

## **Habitat for Humanity of Hillsborough County Receives Grant Award from State Farm Insurance**

Tampa, Fl. [March 11, 2024] – Habitat for Humanity of Hillsborough County is honored to announce it has received a grant from State Farm Insurance for \$10,000.00 which will help a struggling family realize their dream of homeownership. Funds from the grant will support material costs for a new single-family home build for the Barnett family, Marco and Shannon and their six children who range in age from 15 to one year.

The Barnetts are in urgent need of decent, affordable housing. The family has struggled to find a stable place to live since they moved to Florida. For a few months, the family even experienced homelessness. “It was difficult not having a place to lay your head and to just take a hot shower and to relax,” Marco shares.

Currently, the Barnetts are squeezed into an overcrowded apartment where the rent keeps increasing year after year. The situation is even more stressful because the apartment has multiple maintenance issues that management ignores. “It was difficult to get an apartment. I still worry about going back to that situation where we had been,” Marco remembers. “I work in healthcare as a Certified Nurse Assistant. Even though I work very hard I am in constant fear of one day not making enough with cost of living going up.”

The Barnetts discovered Habitat Hillsborough when they were looking for a solution and were thrilled to be accepted into our homeownership program. “Words cannot explain how much we really appreciate the work, the tears, the sweat and the time and the knowledge and most importantly the love and dedication in building not just a home but a foundation in friendship.”

“What home means to me is stability. A place where we can raise up family. A place we can call home without not knowing where we will live. A place we can actually get involved in the community to make a positive impact,” Marco shared.

As part of the Habitat program, the Barnetts have committed to completing 300 hours of sweat equity, building their own home and the homes of others, and will take a Habitat educational curriculum which include courses on budgeting, finance, and home maintenance to help the family on their path to successful homeownership. Through Habitat Hillsborough, the Barnetts will receive an affordable mortgage which will be no more than 30% of household monthly income.

### **About Habitat for Humanity of Hillsborough County**

Habitat for Humanity of Hillsborough County became an affiliate in 1987 and is part of a global, nonprofit housing organization founded and operated on Christian principles. Habitat Hillsborough is dedicated to eliminating substandard housing locally through constructing,

rehabilitating and preserving homes; by advocating for fair and just housing policies; and by providing training and access to resources to help families improve their housing conditions. In addition, they serve homeowners through their home preservation program.

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