



Homeownership Changing Lives

Maria was smiling from ear to ear as she invited me into her Habitat home on Townsend Ave, which she and her daughter Arianna moved into two years ago. When Maria speaks, she is filled with gratitude and warmth, even when she talks about the challenges raising three kids on her own.

Born and raised in Zacatecas, Mexico, Maria Marquez was one of 10 children. In her early 20s she wanted to learn English, so she applied for a visa and came to the US to study. She got married, started a family, and settled down in Nebraska.

After years of living in an abusive marriage, Maria knew she needed to get away and start a new life – one where her children were safe. One day, she realized it was “now or never” and, when her husband left the room, Maria grabbed the car keys and told the kids to run. They drove to the police station.

Soon after, Maria divorced, packed up anything that fit in the car, and drove south to be closer to her family in Mexico. They landed in Albuquerque with no family, friends, or anyone to help. Maria had to rely on her instincts to keep her children safe. She worked several jobs to make ends meet. Working 12 hours every day, she needed to find someone she could trust to watch her kids. She started asking mothers at her children’s school and then co-workers to babysit, building a network of support from the ground up.

Maria couldn’t afford much so she lived with her children in a two-bedroom



Maria Marquez and her family lead the ribbon cutting ceremony at the dedication of her Habitat home in 2014.

apartment for 17 years. Maria said, “I knew what I could afford, I knew my budget. So we stayed in that apartment.” But she always remembered what her grandfather would say to her growing up – “You can be the poorest person in the world, but your clothes have to be clean.” So she took pride in her tiny apartment, keeping it clean and comfortable. But outside was dangerous. Her children didn’t have room to study and Maria had no quiet space of her own. “I never slept alone because my mom and I shared a bed until I was 15, when we moved into our Habitat home,” said Arianna, Maria’s youngest daughter.

Maria is grateful that she was selected by GAHH and that her monthly payments are the same as what she was paying for the apartment. Maria’s home is welcoming and friendly with lots of plants and family photos. She said,

“When people come inside they always look up. The ceilings are high and the light from the windows makes everyone look up right away. I love my home.”

Maria has been the Site Facilitator at Kirtland Korner Community Learning Center for many years. Now she no longer has to work three jobs to make ends meet and she has gone back to school to earn a degree in early childhood education.

When asked what she likes best about the house, Maria says, “I have my own space. And it’s quiet, I can relax.” Now everyone goes to “Mom’s house” for family gatherings. There is room for Maria’s children, their spouses, and her grandchildren to visit and sit down to a family dinner. Maria is hopeful for her future and enjoying the time with her grandchildren.



Leading Mission & Vision

Building Impact Beyond the Foundation

As we welcome in the fall season, we reflect back at the year and think ahead to the approaching holiday season. The changing season brings cooler temperatures, shorter days, and a calmness that allows our spirits to rejuvenate and rest from work well done. Yet there's also a sense of excitement in thinking about all of the great things waiting for us in the new year.

Our Board of Directors has looked at what we've accomplished and where we are now. We love what we see - a strong, sustainable organization with great leadership, a dedicated and caring professional staff, and the best group of volunteers anyone could wish for!

Having this solid operational structure allows us to put a laser-sharp focus on our strategic direction. We're reviewing our strategic plan and focusing on goals and objectives which align with the broader direction of Habitat for Humanity, yet are customized to the needs of our community and the growth capacity of our affiliate. We'll continue with key foundational pieces of our plan that were put in place last year: funding our mission, growing skills and leadership capabilities with all who contribute to our mission, and operating with excellence.

Beyond the foundation and construction at the build site, we're also building impact by developing a sustainable plan to ensure stability and foster growth in multiple areas. We start with our mission, vision, and guiding principles. We seek to foster a development approach that creates lasting family impact and lasting community impact. We do this by creating impact in three significant areas. 1) Direct engagement, the daily work we do, impacts our local community. 2) Promoting and supporting policies and systems which contribute to affordable housing opportunities impacts the broader building sector of the housing industry. 3) Through awareness and engagement, the cycle of poverty slowly begins to break down and we build societal impact.

The staff is working to create a plan that can move and adapt as our affiliate grows. Each department created a plan to map out strategies for growth, advocacy, outreach, fiscal responsibility, and helping GAHH to be the leader in providing affordable homes for the population that we serve in Albuquerque. This coordinated effort is still emerging, but the process is teaching us many things.

Sounds like a lot of work, doesn't it? We agree and we can also confidently assure you "We've got this!" We're excited to see what more will rise from the strong foundation we've built.



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Affiliate Information

GAHH & ReStore
4900 Menaul NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110
Phone: 505-265-0057
Fax: 505-255-0937
www.habitatabq.org
info@habitatabq.org

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Hours
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9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Save trees & build more homes!

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please send an email to beth@habitatabq.org with "e-newsletter" in the subject line.



The mission in action on Mesa del Rio with homeowners Kristina, Victor, and Sonia.



Sharing in Hope

Clarence breathes new life and hope into everything he touches. It's just who he is and what he's done his whole life. He grew up in Iowa and during high school he helped load Pepsi trucks. He said, "It was hard work, a lot of heavy lifting. We loaded three trucks, \$1 per truck."

Following World War II, Clarence joined the Navy. He learned about missiles – how they were made, how they worked, and how to fix them when they failed to launch or something malfunctioned. After nine months he graduated top of his class and then spent four years working on missiles. Oh, the stories he can tell! After the Navy, Clarence worked on engineering projects for big companies



Clarence stands in front of the lighting display he built for ReStore.

like Sperry Corporation and Honeywell. From testing missiles to preparing equipment that sends astronauts into space, to building electronics for B-1 bombers to retro-fitting B-52 and B-2 bombers.

He was promoted time and again, even without an official engineering degree, because he was always eager and had a knack for finding solutions to problems that no one else could solve. That's his gift – he's a common sense tinkerer and all around fixer upper. After he retired he asked his church leader what he thought about Habitat and his pastor said it was a good organization. Clarence called GAHH and someone suggested he volunteer at the ReStore. He's been here just about every Wednesday since.

Today, his engineering mind and can-do attitude helps ReStore keep things running. Walking around the building, he points to all the cabinets, work spaces, hanging fixtures, and construction projects he's installed over the years. If it's broken, Clarence brings it back to life.

Clarence says he's "been here since dirt," but we know he's got many more years to keep fixing things. Each volunteer is an integral part of our mission and we are truly grateful for Clarence – his kindness, can-do spirit, expertise, and support are irreplaceable.



Clarence is joined by ReStore employees and volunteers. Pictured (l to r): Julia, Annette, Clarence, Laura, and Mary.



**A NEW WAY
TO PARTICIPATE**

Feed the Volunteers

Wednesday or Saturday
11:30-12:30 Mesa del Rio NW

For more information, contact
info@habitatabq.org



Like us on Facebook!
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From One Home to Another

The ReStore is more than a thrift store. Income earned from the sale of discount household goods doesn't only help build affordable homes; we also help the community by employing great people who seek opportunities and professional growth. Every ReStore purchase supports the dedicated people who work for GAHH and the families who become homeowners.



ReStore employee Austin drives a forklift to unload donations.

We recently celebrated Austin who obtained his forklift operator's certification. "The certification is a hand up," said Dona Swenson, ReStore Manager. "ReStore provides ongoing training which enables our employees to

increase their knowledge, skills and confidence." Another star employee is Gabe, one of the ReStore's Youth Development, Inc. (YDI) employees. Gabe builds one day per week on the jobsite and works 24 hours per week at ReStore while he continues his education.



ReStore YDI employee Gabe

But our limited staff can't do it alone. It takes the support of the community, which is why the ReStore is also staffed by many volunteers and homeowners earning sweat equity hours. Since January, 630 volunteers have given 4,214 hours of service to helping customers, unloading donations, stocking shelves, and answering the phone. Anyone who would like to volunteer is welcome.

When you donate household and building supply items you also protect the environment. We resell by recycling items in good condition that might otherwise end up in the landfill...and at 50% – 80% below retail!

ReStore merchandise has been donated by local businesses, building contractors, suppliers, and individuals. "We thank you, our donors and shoppers for Austin and Gabe's continued success," says Dona. "And we especially thank the hardworking volunteers that show up every day to support our mission."

Leaving a legacy

so that no one in the Greater Albuquerque area will live in substandard housing.

The Irving J. & Lois Hall Legacy Society

Working with Habitat has made it possible for us, hopefully, to make a difference in the lives of others. We know that it has certainly made a difference in ours.

—Irving J. Hall, PhD, Home Sponsor and Volunteer

Forms of Planned Giving

- Bequest in a Will
- Gift of Real Estate
- Life Insurance
- Life Income Gifts
- Retirement Plans
- Beneficiary of an IRA
- Permanent Endowment

For more information contact **Beth Goldman**,
 Director of Resource Development
 505-265-0057 📧 beth@habitatbq.org

Supporting Hope

I grew up living in a bungalow apartment, five people squished into four tiny rooms, no hallways between rooms. And no privacy.



Photo: Kyle Zimmerman

Sandy Gold proudly supports GAHH.

When I graduated from college and started teaching, my apartment had a tiny, closet-sized kitchen along with a bedroom and living room. I didn't live in a house until I moved to New Mexico at age 55. Apartment living was the norm in New York City.

What a difference having one's own home makes! All the decisions, all the responsibilities, but also the joys, security, and pride involved in home ownership. I support a number of homeless shelters, but these are more like applying bandages to help alleviate conditions for the moment. Contributing to Greater Albuquerque Habitat for Humanity is

about providing a secure future for people – a safe, permanent place to call home; equity; a source of pride and community; a sense of accomplishment. This is why I continue to proudly support GAHH.

Building a Future Together

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development says a family that spends more than 30% of their income on housing expenses is less likely to have sufficient resources for food, clothing, medical care, and other basic needs. In Albuquerque, approximately 54,000 families, including more than one-third of our community's children, live in households that experience a high housing cost burden. Volunteers recently finished the Pope Francis House, GAHH's 179th home.



Archbishop Emeritus Sheehan offers the opening prayer at the Pope Francis House dedication on August 27, 2016.

Working together since 1987, GAHH and our community partners have now reduced housing cost burden, built hope, and changed lives for over 400 children.

The Pope Francis House, built in 2015, is the first in the 8-home Mesa del Rio Project. Each of the homes will be 1,300 sq. ft., two-stories, with three bedrooms. Finding affordable and suitable land in a good location is one of our most difficult challenges, but our prayers have been answered! In October, with one home completed and the next seven well underway, we purchased an additional 12 lots, securing the land for Mesa del Rio Phase 2.

In addition to Mesa del Rio, GAHH is collaborating with the University of New Mexico (UNM) and Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) on ecoMOD homes. The ecoMOD initiative was developed by John Quale (University of Virginia) with affordable housing organizations to create energy efficient and sustainable housing units. The first New Mexico ecoMOD home is being designed and built offsite by UNM and CNM students to meet Habitat standards. As an affordable

housing partner, GAHH is working to secure land from the city in the Barelas community for the home and we are meeting with



Barelas community organizations to build understanding and positive relations for the initiative. The home will be assembled on site by GAHH homeowners and volunteers. Guiding principles for the initiative can be viewed at <http://ecomod.unm.edu/about/guiding-principles>. To support the project or get more information email info@habitatbq.org.

Help Build Mesa del Rio
www.habitatabq.org



A glimpse of Mesa del Rio Phase 1



Donor Honor Roll

Greater Albuquerque Habitat for Humanity thanks the many individuals, foundations, companies, churches, and organizations that have donated from January 1 – September 30, 2016. Your generosity supports the construction of affordable, safe, and decent low-income homes in Albuquerque. Thank you for building hope and changing lives through homeownership.

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\$5,000 & Over

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In Kind

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Lunchbox Donors

These donors fed our construction volunteers and kept them going March – September 2016. Thank you!

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Volunteer Team Builders

Many thanks to the volunteer groups that helped at the job site and in the Restore January – September 2016. Thank you!

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The SWAT House, 824 Mesa del Rio, was dedicated to the blessed memory of Dave Ericson, September 15, 1932 – April 13, 2016.

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God's Work, Our Hands ELCA Lutheran Church volunteers and Lunch Box Builders St. Timothy's working on the Unity Project, two homes supported by 30 congregations and churches.



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