



## **ABOUT HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF GREATER MEMPHIS**

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Memphis is an ecumenical Christian housing ministry dedicated to eliminating poverty housing from Memphis and surrounding areas, while making decent, affordable shelter for all of God's people a matter of conscience and action.

Thanks to a core of generous and dedicated supporters, Habitat for Humanity International has already built or renovated houses for more than 300,000 people worldwide. Habitat for Humanity of Greater Memphis, an affiliate of Habitat International, was founded in 1983. Since that time, we have built 336 homes in partnership with local families who otherwise wouldn't have been able to afford adequate housing.

In freeing families from the unending struggles that accompany inadequate shelter, Habitat houses open the door to increased self-reliance and self-esteem. In turn, more families can devote attention to job opportunities, education and health. As the crushing cycle of poverty is broken, their children benefit, their neighborhoods change for the better and entire communities improve.

Habitat for Humanity does not build for families; it builds alongside those who demonstrate a willingness to partner with Habitat. Partner families make a \$1,000 down payment, invest 350 hours of "sweat equity" labor into the houses and attend 15 weeks of financial and basic home maintenance training classes. Their monthly payments on a no-interest, no-profit mortgage go into a revolving Fund for Humanity which helps pay for the construction of more Habitat houses and daily operating expenses.

Through this approach, Habitat gives partner families a "hand up" restoring the hope and dignity that poverty can strip away, and enabling them to raise their children in safe, decent housing that they can afford.

The driving force behind Habitat is volunteers—those who contribute a day, a week or a few months to give Habitat's vision a tangible form. Volunteers, working side-by-side with the future homeowner families, provide virtually all of the home building labor.

Individuals, businesses, community groups and faith-based organizations that support Habitat for Humanity's mission also provide the tax-deductible donations of money, land and materials that make the work possible. Memphis Habitat functions as its own independent 501(c)(3) organization and does all of its own fundraising.

Habitat work sites are places to build relationships, as well as houses. Habitat's self-help solution to the blight of substandard housing resonates with people from varied political, professional, ethnic and religious backgrounds. Habitat invites diverse individuals to find common ground in using a hammer and sharing a goal.