

Habitat families, like Eva's, need the support of donors like you to make their dreams of affordable homeownership come true!



Dear Friends,

Thank you for your generous support of Habitat for Humanity families, who are – as you're reading this – working hard building homes and completing first-time home ownership education.

I'm asking you to once again, to **open your heart with a donation** to help Habitat for Humanity provide hope and opportunity to families as this year comes to a close.

Habitat for Humanity's work creates opportunities that are multi-generational, but seldom do we have a chance to demonstrate more tangibly than through two of our newest homebuyer applicants – the **parents and their adult child, purchasing homes that are side by side** on Sylvester Street in Norwich.

While shopping in our ReStore in Waterford, Eva spoke with Kim, our ReStore director, and told her she wanted to find her mom, Ivelisse, and stepdad, Carlos, a home that they could afford. Kim suggested that they apply for a Habitat house, and told Eva she should think about applying for herself and her daughter, Aolanie.

Eva and her parents were living in adjacent buildings in New London, owned by the same landlord and enjoyed living close to each other, but the buildings were old and needed work and the landlord couldn't keep up with the maintenance. Eva had a chronic mold issue in her apartment, and also had a murder occur outside her apartment building. She and Aolanie moved into a friend's in-law suite, and she and her parents decided to apply to Habitat.



Eva, Carlos, and Ivelisse applied for the homeownership program and were both accepted to own a duplex we're building on Sylvester Street in Norwich. Eva and her daughter will live on one side, and her parents will live on the other.

"When we got the great news, we were excited and teary-eyed," says Carlos.

(read on, please)

“Having a house is a dream come true – we will have more space and security,” says, Ivelisse. “It’s time we have a quiet place to live in peace, and off-street parking is such a help.”

“I’m excited to decorate my bedroom and to put up my LED lights and post it to Snap-Chat!” chimed in Aolanie, 10. Aolanie recently won an award at her school in Waterford for planning a book drive during her recess time so that her peers who are less fortunate have access to free books. “I’m excited to be able to play outside in my yard with friends again, and maybe get a dog!”

“Maybe,” emphasizes Eva, chuckling. “A lot of people have said to me, ‘are you really sure you want to live next to your mom?’ and I always tell them ‘yes.’! I know it’s unusual, but our family is small and we have a nice dynamic. My mom will come over to my house and cook and clean for me while I’m working. We get to eat meals together after school and work.”

“When I was in school on Zoom, grandma would surprise me and come over to make me breakfast,” adds Aolanie. “I’m going to love being next door to them again!”

“Working on my house has been quite a good experience. I’ve learned a lot – the volunteers and staff working on the homes have a wealth of knowledge so I try to absorb it all. Once you grasp the concepts and overcome any fear, there’s a lot you can do.”

“We really, really appreciate it. There [are] no words to explain it,” says Carlos.

Aolanie hopes that you will help this year by donating and volunteering:

“You might think ‘it’s only an hour I can volunteer’, or ‘I can only give \$20’, but you’re planting a seed. Even though you might not see it blossom, someone else will get to stop and smell the rose.”

We know there are so many more families, like Eva’s, all across eastern Connecticut, who need a hand-up from donors like you.

Your gift enables Habitat families to afford their homes, and allows them to build strength, stability, and self-reliance.

Please, join me now in giving the gift of home.

Yours in partnership and with sincere gratitude,



Terri O'Rourke
CEO & Executive Director



PS. Donating a small amount monthly is an easy way to increase your impact all year long!