



**Habitat**  
for Humanity®  
of Pinellas &  
West Pasco Counties

**The Community Builder**

MAY 2024 | VOL. 28

# GLLOW GALA



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# A Note from Mike Sutton, President & CEO



*Dear Habitat Supporter,*

**Welcome to the twenty-eighth edition of The Community Builder newsletter!**

**This exclusive communication is specifically designed for you – our Advisory Board Members, Board of Directors, Emeritus Trustees, Legacy Society Members, Community Builders Society Members, and major donors. The goal of this monthly communication is to provide you with insight into current and upcoming projects, events and initiatives designed in support of our mission.**

As we approach the end of our 2023-24 fiscal year, we saw 11 families become a homeowner in the month of April and 2 families so far in May! This puts us at 61 home closings for the fiscal year, with 20 left to go. This will bring our total number of homes built this year to 81, once again a new record for our organization. We invite you to come out and celebrate these families as they receive the keys to their new homes.

In addition to celebrating another record-breaking year, Habitat will also be celebrating a very exciting milestone next month - our 900th home build! The Jones family will be the 900th family to partner with Habitat Pinellas and West Pasco Counties and we will celebrate at their home dedication on Friday, June 21st in the Dansville-Ridgecrest community in Largo. Xavier Jones will purchase his home with a zero-interest loan through the Habitat homeownership program to provide himself and his three children, Xaviah, Xavier Jr., and Xanae with a safe and affordable forever home. We invite you to join us for this exciting milestone dedication!

As a final celebratory announcement, it is my honor to share with you all that Habitat for Humanity International has selected Habitat for Humanity of Pinellas and West Pasco Counties to expand our service area into Hernando County. Given our organizational growth, coupled with the investment in our professional, dedicated staff, we feel we have a great opportunity to better serve the families and individuals of Hernando County. Our organization is positioned to bring affordable homeownership resources to fill the gap in service that the Hernando community is currently experiencing, with no active Habitat for Humanity presence currently available.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership. Together, we will continue to move the mission forward to build more homes, communities and hope.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mike Sutton', written over a light blue circular background.

**Mike Sutton, President & CEO**  
**Habitat Pinellas and West Pasco**



## **our mission**

Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.

# A Letter from the CEO: Hernando County Expansion

Dear Habitat Supporter,

It is my honor to share with you all that Habitat for Humanity International has selected Habitat for Humanity of Pinellas and West Pasco Counties to expand our service area into Hernando County.

Since 1985, Habitat for Humanity of Pinellas and West Pasco Counties has partnered with low to moderate-income families to provide a hand up towards affordable homeownership. For the past five years, the organization has been recognized as one of the top three producing affiliates based on its new home construction completions out of the affiliate network of 1,100. We have experienced record-breaking and sustainable growth in the last decade, with 81 families served this year. This summer, we will dedicate their 900th home build in the Pinellas and West Pasco region. More than 600 of those homes have been built in partnership with local deserving families and individuals in the last ten years.

Given our organizational growth, coupled with the investment in our professional, dedicated staff, we feel we have a great opportunity to better serve the families and individuals of Hernando County. Our organization is positioned to bring affordable homeownership resources to fill the gap in service that the Hernando community is currently experiencing, with no active Habitat for Humanity presence currently available.

Habitat for Humanity builds and sells homes at zero-percent interest to households not qualifying for a traditional mortgage. The program prepares homeowner partners to be successful homeowners through a robust education curriculum of 36 classes, from budgeting to home maintenance. Homeowners purchase their home from Habitat and earn a 0% interest mortgage, never paying over 30% of their household income for housing expenses. Removing interest from the mortgage keeps monthly payments affordable and means that each homeowner is building equity in their home from their first payment. This allows homeowners to save for the future while having the stability of an affordable monthly payment. It also increases the community's supply of affordable housing units and ensures homeowners are never cost-burdened.

Habitat for Humanity of Pinellas and West Pasco Counties is currently under contract for 5 acres, which will provide affordable homeownership opportunities to 24 families in Spring Hill. Our plans for the development of 24 single-family homes will be released soon.

The affiliate will release a new name and brand in the coming weeks.

While our Board of Directors continues to lead our strategic vision, I am so proud of our staff's work to strengthen our community on a daily basis. We will continue to serve more families seeking a safe, affordable place to call their own.

The Habitat mission is advanced with the support of donors, volunteers, and community partners. We are grateful for your ongoing support of our mission to make affordable homeownership accessible to families in need.

Sincerely,



**Mike Sutton, President & CEO**  
**Habitat Pinellas and West Pasco**

# Habitat Fundraisers

## Annual Gala

### Habitat's Glow Gala Fundraiser is a Glowing Success

On Friday, April 5th, over 500 attendees gathered to support the Habitat mission at the sold-out Glow Gala presented by Crown Automotive Charities and the Hawkins Family Foundation. The event at the Vinoy Renaissance Resort illuminated the night in celebration of the Habitat mission.

It was a very bright night for Habitat! One that heard live testimonials by Habitat Homeowner, Tiffany Brown, on the impact of her homeownership journey. Those in attendance enjoyed a luminous night filled with raffles, a bottle pull, and an exciting live auction. Attendees danced the night away at the Let's Glow Crazy After Party sponsored by Bloomin' Brands, Belleair Development Group, and The Valspar Championship & Copperhead Charities.

Thanks to the support of our Glow Gala sponsors and supporters, a record of over \$1,000,000 was raised to support affordable homeownership opportunities for deserving families in our community.

# OVER \$1 MILLION RAISED AT HABITAT'S GLOW GALA!





## Habitat Celebrations

### Habitat Opens New Office in New Port Richey with Ribbon Cutting

On Friday, May 3rd, Habitat for Humanity of Pinellas and West Pasco Counties celebrated the grand opening of our new Pasco County office. A ribbon cutting ceremony was hosted by the North Tampa Bay Chamber and a celebratory open house followed the event.

The new space is conveniently located a mile from the New Port Richey Veterans Affairs Center and a half mile from Government Drive and Citizens Drive in New Port Richey. The office features staff workspaces and an education room for future Habitat homeowners.

Thank you to Senator Ed Hooper and Congressman Gus Bilirakis for your welcoming remarks and to the West Pasco Board of Realtors for presenting us with a check for \$10,000. Thank you to NEAT Coffee Bar for providing coffee for our guests.



## Homeowner Candidate Celebration

### Homeowner Candidate Family Picnic

On Sunday, May 5th Habitat Pinellas & West Pasco held it's annual Homeowner Candidate Picnic and it was a major success! Over 200 people, including homeowner candidates and Habitat staff, came out to enjoy a day of games, grilling, bubbles, and fun! Thank you to all the families who came out to celebrate with us and to our staff volunteers who helped cook and serve delicious food.



# Habitat Celebrations

## 2024 Best Places to Work

Nearly 1000 people will gather at Raymond James Stadium on Thursday, May 2nd to celebrate workplaces they love. The Tampa Bay Business Journal's annual Best Places to Work program, now in its 18th year, comes at a time when business owners and employees across the Tampa Bay region are experiencing talent shortages. That makes turnover more costly than ever. The retention of good people is a critical priority. The 60 companies honored this year scored highest among all the employers participating in Omaha, Nebraska-based Quantum Workplace's annual employee engagement survey.

TAMPA BAY BUSINESS JOURNAL



## 2024 BEST PLACES TO WORK

The results are quantitative, based on survey responses from employees themselves rather than a panel of outside judges. The results are clear: The companies honored in 2024 invested heavily in their people by providing valuable perks and benefits, flexibility, remote work, good leadership, a fun culture and more.

Each of the top 15 companies in four categories was honored at the stadium field level while teams gathered, partied and relaxed with food, drinks and games. Habitat Pinellas and West Pasco is grateful to have received #11 in the Large Category – 50-99 employees.



**Employees were asked to evaluate their employers on these areas:**

- Communication
- Resources
- Individual Needs
- Manager Effectiveness
- Personal Engagement
- Team Dynamics
- Trust in Leadership

**Their answers were strictly confidential and anonymous.**





# Employee Engagement

## Solar Eclipse

### Habitat Staff Gathers for Solar Eclipse Social

On April 8th, Habitat staff took a short break from the office to catch a glimpse of the Solar Eclipse! We celebrated with some Moon Pies, Sunny D, and Solar Eclipse Donuts as we experienced this exciting little moment of history!



## Staff Accolades

### Tampa Bay Business Journal

#### Todd St. John-Fulton Named a TBBJ Business of Pride Honoree

Congratulations to Habitat's Chief People & Culture Officer, Todd St. John Fulton, for being named a 2024 Tampa Bay Business Journal Business of Pride Honoree.

Twenty-seven individuals and companies will be honored in the 2024 Business of Pride awards. The Business of Pride awards focus on LGBT business leadership and development, allies within the community and voices from the LGBT community. These business leaders and companies are making a difference in advancing equality in the business world. The program shines a spotlight on people, companies, policies and progress.

Congratulations to our Chief People & Culture Officer

## Todd St. John-Fulton

on being recognized as a  
2024 Tampa Bay Business Journal  
Business of Pride Honoree.

## Paving the way for people & culture.



# Habitat Celebrations

## Staff Highlights

### New Hires

As our affiliate continues to grow, we have been looking to bring new staff members on in various positions to support our goal of serving more families. Join us in welcoming three new hires to the team.



**Cecille Zabala**  
Executive Assistant  
to the President & CEO



**Craig Taylor**  
Senior Field Supervisor



**Earl Ashmeal**  
Construction Crew Leader



*Women Build 2024*

**The Habitat Women Build brings together female leaders from across the region to build a home for a local single mother.**

We invite female leaders seeking a life-changing opportunity to support the homeownership dreams of a deserving family to join the 2024 Women Build launching this Fall!

*Get Involved*

Scan the QR Code, visit [habitatpwp.org/womensbuild](https://habitatpwp.org/womensbuild), or contact Katie Rockman at [krockman@habitatpwp.org](mailto:krockman@habitatpwp.org) for more information.







# Upcoming Events

**The Rimpson Family Home Dedication (Veteran's Build)**  
May 18th | 9:00 AM - 9:30 AM  
1156 LaSalle St., Clearwater, FL

**The Banyeretse Family Home Dedication**  
May 30th | 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM  
1739 43rd St. S., St. Petersburg, FL

**The Skelton Family Home Dedication**  
May 20th | 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM  
2166 16th Ave. S., St. Petersburg, FL

**The Tanksley Family Home Dedication**  
May 31st | 9:00 AM - 9:30 AM  
9345 Teak St., New Port Richey, FL

**The Bradley Family Home Dedication**  
May 30th | 9:00 AM - 9:30 AM  
3135 Queensboro Ave., St. Pete, FL

**900th Home Dedication: The Jones Family**  
June 21st | 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM  
1231 Gooden Crossing, Largo FL

how to get involved



Apply



Donate



Volunteer



Shop



Advocate



Celebrate the **900th** home built in our community with a \$900 donation!



donate today at  
[habitatpwp.org/900thhome](http://habitatpwp.org/900thhome)



## visit us

**Construction Warehouse & Truist Education Center**  
13355 49th St N, Suite B Clearwater, FL 33762

**Administrative HQ**  
14010 Roosevelt Blvd, Suite 704 Clearwater, FL 33762

**Pasco County Office**  
7237 Little Road, New Port Richey, FL 34654

**St. Pete Resource Center**  
1350 22nd St S, St. Petersburg, FL 33712

**(727) 536-4755 | [habitatpwp.org](http://habitatpwp.org)**

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