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September 2020



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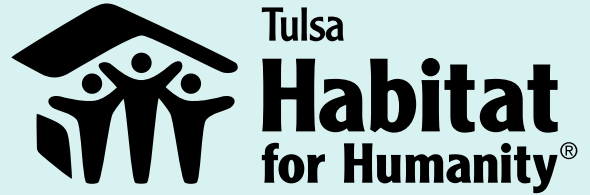
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A message from the President & CEO

Whether you are running a restaurant, Fortune 500 company or nonprofit, 2020 has presented one challenge after another to the way we do business. Like most, Tulsa Habitat for Humanity has been dramatically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the disruption it has brought to every facet of American society.

We closed our offices on March 16, thinking conditions would probably be better in two or three weeks. Today, we are open only on a limited basis and most of our administrative staff are working from home. Tulsa Habitat's two ReStore outlets were closed for two months, presenting a big hit to revenues. We had to postpone and ultimately cancel our Rock the House fundraising gala for this year – another hit to our bottom line. Volunteer activities remain suspended indefinitely.

However, this time of crisis has also brought the importance of Tulsa Habitat for Humanity's mission of building high-quality affordable homes and providing our clients with the opportunity to purchase those homes into even sharper focus. The pandemic and the resulting financial repercussions have placed a spotlight on vast economic and other inequalities in our society, particularly regarding access to affordable housing. I believe the already enormous need for Tulsa Habitat's services will only increase in the coming months and years.

All of this has strengthened our resolve to accomplish our goals. Tulsa Habitat's amazing staff has quickly adapted to new ways of doing business and kept our day-to-day operations functioning smoothly. Upon reopening, our ReStores have done tremendous business. Perhaps most importantly, construction activities saw very little downtime. In fact, our team has redoubled its efforts, and **we now have more homes under construction than at any time in our company's 33-year history.**

I take great pride in the way Tulsa Habitat for Humanity has weathered this storm thus far. I also know that we could not have done it without dedicated employees and the backing of our incredible Board of Directors and supporters like you.

Sincerely,

Cameron Walker
President and CEO
Tulsa Habitat for Humanity

P.S. We have experienced a significant loss in income this year. If you are able, I humbly ask for your financial support. Please use the enclosed envelope to mail a contribution or visit us online at tulsahabitat.org.

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Building America.

A photograph of a man with a beard and mustache, wearing a black leather jacket and blue jeans, smiling as he holds a baby. The baby is wearing a black jacket and a pink knitted hat. The man is holding a small pink stuffed animal in his right hand. The background is a house with light-colored horizontal siding and a brick chimney on the left. The text "ng The n Dream" is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

ng The n Dream

By Jami Mattox



Judith, Leah and Lehabim Escoto-Flores Stand in front of their new Tulsa Habitat home.

A laundry room is typically not the most glamorous room in the house. It's there to serve a purpose, to make life easier for the homeowners.

But for Lehabim Escoto-Flores and his wife, Judith, the laundry room was life-changing. The couple, along with their one-year-old daughter, Leah, moved into their new home built by Tulsa Habitat for Humanity in December. Judith says that having a laundry room in their home has made life much easier for the family.

"It's not like we'll be in here all the time, but it's so good to have a washer and dryer," Judith says. "Before, we lived in an apartment, and we had to go at night or after work or on the weekend to do laundry."

Lehabim and Judith emigrated to the United States from Mexico. They settled in Modesto, Calif., to be close to family, but they soon learned that living in California is expensive. The challenges living in the state forced them to look elsewhere.

Judith's brother encouraged the couple to relocate to Tulsa, where he lived. So four-and-a-half years ago, Lehabim and Judith packed up and drove from California to Tulsa, despite their fear of tornadoes.

Home ownership was always a dream for the Escoto-Flores family, but Judith and Lehabim never thought that it was tangible for them.

"When we first heard of Tulsa Habitat for Humanity, we thought maybe it's not for us because we're immigrants,"

Judith recalls. "But the process was amazing. When we moved to this country, we never expected to have a house. It seemed like a dream that was really, really far away. It's really too good to be true."

After the couple went through the approval process, Lehabim began to put in the couple's sweat equity hours. Judith was pregnant at the time with Leah, so Lehabim put in the extra work. Judith recalls that Lehabim was working two jobs, but he would still find the time to volunteer at their new home site, picking up trash and cleaning up, even if no one else was there.

"When we moved to this country, we never expected to have a house. It seemed like a dream that was really, really far away. It's really too good to be true."

"He was always there helping," she says.

Lehabim says that he learned many new skills during his sweat equity hours. Before the experience, he says he had never touched any construction materials or tools. But while on the site, he learned many basics of home maintenance; he even learned how to hang doors. He loved the work so much, he began volunteering at other THFH home sites before his home was finished.

“People from this community really help each other,” he says. “They do a lot. We are really amazed by the people of Tulsa. And so everything you get, you have to give back, too.”

Lehabim didn’t wait for his house to be finished to develop relationships with his neighbors. He says that during construction, he visited each of his neighbors to introduce himself and let them know that his house was being built by THFH.

“It’s really good, because they know us, they now know each other, and they take care of each other,” Lehabim says. “If we saw something that’s sketchy, we tell the neighbors, and they tell us. I feel comfortable and welcome.”

The family’s gray Craftsman style house is nestled in the historic Kendall-Whittier neighborhood. The location is perfect, Judith says, because it means a short commute to work for both of them; Lehabim works for the City of Tulsa, and Judith works for Growing Together Tulsa, a community support organization headquartered in Kendall-Whittier. Their home is also a short walk to Pancho Anaya, the family’s favorite bakery.

Besides, the laundry room, Lehabim says the family is ecstatic to have a yard for Leah to play in as she grows up. They have installed a swing set and slide for her in the back yard.

“She loves to be outside,” Lehabim says of Leah. “She loves playing in the soil and the grass. I put that grass and soil together. I’m very proud of all the green coming out. I remember this house when outside it was only mud, and now I see how the process turned into something amazing.”

The Escoto-Flores family has shared their experience with THFH with friends and family and encouraged them to apply for home ownership with the organization as well.

“You need a sense of community,” Lehabim says. “We applied because we want our baby to have a place where she can grow and play and thrive and have neighbors. We’re really happy with the house and with the community. This opportunity has been something amazing for us. It’s the American dream.” 🏠

The Escoto-Flores family at their dedication, with Lehabim’s brother-in-law, Daniel Barba.



Welcome Home

Meet some of Tulsa Habitat for Humanity's newest homeowners. Learn how you can help more Tulsa families achieve the dream of homeownership at tulсахabitat.org



Devin Davis
March 9, 2020

#424



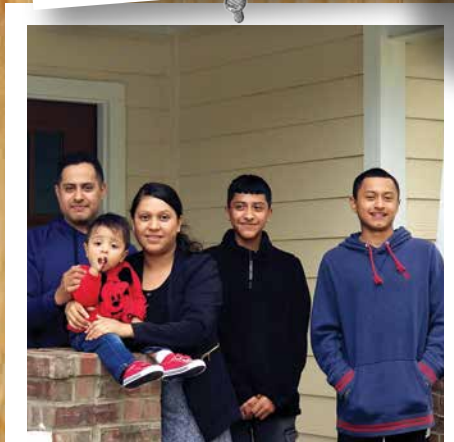
Gonzales Family
May 27, 2020

#430



Kannaiainen Family
June 15, 2020

#445



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April 28, 2020

#427



Cleveland Family
June 26, 2020

#455



Awi Niang
May 27, 2020

#436



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#431



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June 12, 2020

#442



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March 25, 2020

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HOMES OF VALOR



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HOMES OF VALOR

Coming Home



Home #428

Steven, an Army Veteran and his wife Allyson, with 4 month old, Raiden, closed on their home April, 6 2020.

Steven and Allyson Scott just closed on their new home the Monday before Easter. Steven has been out of the army a year and a half. Both he and his wife, Allyson grew up in Tulsa and wanted to plant roots here, near their families.

Discussions of buying a home began when Allyson was pregnant with their now three-month-old baby boy, Raiden. Allyson shared, “One of the best parts of having a home is our son and dog will both have a yard to run around and play in.” The home is also at the end of a street, so there won’t be much traffic.

She adds, “We are pretty close to where I went to the doctor as a kid, and a lot closer to my parents, which is a plus for us, with a baby.”

A new, quality construction home means they won’t need to put money into renovations, they will have more space, privacy, and a garage.

Steven appreciates the idea of having more room, and it’s a bonus that it’s closer to where he works. Having lived in the barracks during his year and a half in the army gave Steven a real appreciation for more living space.

Allyson had experience with Tulsa Habitat when her parents became homeowners. She was in the fifth grade and recalls, “As a child I was able to see how much work and time goes into getting your own home. My older brother and I helped my mom put in sweat equity. I remember the warehouse worker was always willing to show us how to do everything to get the hours.”

They both appreciate a new construction home with two bathrooms and a garage. Something that wasn’t available for her family years ago. Scott said of the program, “It’s a good option for low income families. The quality of houses is excellent, and the classes are informative.”

The process was smooth, Allyson shares, “Lora communicated with us every step of the way and always let us know what we needed to do next.” 🏠



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