

Tulsa
 Habitat for Humanity®

HOME.

Issue 2 • 2017



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2017 - 2018

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Tulsa
**Habitat
for Humanity®**

A message from the Executive Director

With a spring full of fundraisers, housing dedications, and internal growth, it comes as little surprise to all of us here at Tulsa Habitat that the summer is finally upon us. The kiddos are out of school and the adults are trying to keep their minds on work even though the dreams of a beach vacation, visits to amusement parks or maybe even the promise of crisp mountain air threatens to distract.

In our younger days, summer held the promise of freedom, discovery and maybe even the open road. A good many of us who grew up in this part of the country spent our summers in cars and trucks exploring our surrounds a little more enthusiastically – alert to opportunity and in search of the unexpected.

Although our vehicles for these excursions may have ranged from the flashy to the well-worn, they all had one thing in common: the ability to move us forward.

Tulsa Habitat for Humanity is not much different. For all of the press releases, news coverage and national attention our organization is fortunate to garner, it's important to remember that without a powerful engine, we'd be just another shiny piece of metal on the side of the road.

In this issue, we're going to pop the hood and get our hands a little dirty. We're going to show you around the engine that drives Tulsa Habitat for Humanity and shine a light on those that keep us running like a well-oiled machine.

The Habitat ReStore and newly minted ReStore Rack take center stage as we explore the horsepower that propels us ever forward and keeps us humming along at a sustainable clip, providing the peace of mind that whatever the destination, we will arrive with plenty left in the tank.

I invite you to take a spin with us. It's time to drive out into the inky night, past all of the shiny city lights and neon distractions. It's the time of year to find an open road, step on the gas and see what we've got under the hood.

Sincerely,

Cameron Walker
Executive Director

3 WAYS 2 HELP



Donate

Your generosity makes the work of Tulsa Habitat for Humanity possible. You are the key to opening doors and improving lives of more families in our community. To make a donation or learn more, visit tulсахabitat.org.



Volunteer

Volunteers are the heart and soul of Tulsa Habitat for Humanity. Whether you're an individual, corporate team, community/faith-based group or just a group of friends, there are many different ways for you to volunteer. Please visit tulсахabitat.org/volunteer.



Advocate

Tell your friends, family and coworkers about our collective vision for a world where everyone has a quality, affordable place to live. If you'd like to schedule a speaker to talk to a group, contact Cheryl at ckane@tulсахabitat.org.

Tax Free Weekend
Saturday, August 5th
9 a.m. - 8 p.m.

~~R~~ ~~B~~ ~~A~~ ~~C~~ ~~K~~

TO

SCHOOL

School Supplies • School Uniforms
Backpacks • Back-To-School Clothes



Special Activities 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Food Trucks • Snow Cones

Games and Activities

Door Prizes every 30 minutes



 Tulsa
Habitat for Humanity
ReStore



1112 S Memorial Dr
Tulsa, OK 74112
918-359-5555



ReStore



Thrift Store

EVERYTHING OLD
IS
NEW AGAIN ✨



ReStore Rack thrift store employee Lanie Lee Sullivan helps a young mother and her daughter in the store located at 1112 S. Memorial Dr.

Most nonprofits rely on sizable monetary donations not only to fund their programs but also to cover administrative and other overhead costs. Ideally, a nonprofit could be self-sustaining and allocate virtually all donated dollars to programs that carry out their mission. Tulsa Habitat for Humanity is fortunate to own two internal revenue generators which do just that.

The Habitat ReStore and newly minted ReStore Rack provide stable positive revenue streams that ensure Tulsa Habitat for Humanity remains a vibrant and viable nonprofit and is consistently poised to further its mission of building homes, communities and hope.

The Habitat ReStore-A Profitable Solution to a Generous Problem

Far from a planned business model, the original concept for the Habitat ReStore became a necessity based on the generous donation of furniture, used appliances and other household goods by the general public.

The Habitat ReStore concept started in 1991 as Habitat affiliates began to receive donations of building materials and household goods that donors thought could be used in Habitat homes. Though the generosity was greatly appreciated, it proved impractical to redesign blueprints to fit the dimension of specific doors, windows and cabinet sets that had been donated. Instead, Habitat affiliates began selling these donated items to the public and using the proceeds to cover costs of homebuilding. Currently, there are nearly 800 Habitat ReStores in the United States.

At Tulsa Habitat for Humanity, our ReStore has been a consistent source of revenue that helps to offset our operating costs. “The retail arm of Habitat for Humanity gives us the opportunity to grow in a sustainable way,”

says Tulsa Habitat Executive Director, Cameron Walker. “Most non-profits, when they raise one dollar, so much of a percentage of that dollar goes to salaries and keeping the lights on. We’re in a position due to our retail endeavors to use all of that dollar for program support.”

The ReStore is staffed by volunteers, prospective homeowners working on their “sweat equity” hours, and private sector individuals. “There’s about 10 people working at the store, 3 or 4 drivers - about 15 paid employees,” says Molly Dunbar, former Assistant Manager of the Restore. “We also have community service workers and people in our program working on their required homeowner program hours.”

In addition to a donor drop-off site at the store, the ReStore also offers mobile pick up to anyone who requests it. Sorting, cleaning and inventorying of the donated bulk material is time consuming, but the profits from the donations and the ability to resell furniture, building supplies and appliances to the public at greatly discounted prices makes it a worthwhile business model. Not to mention the fact that recycling of these materials is saving incalculable amounts of disposal fees and landfill space.

Innovation Modeled on a Proven Winner

The ReStore Rack takes the model the Restore has used for furniture and appliances and applies it to more traditional thrift store faire. “It’s an old model, but a proven one as we’ve seen with the success of the ReStore,” Walker says. “We’re using donated materials that still have life, and still have value, and we’re using that to directly support our operations.”

The true innovation of the ReStore Rack owes itself to the model originally created by the ReStore itself. “For years, when

people donated goods to the ReStore, they would donate a bag or two of clothes along with the furniture or other things that they dropped off,” Director of ReStore Rack Operations Pamela Fields explains. “We used to then donate those clothes to thrift stores who could resell them. Now we have our own store, so our donation model works on two levels.”

Employing this new platform of reselling provides the opportunity for more jobs, more volunteerism and, of course, more revenue. Donation centers at both stores take all donation items and transfer them to the store that is appropriate, and even the clothing items that cannot be resold get collected and turned into rags for future use.

Several Habitat for Humanity affiliates have a thrift store component to their ReStore operations, but Tulsa’s Habitat has been the first to have a stand-alone store as a model. Walker sees the success of the flagship ReStore Rack as an opportunity to grow and has plans for more stores in the works, “We will have more ReStore Racks in Tulsa County, as the opportunities present themselves.”



Tulsa ReStore Rack thrift store employee, Rosemarie McGee, sorts and prepares clothing to be sold.

Robust Retail as a Base for Giving

While the Tulsa Habitat for Humanity retail stores are a steady and impressive source of revenue generation, it should not be assumed that donations directly to the Habitat affiliate office are not a necessary and appreciated form of fund raising. In fact, current and prospective donors alike can take comfort in knowing that their gifts are going towards worthwhile programs at an organization that will be viable and resilient for years to come, thanks to consistent internal revenue streams.

“Our donors’ donation dollars are building homes and providing more affordable housing for people in our program,” says Todd Klabenes, Tulsa Habitat Chief Operating Officer. “They don’t have to worry that a percentage of the money that they give is going to be siphoned off for salaries, utilities and other operational costs. People donate based upon the true mission of a non-profit. From that perspective, it should be very comforting to donors to know that 100% of their donations are funding our mission to provide affordable housing and access to financing that we have become known for.”

Fundraising efforts and financial gifts from donors go to support the more visible and reported upon efforts of Habitat – namely, the building of homes. What the ReStore and the ReStore Rack allow Habitat to do is devote the funds of our major gifts towards the work that habitat is known for rather than supporting staff salaries, paying office rent or any other number of other mundane and pedestrian economic necessities. “First and foremost, the biggest benefit is that they pay the bills,” says Todd Klabenes, Chief Operations Officer for Tulsa Habitat. “All of our operating costs come from the ReStore and the Rack. Prior to opening the Rack, the ReStore did not fully cover all of our costs on a monthly basis. This required us to dip into reserves to make sure that people got paid and the lights stayed on. With the addition of the Rack, we are in a place where we are operationally self-sufficient.”

For those that might view Tulsa Habitat’s Retail innovation as a sign that the organization is self-sufficient enough to be overlooked when it comes to monetary donations, it’s important to consider plans for future growth. “Yes, we are sustainable today doing the amount of work we are doing, building the amount of homes we are building,” Walker explains. “But we are looking to grow. Our goals are to build about five times as many homes per year, so that makes it all the more important that we are sustainable on the operations side and can use ALL of our donations and partnerships to build homes for local families that need them.” 🏠



Boston’s finest and Tulsa ReStore Employee, Steve Cribbie, sorts donations at the ReStore home improvement store at 1234 S. Norwood Ave.



BUILDING A SOLID FOUNDATION

Tulsa Habitat Executive Director Cameron Walker (far left) presents St. Bernard of Clairvaux's Deacon Richard Campbell (center) and Mnsgr. Patrick Gaalaas with the Heart Of Habitat Award.

On April 8th, at the Steel Toes and Stiletto Gala, the Parish of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux received the second annual “Heart of Habitat” award for its long history of contribution to Tulsa Habitat for Humanity.

Seven days prior, the parish and Tulsa Habitat celebrated the wall raising of a beautiful, craftsman-style bungalow in the Kendall-Whittier neighborhood. This marked the eighteenth home constructed through the partnership between the Parish of St. Bernard of Clairvaux and Tulsa Habitat for Humanity.

For twenty years, the parish has worked tirelessly with Tulsa Habitat to provide safe, quality and affordable housing to those who need it. In that time, the parish has donated more than \$500,000 to Tulsa Habitat, and its parishioners have served in the capacity of board members, volunteers, and individual donors.

As many of the Saint Bernard parishioners will tell you, the partnership between the parish and Tulsa Habitat is largely due to one man: Deacon Richard Campbell, who served as the parish's Justice and Peace Coordinator for nearly 30 years. As Deacon Tim Sullivan - the newly appointed Justice and Peace Coordinator - puts it, Deacon Campbell was “the impetus” behind the church's involvement with Tulsa Habitat.

However, Deacon Campbell is not one to take credit for the homes that have been built and the families that have been helped as a result of the church's partnership with Tulsa

Habitat; in fact, if you ask him about it, he will talk mostly about the generosity of his parishioners and all of the work that they have done over the years. “It was my project to start,” he says, “but certainly they continued and carried it on.”

The Saint Bernard parishioners have undoubtedly been among the most hardworking and dedicated volunteers for Tulsa Habitat. “At house 18, you would have probably found 15 or 20 [parishioners] that can go back to almost every house that we have built,” says Campbell.

The hard work and generosity that Deacon Campbell and the Saint Bernard parishioners have exhibited over the past twenty



Tulsa Habitat's Josh Bryan and St. Bernard's volunteer Vic Alonzi analyze the next step in the build.

(Right) Treak Tasker and other St. Bernard volunteers move a wall into place. (Below) Sawdust flies as volunteer Dan Lubojacky gets the boards cut to size for the St. Bernard's sponsored home.



years reflect the church's belief that, as the Reverend Monsignor Patrick Gaalaas puts it, "A strong family should have a sturdy home." This straightforward yet powerful conviction, which inspired the church in 1997 to partner with Christ the King Parish to sponsor a Tulsa Habitat home for the first time, is manifest still today as the parish begins to raise funds House #19. The Saint Bernard Parish's heart of compassion and generosity and its profound commitment to helping others have both been unwavering over the past twenty years, and, for this reason, the church embodies the heart of Habitat. 🏠



Tulsa

19TH ANNUAL HABITAT FORE HUMANITY



Golf Classic



Tuesday, October 17th • The Patriot Golf Club

To sign up or for more information contact Thomas Golden @ tgolden@tulahabitat.org

A LEGACY OF GIVING



In April, Tulsa Habitat for Humanity announced the first ever Jimmie Swindler Spirit Award. Named after the longtime Tulsa Habitat volunteer and donor, the award represents the spirit of generosity that is exemplified by its namesake.

Jimmie Swindler's history with Tulsa Habitat for Humanity starts in 1995, when he began volunteering with the Tuesday Morning Miracles Workers - a crew of around 40 retirees that together have built more than 40 houses for Tulsa Habitat and who were the recipients of the first ever "Heart of Habitat" award last year. Bob Sanborn, one of the group's co-founders, remembers inviting Swindler soon after the crew's inception. "I said, 'I'll pick you up Tuesday morning,' and I picked him up every day we worked for the next 20 years," Sanborn says, his smile giving way to laughter.

Swindler's long history of philanthropy is not limited to his work with the Tuesday Morning Miracle Workers, however. Along with his late wife, Nancy, Swindler is the largest individual donor for Tulsa Habitat, having provided challenge grants, contributed the seed funding for the ReStore Rack Thrift Store, and sponsored 37 Habitat homes - six of which he has co-funded with talk radio host and author Clark Howard as a part of the Howard/Swindler Project. He also helped establish the Tuesday Morning Miracle Workers Endowment Fund at Tulsa Community Foundation.

When talking about his involvement with Tulsa Habitat, Swindler emphasizes the joy of knowing that his contributions have helped others. "It's a good feeling to know that you're helping people to the extent that Habitat helps people," he says. "The dedication and seeing people get their own house, you know, you see that it's been worth it."

Over the past 20 years, Swindler's generosity has been both profound and multifaceted. He has donated not only financially but has given his time and energy as well, contributing countless hours of service in the construction of Habitat homes. He is an important member not only of the Tuesday Morning Miracle Workers but of the Tulsa Habitat for Humanity family as well, and he consistently inspires those around him by his eagerness

to help others. "He's got a heart as big as all outdoors," says Sanborn.



Jimmie Swindler (left) and Bob Sanborn at the first home build sponsored by Jimmie and the Tuesday Morning Miracle Workers.

By introducing the Jimmie Swindler Spirit Award, Tulsa Habitat seeks to capture Swindler's enthusiasm for and commitment to helping others. Hilti, Inc. was chosen as the first ever recipient of the award. Hilti began its partnership with Tulsa Habitat in 2006, after the idea was suggested by Matt Schaefer, a former Materials Manager for Hilti and an avid volunteer for Tulsa Habitat - he jokes that he came down with a case of "infectious habititus." Now, eleven years later, Hilti has contributed more than \$700,000 and sponsored 15 Habitat homes as well as various programming initiatives.

Hilti's contribution is not merely financial. As a company that aims to be a "good local citizen," Hilti actively encourages its employees to be involved with local charities such as Tulsa Habitat. In fact, Hilti requires all employees selling its products to come to Tulsa for three weeks, during which they work a half-day to a full day on a Habitat site, building homes with Hilti tools. Hilti's involvement with Tulsa Habitat has become deeply ingrained in the company's culture, with its



(Above) Hilti's Jerry Metcalf braces the raised wall. (Right, Below) Hilti employees helping Tulsa Habitat prepare land for a new home build.



employees frequently volunteering on Habitat projects. Hilti is also a frequent contributor of supplies to Tulsa Habitat, donating tools and surplus vehicles.

Chris Jones, the Senior Manager of Facilities at Hilti and Tulsa Habitat for Humanity's Volunteer of the Year in 2012, says that the company's motto is to "passionately create enthusiastic customers and to build a better future." Their devotion to bettering the community is evident in their history of generosity and hard work for Tulsa Habitat.

When talking about the dedication ceremonies of Habitat homes and seeing a new homeowner receive the keys, the Senior Manager of Environment Safety at Hilti, Jerry Metcalf, sounds noticeably similar to Jimmie Swindler. "That's what you do it all for," he says. "That's what makes it worthwhile." 🏠

NEW T THE NEIGHBORH D

With the brutal military junta actively persecuting members of their Zomi Christian minority with forced labor, violence and other injustices, Benedict Khup and his young bride Veronica made the agonizing decision to flee Myanmar in search of a safe place to begin a family.

The couple escaped to Malaysia in 2006 with the hope of enlisting in the UN Refugee program and gaining asylum in the U.S. However, due to a large influx of Burmese refugees, they were in for long wait in crowded conditions and with little means of support.

They finally gained entry into the U.S., arriving in Dallas in 2014. The couple, who now had two small children, heard about the Burmese community in Tulsa, including a Zomi language church, housing and available jobs, and made the move here in 2015.

Benedict soon found work, eventually taking a job doing air conditioning assembly at Aeon, and the family moved into a two-bedroom apartment in South Tulsa. Soon after moving here, Benedict and Veronica learned about Tulsa Habitat for Humanity through their church and other friends who have benefited from the program. Benedict says he's already looking ahead to a time when his home is paid off and he can invest more of his income into his children's education and their future. But, the kids are still very young. Right now, he says, he'll just be relieved to have a larger home where they can play and just be kids without fear of disturbing the neighbors.



Zam Lian (Benedict) Khup and Awi Khan (Veronica) Nuam with their children daughters Zen (age 5), Niang (age 1) and son Pau (age 3).

Humans of Habitat

SPOTLIGHT



Julie Aggus

- Director of NGL Accounting, ONEOK -
- Tulsa Habitat For Humanity Board Member -

How did you get involved with Tulsa Habitat for Humanity?

I first got involved with Tulsa Habitat working on a build many years ago. Four years ago I was approached by a member of the Tulsa Habitat Board of Directors about getting more involved and volunteering more time. Through this process I learned that Habitat was about much more than just providing people with homes. Habitat doesn't give away anything; instead it helps people work towards a better future for themselves and their families by teaching financial literacy and helping people overcome obstacles to home ownership.

Habitat for Humanity changes the course of someone's path in life. It provides stability. It helps strengthen families. Habitat also rebuilds neighborhoods in Tulsa. After learning about the amazing benefits that Habitat provides, I was eager to volunteer my time and resources whenever I could. And with the ReStore, it is easy to donate household items. For example, when I got new kitchen appliances I called up the ReStore, and they sent a truck to pick up my old appliances the next day.

What benefit do you get from your donations/service?

Besides the tax benefit (I'm a CPA, so I love my tax deductions), I enjoy knowing the impact that my donations make. Before my involvement in Habitat, I never understood the impact to families in the program. It is truly life changing. It is easy to donate, and every donation makes a difference.



The discount home improvement and more store.

New and used items including paint supplies, tools, furniture, appliances and more.

Shop • Donate • Volunteer

100% of the profits from the ReStore go towards building homes, communities and hope in the Tulsa area

918-359-5555 • Open To The Public • tulsarestore.org



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tulahabitat.org • 918-592-4224



ReStore®



Thrift Store

Buying Here Builds Homes

1112 S Memorial Dr. Tulsa, OK 74112

Monday - Saturday
9 am - 8 pm