



## **Habitat for Humanity of Martin County Celebrates 30th Year of Service**

(Stuart, FL) Habitat for Humanity of Martin County is celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> year of service to the community in 2016 and is planning a year-long campaign to both celebrate its successes and look toward future projects.

Founded in 1986, Habitat for Humanity of Martin County is an ecumenical, Christian-based organization dedicated to the premise that everyone should have a simple, decent, and affordable place to live. Since its founding, Habitat has served over 300 families through new home construction, home repair, and weatherization. Habitat has also provided support for families in need through referral, training, case management, and community outreach through partnerships with local government and other non-profit agencies.

We are extraordinarily proud of all that has been accomplished in our first 30 years," said Margot Graff, Habitat Executive Director. "But we are also aware that there are still many people in our community who need a helping hand."



**...continued from website...**Self-help and community engagement are key components of the work done by Habitat. Through engaging families as "partners", Habitat seeks to build not only homes with families, but hope for a better life. Thousands of volunteer hours are utilized each year to deliver the services provided. Churches, businesses, civic organizations, and individuals seeking to help their neighbors, assist in delivery of Habitat's mission. From hammering on a construction site to working at the ReStore or serving on the board of directors or a committee, Habitat's success can be attributed to the work of its volunteers.

In the next year, Habitat will spotlight its mission, the people served, the many ways to get involved with Habitat, and expand its program to serve more families. One of the major goals for the Martin County affiliate is working closer to the completion of the Carter Park project in Indiantown.

Construction began on the 40-home subdivision more than 3 years ago, already providing safe, affordable and sustainable living for 12 partner families. There are 28 more homes left to be built around the neighborhood, which also features a one-acre storm water treatment pond (with fish) and the biggest Boys & Girls Club in the county.

In addition to the affiliate's aggressive new home build schedule, Habitat for Humanity of Martin County will also work to repair more than 50 existing homes in Community Redevelopment Areas throughout the county as part of the A Brush With Kindness program.

A Brush With Kindness is Habitat for Humanity's answer to addressing the needs of existing homeowners who are oftentimes overlooked but need help weatherizing, painting and repairing their homes. In the past five years, Habitat for Humanity of Martin County has performed these types of repairs in more than 150 homes. Thanks to partnerships with the City of Stuart and a private donor, more than 50 families should be able to partner with Habitat for Humanity of Martin County and help make their homes more energy efficient, safer and secure.

The new construction and A Brush With Kindness program are just two spokes in the affiliate's six-pronged Neighborhood Revitalization focus.

"The world is changing quickly in every community and Martin County is no different," Graff said. "Moving to a more global Neighborhood Revitalization mission allows this affiliate to serve more families, eliminate more blight and ensure the success of children throughout the county."

Making the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary even more special is the new 33,000 square foot ReStore in Jensen Beach. The original ReStore in Golden Gate was enlarged to encompass an additional 2,000 square feet in the current building bringing its total to almost 10,000 sq. feet.

The ReStore in Jensen Beach houses Habitat's administrative offices and serves as a warehouse, showroom and sales floor. Besides consolidating all of the ReStore inventory under one roof, as opposed to storage units around town that charge rent, the new facility will allow Habitat for Humanity of Martin County to better serve the northern portion of the County and, hopefully, offer services to new clients and partners.

For more information, contact Habitat for Humanity at (772) 223-9940.