, can enable surviving loved ones to "live again" with a minimum of heartache. The best investment is the time given to making a plan to provide for those we love.

Every year thousands of individuals exercise the privilege to determine the final distribution of their estates. In doing so, many direct that a significant portion of their assets be used for the benefit and support of charitable organizations. Such bequests enable them to make an even more significant gift than they may have been able to afford while they were living.

What language might you use? You should consult your personal advisor, but the following is one possibility:

I give, devise, and bequeath to Habitat for Humanity of Orange County NC, Inc., Chapel Hill, North Carolina, (the sum of \$ _____) or (_____% of my estate) (the following property) or (the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate). The property comprising this gift may be used to further the charitable purposes of Habitat for Humanity of Orange County NC, Inc., at its discretion.

If you would like to improve the availability of affordable homes in our community through your will, or if you have already made provision for Habitat for Humanity of Orange County in your estate plan, please contact staff member Don Click, at 932-7077, ext. 19, or email at d.click@verizon.net. Habitat will be glad to provide you with an *Estate Note* to acknowledge that important part of your will.



Habitat Advisory Board participates in work day at Rusch Hollow home

The Habitat Advisory Board elected to combine their spring meeting this year with some on-site finishing work in the new Rusch Hollow neighborhood. Working alongside future homeowner Emilio Santoyo, on Saturday, April 9, they were given instruction, paint brushes and buckets before going to work on the inside trim, windows and doors of the Santoyo family's future home. AmeriCorps member Kelly Rock supervised their work.

Upon finishing and after cleaning their brushes and buckets, they enjoyed meeting and talking with another future Rusch Hollow homeowner, Charles Rogers. Advisory Board member Aaron Nelson, Executive Director of the Chapel Hill/Carrboro Chamber of Commerce, especially appreciated getting to know Charles because the Chamber partnership will be helping him build his home.

The meeting/work day concluded with a presentation by Tyler Momsen-Hudson, Habitat Construction Manager. Tyler described the many higher quality aspects of the homes we construct in Orange County, features that are not readily apparent

to passersby. Learning about and seeing features such as built-in sprinkler systems, Energy Star enhancements, and refrigerators and stoves contributed by Whirlpool helps Advisory Board members to be knowledgeable Habitat ambassadors in our community.

The Advisory Board enjoyed the fellowship that accompanied their painting. Many expressed a desire to make a work day meeting a regular event. By contributing their own "sweat equity," they made a personal investment in fundamentally improving the lives of a local family.

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Aaron Nelson and Charles Rogers

Our prestigious group of painters:



Howard Lee



Deb Markley



Brooks Graebner



Stan Fleming



Sue Harvin



Lee Rafalow



Josh Gurlitz



UNC Chancellor Moeser Volunteers at Habitat Worksite

On April 29 UNC Chancellor James Moeser, his wife Susan Moeser, Chapel Hill Mayor Kevin Foy, and County Commissioner Chair Moses Carey volunteered at Rusch Hollow, helping to raise the walls on the future home of Charles and Bonnie Rogers.

Chancellor Moeser spoke briefly before he and other local dignitaries went to work:

“Building homes through Habitat for Humanity is one of the many ways in which the **University and UNC Hospitals is engaged in our local community.** For the past 20 years, we have worked with Habitat for Humanity to provide decent housing to working families in Orange County. In fact, **25 of the 125 Habitat homes built in Orange County have been built through partnerships between the University or UNC Hospitals and the larger community.**



“But I could not come here without **recognizing the real heroes of Habitat: the families who make these houses their homes.** Many of these families are familiar faces in the UNC community – it is a sobering statistic that **one-third of Habitat homeowners are also**

UNC or UNC Hospital employees. These families have literally built the roof over their heads and I am honored to be here today to help in a small way with that construction work.

“I would like to see the University play an even larger role in this outstanding organization and in providing affordable housing in general. We are exploring the best way for the University’s resources to do that.”



Above: Susan Moeser, Mayor Kevin Foy, and Chancellor Moeser secure a wall.

Left: Chancellor Moeser speaks to the assembled crowd.

Below: UNC volunteer Elizabeth Pratt chats with Blanche Clark and Susan Moeser.



Thanks to . . .

- 👉 **Simplicity Organizing** for their “getting organized” workshop, *How to Have a Successful Move*, to future Habitat homeowners.
- 👉 **Alice Horton** for numerous trips to deliver loads of items for resale to the Habitat Hand Me Ups store, including an enormous number of flower pots and gardening items, just in time for spring planting.
- 👉 **Jonathan Grubbs at Terra Quest** for preparing our environmental site assessments for new properties.

- 👉 **Chapel Hill Garden Club** for their donation of gardening tools for new homeowners.
- 👉 Homeowner **Ritza Saenz** for giving back to Habitat by serving as our Spanish translator.
- 👉 **Alex Castro** for translating at all of our closings for Spanish speaking families.
- 👉 **Jeff Caiola.** We will truly miss you and honor your six years of dedicated service on the Family Selection Committee.



UNC Blitz Build

From February 25-27, the University of North Carolina community had the opportunity to change the life of Linda Parson's family in just a few days. UNC Habitat for Humanity undertook the task of hosting a Blitz Build, in which students, faculty, and community members joined together to get an entire house under roof in three days.

The Build was organized by UNC Habitat for Humanity in partnership with Kenan-Flagler Business School, the UNC Department of City and Regional Planning, Chapel of the Cross Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Campus Ministry, and St. Paul AME Church.



UNC Students Honored for Habitat Efforts

Two UNC students were recently honored for their community volunteer efforts with Habitat. Rebecca Lynn Sowder was honored by

the The Carolina Center for Public Service with The Robert E. Bryan Public Service Award for spearheading the UNC Habitat Blitz Build. Becca, who is an Environmental Science major, served as co-chair of UNC Habitat for Humanity, where she built a coalition of diverse campus groups to help HHOC.

Thanks largely to her efforts, the UNC community joined together to build a Habitat house in three days for UNC employee Linda Parson and her two children.



In recognition of her work with UNC Habitat for Humanity, Stephanie Bright received a 2005 Edward Kidder Graham Award. Stephanie served as the volunteer coordinator for UNC Habitat, organizing and scheduling individuals and groups to build two Habitat homes this school year.





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sue higher education, the economic futures of their children can be secured.

Michele Brown is one of those parents looking toward the future. She graduated with High Honors from North Carolina Central University the day before Mother's Day with a B.S. in Criminal Justice and a minor in Sociology. Michele says "a benefit of having a stable environment is that my children can concentrate on their school work without worrying about being uprooted and moving. Having stability has allowed me to be able to attend school to further enhance our quality of living. Habitat was a perfect start to that enhancement."



Research by the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation in Cincinnati, Ohio has shown that children of homeowners are "116 percent more likely to graduate from college and 59 percent more likely to own a home within 10 years of moving from their parents' household than children of renters."

For Aaron Shah, a father of six, being a good example to children is the primary reason he is working toward homeownership. Aaron currently



works with the Chapel Hill/Carrboro City schools as a substitute teacher and is raising his six children with his wife Trina in public housing in Chapel Hill. Upon graduating this May with a BS in Library Science from UNC, Aaron is beginning his sweat equity hours for his Habitat home. "I want to exemplify good family values and to be a role model, not just for my children, but for all

children in the Chapel Hill/Carrboro community. I want them to know that you can come from public housing and acquire a higher education and become a homeowner and live a productive and successful life."

All of these graduates have one thing in common; their hard work does not stop with the mortarboards and the diploma. Darlene will begin work on

her Master's Degree so that she can become a counselor. Michele has been offered a graduate assistantship from the Chair of the Criminal Justice Department, which will allow her to work 40 hours a week in the Juvenile Justice Department and waive her tuition to attend graduate school. Renee will begin her new job at a retail pharmacy in Durham. Aaron plans to pursue graduate work and become a coach at the school where he teaches. Everyone who supports Habitat for Humanity of Orange County helps provide a safe, quiet home where goals can be achieved and an example set for children as they embark on their own dreams.

Congratulations to all of our homeowners (and their children) who have graduated this year!

Apostle's Build

Orange County Habitat for Humanity is organizing its first Apostle's Build home. An Apostle's Build is where 12 (or more) churches come together to raise the money and provide the labor and the prayer support to build a Habitat for Humanity home.

Many churches we talk with about the Habitat ministry do not see themselves as large enough or financially able to build a Habitat house. With 11 or more other Apostle partners, participating in the Habitat ministry is now an exciting possibility. Share the prayer, share the funding, share the volunteer labor, and share the joy of discipleship!

An anonymous donor family and friend of Orange County Habitat for Humanity has provided seed money (\$500 for each Apostle church) for the project. This donor family, members of a local congregation, is excited about the opportunity we have to bring 12 different congregations together to accomplish God's desire that we serve those of his children who are in need.

An "Apostle Church" provides prayer in support of the project, a share of the cost of building materials (\$2,000), volunteers to build the home (one or two Saturday work-days), lunches to feed work crews, and a liaison to work with Habitat and the partner family.

Habitat for Humanity provides a partner family, a building lot and infrastructure. We manage the permit process, subcontractors, etc., We provide construction supervision, construction training, and all tools. We also advise in fundraising and organizing so the project is satisfying, worthwhile, and fun for all involved.

For more information, please contact Sam Hudson at 932-7077 x15 or shudson@orangehabitat.org



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