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The San Gabriel Valley Habitat for Humanity creates lasting change by providing affordable homes for those in need.

BY: Julie Carlson

“All the work we do here at San Gabriel Valley Habitat for Humanity is based on a simple concept of partnership: families in need of a decent place to live build safe and affordable homes in partnership with Habitat for Humanity and our community,” says Lindsey Lottie, marketing director and PR manager for the organization.

Habitat for Humanity’s guiding principles and mission are: demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ, focus on shelter, advocate for affordable housing, promote dignity and hope, and support sustainability and transformative development. The global nonprofit housing organization has affiliates based in 1,400 communities in the United States and approximately 70 countries across the globe.

Families receive a hand up by working side-by-side with volunteers from faith institutions, corporations, schools and civic groups to build a place they can call home. Selection of applicants is based on three criteria: level of need, willingness to partner with HFH and ability to repay a mortgage through an affordable payment plan. This is referred to as “sweat equity.” Mortgage payments are deposited into the “Fund for Humanity” account and are used to build additional houses.

For 27 years, the San Gabriel Valley Habitat for Humanity affiliate has been instrumental in providing over 300 low-income men, women and children housing and home repair, regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, familial status, disability, marital status, age, ancestry, sexual orientation, and source of income. They are also proud to be recognized by Charity Navigator, an American independent charity watchdog organization with a four-star rating.

The 501(c)(3) California organization services communities from Glendale to Azusa to South El Monte. The first project for the organization was a two-story duplex on Maple Street in Pasadena and was completed in 1992. Since 1995, SGV Habitat has completed 12 housing developments with 62 homes in five cities: Pasadena, Glendale, Duarte, El Monte and Monrovia. Glendale has had the most with a total of 43. Throughout the year of 2016 and 2017, they have worked toward the goal of completing their

“This fiscal year, San Gabriel Valley Habitat for Humanity is embarking on more new home construction and home repairs to address the growing need for safe, decent and affordable housing,” says Lottie. “We’re on track to partner with 54 households in need of adequate housing through the construction of 19 new homes in Pasadena and Glendale and the repair of 35 homes across the San Gabriel Valley.”

SGVHFH welcomes monetary donations and sponsorship throughout the year. There are many ways to get involved—volunteering your carpentry skills, crew leadership, hospitality, getting the word out to your congregation, and assisting at their ReStores. Habitat ReStores are nonprofit home improvement stores and donation centers. Their Atwater Village and Azusa ReStores are open to the public Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Every Tuesday, seniors and military can shop and save 15 percent at both San Gabriel Valley Habitat for Humanity ReStore locations.

“We sell new and used home goods, furniture, appliances and building materials,” explains Lottie. “All donations and purchases help fund our mission right here in the San Gabriel Valley.”

For the fiscal year of July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, SGV Habitat for Humanity has raised 10 percent of their \$1.2 million fundraising goal. 2017 also welcomed a new executive director, Mark Van Lue, who has worked with Habitat for Humanity for 18 years, starting his career in 1999 as a Construction Manager in South Bend, Indiana. He has led projects in India, Nepal, Vietnam, Cambodia, Nicaragua and Costa Rica, including in the United States.

“I am excited to join the dedicated team at SGVHFH, and to help grow our capacity and impact on affordable housing in Southern California,” says Van Lue.

Another addition to the team is Frances Hardy, director of resources and development, who adds, “We engage more than 4,000 adult and youth volunteers per year. To increase the number of families and individuals served this year, we’re seeking 8,000 volunteers. We welcome volunteers of all skills levels and backgrounds. We provide all the necessary training and tools.”

No matter your age, and if you’re interested in making a life-long impact there are numerous advocacy, education and fundraising opportunities available, such as on campus youth programs for ages 16 and older. SGVHFH also provides home repairs to low-income veterans who own and live in their own home with overdue exterior home repair services.

“Habitat for Humanity creates real, lasting change,” says Lottie. “When those in need of adequate housing partner with us, our volunteers and supporters, the result is a situation where homeowners can save more, invest in education, pursue opportunity and achieve financial stability. These improved and affordable living conditions lead to better health, stronger childhood development and the ability and flexibility to make forward-looking choices.”