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HABITAT FOR HUMANITY CENTRAL ARIZONA ASKS FOR CASH DONATIONS TO ALLOW DESERVING FAMILIES ACCESS TO THEIR OWN HOMES

PHOENIX (Nov. 10, 2016) Nearly 1 in 3 Arizona families who qualify for housing still need help. Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona (Habitat) helps Arizona families become financially stable and self-reliant through the process of aided home construction and ownership. Habitat is looking to Arizonans to donate cash to help qualified families fulfill their dreams of owning their own home. Even though the organization has an amazing volunteer base, cash donations are needed now more than ever. Arizonans don't need a hammer to help.

"Due to a lack of funding, not all who qualify for Habitat's help are able to receive it," said Jason Barlow, president and CEO of Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona. "The need for cash donations is greater now than ever and we need Arizonans to make a generous donation that will help the organization pay for building supplies and land. The much-needed funds will allow Habitat to continue to improve communities and renew strength and hope for families throughout Central Arizona."

Path to Habitat Home Ownership Infographic:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/vu9rh3mmdwtsxz4/HH%20Steps%20to%20Homeownership%20Infographic.pdf?dl=0>

Habitat must overcome many hurdles including a decline in land inventory, the rising cost of real estate, and the absence of government funding to purchase property. These challenges make it harder for the organization to put qualified recipients into their homes. In fact, Habitat is currently unable to serve almost 1 in 3 three Arizona families that qualify for help, which is why it is so important to raise the dollars that are needed. These generous funds will allow 30 families during the next three years the opportunity to become self-reliant as they embark on the journey to home ownership.

Homeownership also empowers them and gives them the tools to be successful, budget effectively, and create more positive outcomes within their family:

- Children who grow up in a Habitat home are more than twice as likely to attend college.
- Nationally, 74% of Habitat for Humanity families report better overall health.
- The annual foreclosure rate on Habitat for Humanity homes is less than 2%.

"Through my journey with Habitat, I hope I will make people realize that they are not their circumstance," said Syri Gerstner, Habitat for Humanity homeowner. "The last thing I wanted to do was fail my kids. Now I own my home; I work for a homeless shelter and serve on the Board

of Directors for another. My girls have lived through the struggle of being homeless, and because of this experience, I know they will change the cycle. Because of Habitat for Humanity, we now have more opportunities to live fulfilling lives.”

Habitat provides qualified families a successful path to home ownership. Contrary to popular belief, Habitat for Humanity homes are not given away. Homeowners, like Gerstner, must qualify for a mortgage through Habitat for Humanity, put in 400 hours of sweat equity, attend home ownership classes and prove that they are committed to continuing down a positive path of self-reliance. The result? A new home with an affordable mortgage payment, that fits what each homeowner can afford.

“I was certain I would not qualify because of my credit history, nor did I think I would ever be able to afford a new home,” added Gerstner. “But someone from Habitat encouraged me to apply, and gave me the hope I needed to move forward with the process. I could not be more grateful to Habitat, or more proud to provide for my family, and teach my kids that ‘if there is a will, there is a way.’”

Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona urges Arizonans to donate today by visiting www.dollarsmatter.org.

About Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona

Serving Central Arizona since 1985, Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona (HFHCAZ) brings people together to build homes, communities, and hope. As an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, we are an independent, locally run, nonprofit 501 (C)(3) organization. We’re one of the most active Habitat affiliates, consistently listed in the top ten among nearly 1,500 Habitat for Humanity affiliates in the U.S., and work in partnership with low-income families, volunteers, and sponsors to build, renovate, and repair homes. To date, we have built or renovated more than 1,100 homes for families throughout Maricopa County and parts of Pima County. Our qualified families pay for their homes through sweat-equity and no-profit loans. To donate, visit www.dollarsmatter.org.

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