



BUILDING

Coming Home to Charlton Avenue

The Rose Hill neighborhood has always been home for Tina Harris. As a child growing up on Forest Street, she often swam at the Washington Park pool and visited her grandparents on Charlton Avenue. Tina dreamed of buying a home and continuing these traditions with her own family. “Owning a home is something I’ve always wanted,” asserts Tina. “I knew I would find one when the time was right.”

In 2006, in the midst of celebrating the impending birth of her son William, Tina was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Although she had to retire early due to her condition, she didn’t give up on her dream of homeownership. In 2013, she applied to Habitat’s program and was approved the following year.

Tina spent many hours contributing sweat equity in unique ways. She worked as a receptionist at Habitat’s office, gave presentations to volunteers, and met with other aspiring homebuyers.

“I’ve really been able to understand not just the home buying process, but the home building process, and how Charlottesville Habitat is building this community,” reflects Tina. “It’s been a joyous experience.”

Due to her mobility needs, Tina had to wait until a single-level home became available. To her delight, that home was planned for Charlton Avenue. “I knew God would bring it forth,” says Tina. “He put me right back in the community where I was raised.”

By moving back to the Rose Hill neighborhood, Tina has achieved her dream of having a home where she and her son have a strong network of family and neighbors close by.

“Buying my own home makes me feel like the luckiest woman on earth. I know that my son feels like the luckiest kid on earth too.”



BUYING MY OWN HOME MAKES
ME FEEL LIKE THE LUCKIEST
WOMAN ON EARTH.



Building Community in a Time of Change



“
OUR GOAL IS TO CREATE A
BELOVED COMMUNITY
— DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
”

What does it mean to create the ideal place envisioned by Dr. King?

For Tina, featured on the cover, community involves coming home to the neighborhood where she was raised, where her family and neighbors looked after her. That same community will again nurture her and her son even as Charlottesville undergoes great change.

For Angie and her neighbors in the Southwood Mobile Home Park (page 3), community means preservation and inclusion in the midst of transition. The Southwood community has vowed to maintain their strong connections to one another, working hard each day to imagine and build a new neighborhood that cares for current neighbors while embracing new ones.

For future Lochlyn Hill homeowners like Holly, (pages 4-5) who is building

her home today, the meaning of community is still taking shape. At meetings, picnics, and on the job site, Holly and her future neighbors are forging relationships, asking tough questions, and finding common ground.

You see, Dr. King knew that true community does not just happen. It requires commitment, honesty, and a shared desire to link your own happiness to the wellbeing of others.

At Habitat, we believe in Dr. King's beloved community. We believe that building homes is just one part of lasting transformation. True success in our work comes from bringing together people from all walks of life to foster connection and create a sense of shared purpose.

We are grateful to the thousands of supporters who will join with us this year to build and sell more than 20 affordable homes, and rehabilitate 20 more. We are equally grateful to everyone who will attend a potluck, share life experiences, or welcome a new neighbor into their home—you are bridging divides and inspiring connections in the eight neighborhoods we are blessed to work in.

Thank you for supporting Tina, Angie, Holly, and the hundreds of other families we'll work with this year as they do their part to create their own beloved communities.

How Does Habitat Develop Mixed-Income Communities?

Our goal is to create mixed-income neighborhoods that benefit low-wealth families and entire communities. **But it takes real work to ensure that neighborhoods thrive.**

When Habitat builds, we focus on our families' strengths—and we help nurture relationships between every community member.



BENEFITS FOR LOW-WEALTH FAMILIES

- ▶ Families move from substandard housing to high quality homes
- ▶ Decreased crime and increased safety
- ▶ Access to more community resources
- ▶ Higher self-esteem and improved school performance for kids



OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

- ▶ Minimizing tensions between new neighbors
- ▶ Helping all residents gain equal access to community amenities
- ▶ Ensuring families retain social support from previous communities
- ▶ Sharing decision-making power in neighborhood associations



HABITAT'S APPROACH

- ▶ Building high quality homes for all families, with an affordable mortgage
- ▶ Locating neighborhoods with access to transportation, education, employment, and amenities
- ▶ Hosting Community Conversations to build understanding between neighbors of different backgrounds
- ▶ Empowering new Habitat homeowners through home maintenance, education, and leadership development



Community members have worked hard to plan the first phase of building a vibrant new Southwood.

 **REBUILDING**

Blazing a New Trail at Southwood

Standing among the trees on a bright fall day, Angie saw a vision of the future. “I could imagine where the houses will go and what they might look like,” remembers the longtime resident of the Southwood Mobile Home Park. “I had so many feelings at once.”

For many months, Angie has taken part in planning meetings with fellow residents, Habitat staff, and consultants. But on this momentous day, as Angie joined her fellow neighbors on a walking tour of a wooded, 30-acre parcel of land adjacent to Southwood that Habitat had recently purchased, things really came into focus.

The group decided that this very plot of land would be home to the first phase of redevelopment.

“Coming on the tour made me see that this is really happening,” reflects Angie’s colleague Maria, who has lived in Southwood for 15 years. “It was the beginning of realizing our dream of having an affordable house.”

In February 2018, Habitat submitted an application to the County of Albemarle to change the zoning of the 30-acre parcel to better reflect the values, vision, and needs of the Southwood community. Over the next six months, the planning team will continue working with the County to help make the residents’ vision a reality, laying the groundwork for the first phase of building.

Generating the rezoning application took immense time and energy. Residents worked side by side with planners and engineers to determine the number of homes, types of businesses, and the layout of the roads. They agreed on principles like higher density in order to accommodate more families and keep the homes as affordable as possible. They favored keeping residential areas separate from the highest intensity businesses—while allowing for community centers and child-friendly amenities closer to homes. As always, their utmost concerns were for the safety of their families and the



**WE’RE ON OUR OWN
PATH TOWARD MAKING
OUR NEIGHBORHOOD
A REALITY.**



inclusiveness of their community. Physical changes to the landscape are already taking place. A team of Southwood residents skilled in landscaping, alongside local volunteers, are cutting trails through the parcel to allow more residents to see where the first homes will be built. More residents are joining the planning process and taking on leadership roles, and Habitat anticipates construction to begin in 2020. Angie is proud of her neighbors and their accomplishments. “We’re on our own path toward making our neighborhood a reality.”

BUILDING COMMUNITY

EIGHT HABITAT FAMILIES ARE JOINING WITH FUTURE NEIGHBORS TO BUILD A STRONG



THE JOURNEY BEGINS

With the dream of homeownership in mind, eight hardworking families applied to Habitat's program. Once accepted, they began the hard work of financial education, homebuyer classes, and learning construction skills.

After choosing homes at Lochlyn Hill, which will become a mixed-income community of more than 150 homes, they began meeting their new neighbors...

A DIALOGUE GROWS

Strong communities don't just happen overnight. That's why for a whole year, Lochlyn Hill families meet monthly for Community Conversations, which offer the opportunity to discuss shared values, hopes, and concerns—and for children to bond.

Neighbors already living in Lochlyn Hill are invited to join the conversations to learn about Habitat, share insights, and welcome new neighbors. By bringing families of all backgrounds together, authentic relationships grow and create a caring community that transcends race, culture, or income.



TY AT LOCHLYN HILL

G, MIXED-INCOME NEIGHBORHOOD FROM THE GROUND UP



NEIGHBORS JOIN HANDS

“Sweat equity” is a key element of our program—families work with volunteers and other aspiring homebuyers to build their Habitat homes with their own hands. Each family contributes at least 200 hours on the job site, or at the Habitat Store or office.

No matter the weather, soon-to-be neighbors work hard together all day to sow the seeds of a blossoming community.



BUILDING THESE RELATIONSHIPS WITH MY NEIGHBORS NOW IS SO COMFORTING, BECAUSE I KNOW WE CAN ALL COME TOGETHER.

– HOLLY WOOD-SHELTON, LOCHLYN HILL HOMEOWNER



THE COMMUNITY THRIVES

Already, existing Lochlyn Hill community members have stepped up to welcome their new Habitat neighbors during a picnic on the construction site, joining with them in planning for the future.

At Lochlyn Hill and beyond, Habitat neighborhoods are strengthening the social fabric of Charlottesville—and enabling our whole community to thrive.





Laying Foundations for Greater Impact

For too many of our neighbors, a decent home is just out of reach. Habitat offers one of the only pathways to homeownership for low-wealth families in our area. And although resources exist for home repair, financial counseling, and social services, these programs are not always in sync or easy to navigate.



HOUSING IS THE FOUNDATION OF A STABLE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY.

– ANTHONY HARO, TJACH



A significant focus of Habitat’s strategic plan is to help catalyze a community-wide alignment of policy, funding, and programming to support affordable housing. Enter the Charlottesville-Albemarle Affordable Housing Coalition (CHAAHC), which brings together Habitat and four other founding partner organizations.

“CHAAHC is working to create common goals and metrics,” explains Jen Jacobs, Executive Director of Albemarle Housing Improvement Program. “We are being intentional about creating partnerships that are long-term and strategic—not just among housing providers but across all sectors.”

Often, families seek out Habitat’s program but are not ready for homeownership, or they have

emergency housing needs. But they also need the stabilizing supports of childcare, transportation, or job training.

“Housing is the foundation of a stable and healthy community,” says Anthony Haro of the Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless. “But we need to work together and across other sectors to provide opportunities for growth and foster community-building.”

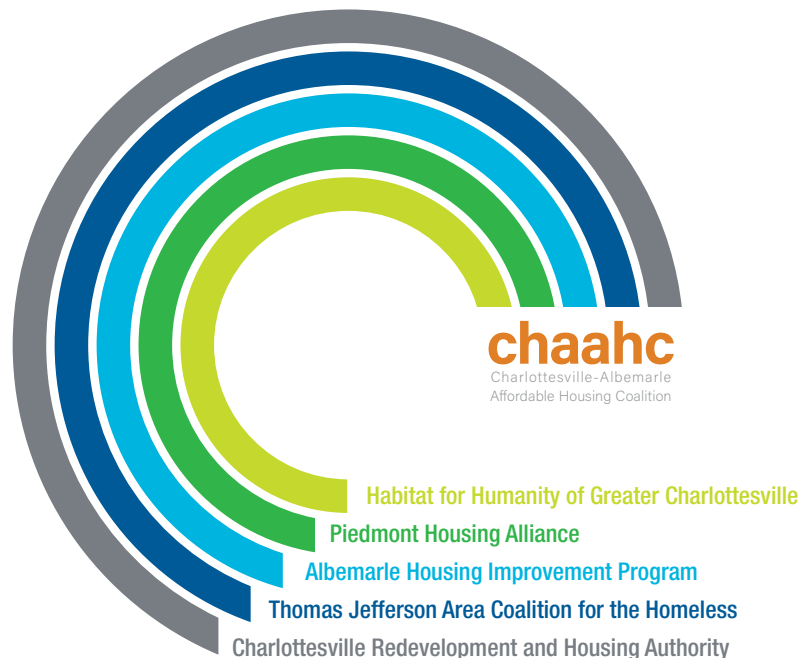
CHAAHC’s cross-sector strategy is already being implemented. As a result of the coalition, Habitat is working with the Public Housing Association of Residents, Charlottesville Housing and Redevelopment Authority, and Piedmont Virginia Community College to enable public housing residents to learn the construction trades and rehabilitate public housing units. At the end of a year, the participants will have the trade skills to find construction jobs and twenty more families will have safe, decent, affordable housing.

“When we’re working together and collaborating on collective policy goals, the opportunity for impact and effectiveness increases,” shares Sunshine Mathon, Executive Director of Piedmont Housing Alliance.

CHAAHC is seeking to expand its membership to other sectors and work closely with affordable housing advocates. The coalition envisions achieving a holistic alignment of services that improve our entire community’s quality of life. But housing remains the focus.

“The only way to make measurable and sustainable progress around affordable housing is for all of us—service providers, public officials, citizens, businesses, and philanthropy—to work together toward a shared vision,” says Janette Kawachi, Chief Partnership Officer at Habitat. “We have a lot of work to do to get there, and CHAAHC will play a critical role.”

CHAAHC - CHARLOTTESVILLE ALBEMARLE AFFORDABLE HOUSING COALITION



Through photos, UVA grad Chadia King preserves Habitat families' memories of their journey to homeownership.

FOCUSING ON HABITAT FAMILIES

For as long as she can remember, Chadia King has been passionate about photography.

"As a child, my dad enjoyed capturing my special moments on camera," recalls Chadia, who started volunteering with Habitat while a student at UVA. "I knew that was something I wanted to do for others."

She initially volunteered on the construction site, spending many Saturdays building alongside Habitat homebuyers. But she wanted to be more involved. She had recently started her own photography business and saw the opportunity to combine her passions.

"I reached out to Habitat's volunteer team about capturing families' journeys to homeownership," explains Chadia. "That's how my Habitat family portraits were born!"

Chadia began donating family photo shoots to new homebuyers as a way to give back. "All my time spent with them is so special to me. Seeing families pour sweat equity and joy into building a home for their future is beautiful, and I wanted to capture that through my lens. I get to help turn their house into a home!"

"I still have the photo album that Chadia did on my coffee table," says Tywana Brooks, a Habitat homeowner in the Wickham Pond neighborhood. "Those pictures capture the happiness my children felt to finally have a home of their own. I am so thankful!"

Though Chadia has since moved to Washington, D.C., she makes a point to return to Charlottesville for visits and photo shoots. She feels she has learned important lessons from her work with Habitat families—on the job site and behind the camera.

"Volunteering taught me about the importance of getting to know the community by interacting with the people in it," asserts Chadia. "Each Habitat family has breathtaking stories of strength, courage, and optimism. They encourage me to face any obstacles or fears. They all have such beautiful spirits."

**Do you have a special talent or skill?
Volunteer with Habitat! Contact grent@cvillehabitat.org.**



SEEING FAMILIES POUR SWEAT EQUITY AND JOY INTO BUILDING A HOME FOR THEIR FUTURE IS BEAUTIFUL TO ME, AND I WANTED TO CAPTURE THAT THROUGH MY LENS.





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Photos Habitat Staff, Chadia King,
and Scott Goss/Home Stadiums LLC



**EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY**



WHAT WILL YOU BUILD?



VOLUNTEER

Lend your skills to Habitat! From photography, to childcare, to preparing food, to building homes, EVERYONE makes a difference.



ADVOCATE

Attend community meetings and build relationships with others who care about affordable housing! Contact gtrent@cvillehabitat.org.



DONATE

Help build a more equitable and sustainable Charlottesville. Make a gift to the community today.

www.cvillehabitat.org