

A newsletter of
Habitat for Humanity of
Montgomery County, PA

Your Impact:

Oct. 1, 2015 - Mar. 31, 2016

Total Number of Volunteers	776
Number of Critical Home Repairs Completed	9
Number of Families Directly Impacted	217
Pounds Divert- ed From Landfills through ReStore	282,000

Upcoming Events:

- Almost Home Financial Literacy Spring Session— March 29 - May 19, 2016
- Groundbreaking in Bridgeport— May 14, 2016, 10 AM
- 130 Wayne Ave. Home Dedication— May 21, 2016, 10 AM
- 52 W. Basin St. Home Dedication— June 25, 2016

Welcome to our Spring Edition!

Winter/Spring 2016 Volume 4, Issue 1

Building in Bridgeport:

Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery County is excited to announce our latest project, the new construction of four townhomes in Bridgeport, PA! By summer of 2017, these beautiful homes will provide homeownership opportunities to four hard-working, low-income families. We currently have partner families selected for two of the homes, who are excited to be a part of building their new homes from the ground up through their 200 hours of “sweat equity.” We are still in the process of identifying two additional families for the remaining units, but are hopeful that our recent work in the veteran community will allow for one of these houses to become home to a veteran and his/her family.*

Thanks to incredible generosity, Habitat Montco is once again partnering with BartonPartners Architects and Planners, which has donated its services to Habitat Montco. Barton has done several projects with Habitat, including the design of seven units built in Upper Dublin. Together, BartonPartners and Habitat have designed homes that are safe, simple, basic, decent, affordable,

BARTON PARTNERS
urban design + architecture + interiors



and beautiful. The Habitat homes in Bridgeport will be 3-story townhomes with garages and 3 bedrooms, 1.5 baths, and an open-concept first floor. The homes will be energy-star 3 certified homes, which will benefit the families for years to come by using 25% less energy than a new home built to code. In addition to its stunning design, BartonPartners has reached out to its suppliers, and through those relationships, has acquired commitments for cabinets, floors, counters, roofing, sheathing, and landscaping for this project. These materials are critical for adding functionality and beauty to the homes.

In addition to working with BartonPartners, many other partnerships will go into building these homes. Habitat has received a generous grant provided by the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners and the Department of Housing and Community Development’s HOME Program. This program is administered by the County, but funding is provided through HUD at a federal level. Habitat Montco has also received a generous gift from an anonymous donor, and these funds have been allotted to the Bridgeport townhomes.

Support Bridgeport: It Will Take 52 Doors and 32 Windows to Complete This Project!

Barton and its suppliers, the County, and other donors have been incredibly generous, but building these homes can only be accomplished with community support. **To make this project a reality, Habitat Montco will need support from organizations, corporations, faith communities, individuals, schools, and more.** There is still a long way to go to make this project a success for our families. If you are able to contribute to this project, please contact Liz Bowers, Director of Development, at ebowers@habitatmontco.org or 610-278-7710 ext. 129.

Finally, Habitat Montco is very grateful to be welcomed by the Borough of Bridgeport to continue the mission of serving the families of Montgomery County. We have previously completed “A Brush With Kindness” projects and a critical home repair in Bridgeport, and we are excited to begin working in the borough for our homeownership program as well.

As we begin this exciting new community, Habitat Montco invites you to join us for the groundbreaking on Saturday, May 14, at 10 AM at the corner of Ford and Green Streets, Bridgeport. If you are unable to make it, but would like to be involved, follow us on Facebook, check in with Cara at cara@habitatmontco.org for build day opportunities and stop by the site to see our progress! We look forward to building these homes and working with the community and our new Habitat families on their journey to homeownership!

** If you are or know a veteran interested in owning an affordable new home, please contact Michelle Spada, Director of Family Services, at mspada@habitatmontco.org or 610-278-7710 ext. 109.*

Contact Marianne at: mlynch@habitatmontco.org to share your feedback!



Almost Home Financial Literacy Program: Helping Families Conquer Thousands of Dollars of Debt

After a successful launch of the *Almost Home* program in October 2015, Habitat Montco is currently holding its second session. The program is a financial literacy and life skills course built on curriculum from Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University. In addition to financial subjects, the course covers goal-setting and career development. The course has been expanded from a 6-week program to an 8-week program, allowing more time to focus on the topics covered.

Fifteen families are participating in this session of *Almost Home*, which is being held March 29 - May 19. We are so grateful to all of our partners who make this program possible, including the Project Management Institute, UCC Christ Church Norristown, the Norristown OIC, and our financial coaches, instructors, and childcare providers.

Habitat Montco plans to hold this course three times per year, in the spring, summer, and fall. If you are interested in learning more about the curriculum, becoming a financial coach, or providing meals or childcare for the families as they commit to these eight weeks of classes, please contact Michelle Spada, our Director of Family Services, at mspada@habitatmontco.org.

Three months after our first Almost Home session, graduates had the following outcomes:

- o 2 participants secured new employment
- o 2 participants paid off auto loans
- o 1 participant qualified for a Critical Home Repair
- o 1 participant moved into a Habitat home
- o 1 family was approved for a Habitat home
- o 1 participant re-consolidated over \$60,000 in student loan debt
- o 2 families avoided foreclosure
- o Participants together paid off over \$6000 of debt



Women Build Week: Volunteers Are Proud to “Build Like A Girl”

When the blizzard of 2016 snowed in our Habitat houses at 130 Wayne Avenue and 52 W. Basin Street in Norristown, we had to make a quick location change. This year’s Women Build Week fundraiser was hosted January 27-30 at the Habitat offices and ReStore in West Norriton. The women who participated raised over \$7,000 for Habitat Montco. We are so thankful for our volunteers, Habitat homeowners, and staff who joined us here for the event, despite its slight change from the event’s tradition of working on a Habitat house.

Volunteers for Women Build came from varying backgrounds and levels of construction experience. The mornings started off on an empowering note, with guest speakers from the community, including PA Secretary of Transportation Leslie Richards. Women Build veterans led and helped new volunteers as they learned to use hammers, screw guns, chop saws, chalk lines, and more. Women who had never built before became comfortable with power tools and learned about the construction process! A few women even signed up for multiple build days. By the end of the week, the women’s hard work resulted in the creation of an expansion for the construction office, three dollies to move items in the ReStore, a rug rack to display ReStore’s carpet and rug inventory, two new construction tables, and a cage and shelving unit to secure items for the Family Services department! Each group of women showed just what can be accomplished when you “Build Like A Girl”.

This fundraiser was a success because of donors and volunteers like you! Thank you for supporting the women building during this event. Habitat Montco would also like to thank Starbucks, Chick-fil-A, and Charlie’s Pizza for donating food to our volunteers for the week.

Habitat Montco is excited to welcome back our Women Build volunteers to join us on future build days in Norristown, Pottstown, or soon on new construction in Bridgeport.



Habitat Montco will be hosting another Women Build Week event in October 2016 for our new construction in Bridgeport! If you’re interested in “Building Like A Girl” with us, email Cara, our Volunteer and Community Relations Manager, at cara@habitatmontco.org.





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Ways to Get Involved:

There is something that each one of us can do to end poverty housing in our community:

- **Volunteer!** There are opportunities on our building sites, in our ReStore, in Family Services, with Kids Club, and as an intern. For more information, contact Cara at cara@habitatmontco.org
- **Invest!** Give the gift of Habitat and transform lives. For more information on ways to give, including gifts of services or materials, contact Liz Bowers at ebowers@habitatmontco.org
- **Advocate!** Tell our county representatives, including your township or borough commissioners, that preserving homeownership is important to our quality of life. For more information about contacting community leaders, contact Marianne Lynch at mlynch@habitatmontco.org
- **Recycle!** Moving, remodeling, or cleaning? Donate your items to the Restore! If you have items that are in good shape and usable, contact our Donations Coordinator at restore@habitatmontco.org.

Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery County, PA is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International

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