



DuPage
Habitat for Humanity[®]

Annual Report FY2020

July 1, 2019 – June 2020





A Note

As a result of COVID-19, more than 300 million people in 42 states have been asked to “stay at home” – and now more than ever, home is everything.

DuPage Habitat has launched the Homes, Communities, Hope + You campaign to ensure that we are able to continue and accelerate – our work in DuPage county to ensure that everyone has a decent place to call home. As the economic shocks from this crisis ripple out, the need for affordable, safe and healthy housing is more apparent than ever. Our homeowner information attendees have increased more than 18% over the same period last year, demonstrating the growing need for affordable housing in DuPage.

Words from our leadership

George Mulligan – Board

This last year has been an extraordinary one for our staff, volunteers, donor communities, homeowners, and future homeowners. Amid the Coronavirus pandemic and much civil discontent, it is a perfect time for DuPage Habitat for Humanity to re-focus on our mission. We remember why it is so vital that we carry on our efforts and even increase the numbers of families we aspire to serve in DuPage County. Through all the devastation this year brought, we have learned once again how important family and shelter are to those people most in need of assistance to find affordable housing.

Even before the struggles of 2020, we knew that families who can rely on affordable housing are more likely to thrive. Their children are more likely to perform better in school. They will then enjoy a better quality of life. Since March, the many closures and layoffs have disproportionately affected those parts of the population who most need DuPage Habitat's assistance. Meanwhile, COVID-19 hit the most physically vulnerable people the hardest. Without safe, affordable housing it is more challenging for those citizens to isolate and harder for them to protect themselves and their families.

Our fiscal year at DuPage Habitat runs from July to June. So about three quarters of the past year were under more or less "normal" times. As you review our annual report, we ask you to consider how much more difficult DuPage Habitat's work will be moving forward. We are gratified at how much we can get done under unprecedented



conditions; these times remain a big challenge - but we are not backing down. We continue to build and to help families, though the mission is much more complicated now than it was last year at this time. We need your support more than ever. Please look through this material and as you do so, look in your own heart to see if there are ways you can help us with a financial gift now. And as conditions improve in the coming months, consider volunteering on our construction sites or at one of our Habitat Restores.

As ever, we are grateful for whatever you can share, even if it is only your prayers that our staff, volunteers and homeowners remain safe and productive.

George

Words from our leadership

Dave Neary – Executive Director

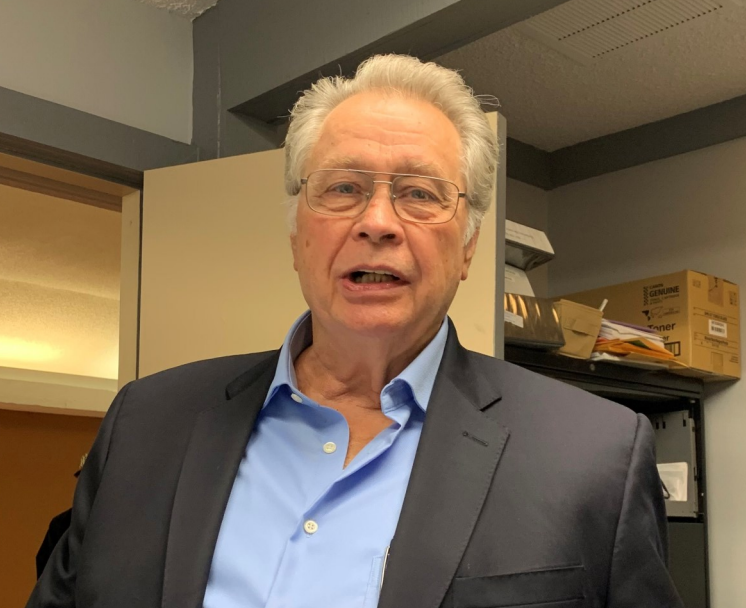


Dear Friends,
I am excited to be presenting our report for the two affiliate service areas we now represent, Chicago South Suburbs and DuPage County! This partnership was a great achievement this year and we are excited to combine resources and add to them to increase our impact on the communities we serve.

There is plenty to reflect on in the past year, in some ways it feels like we have compressed multiple years in the past twelve months. To say it was challenging would be understatement. The convergence of a global pandemic, economic recession, and natural disasters on one hand, integrated with the important discussions on racial justice and equality on the other hand, accentuated the growing wealth gap in our country and throughout the world. Many would sum up this year as challenging and unprecedented. That is certainly true, but we have experience that before. We have survived recessions, natural disasters, and many significant operational challenges. So when the most challenging circumstances in our history presented itself, we did what we always do, we figured out how to survive and thrive. When some reduced staff, we increased. When people couldn't be

together, we kept people connected. While some lost their resolve, we increased our resilience.

I am so proud of our staff, volunteers, and financial supporters for their dedication to meet the challenges of the past year. Counting those families that we helped internationally, we provided homes and repairs to 61 families. We also continued to engage communities and deliver services through our Neighborhood Revitalization efforts. We have learned how to pivot in these times and will continue to do so.



Left Picture: Jim Slater at the Community Club House in Tanglewood (undated picture, courtesy of Jim Slater)

Right Picture: Tanglewood Community Volunteers in front of the Community Club House

Homes + Communities

The community of residents at Tanglewood in Hanover Park consists of resilient homeowners who revitalized their community through hard work and dedication. A lack of adequate maintenance on the property left the infrastructure of Tanglewood deficient after many years. There were noticeable problems with the roofs of many properties and communal spaces. The drainage system was ineffective, and many of the streetlights were not functioning correctly. In conjunction, these problems created a neighborhood that was not conducive to a strong sense of community. Nevertheless, the Tanglewood Homeowners Association (HOA) board members were determined to improve the neighborhood infrastructure and create a safe and vibrant community that the homeowners deserved.

When Jim Slater joined the Tanglewood HOA board in 2009, he saw plans to improve its infrastructure and safety. They had the will to do the work needed. They just needed to find a way to garner the necessary resources to make their dreams of a better community become a reality. Those resources came in the form of a new partnership with DuPage Habitat for Humanity in 2015. DuPage Habitat was beginning a townhome development in the adjacent neighborhood. Soon after, they were partnering with the Tanglewood HOA in Chicago's northwest suburb to help the residents build a strong sense of community and hope while improving their quality of life.

"Habitat was always successful in helping achieve a higher quality of life." - Jim Slater, Tanglewood HOA Member.

By establishing a partnership with DuPage Habitat, Tanglewood residents were able to get support through funding and resources that were needed to take on the large scale neighborhood improvements that they had been planning for so long. They began with improving the infrastructure of the buildings and community spaces. Each project came with significant improvements to the residents' safety. Improving the roofs and drainage systems allowed for those who lived in Tanglewood to feel safer in their homes, and it helped reduce further damage to the properties. Replacing the outside lighting system allowed the residents to feel safer in their community. These *(continued on next page)*

improvements were only the beginning of creating a safer and more engaged community.

Improving the lighting and drainage system was just the foundation to revitalizing the Tanglewood community. The smallest of resources can create the most significant lasting impacts in a society that is struggling. In partnership with DuPage Habitat, the Tanglewood HOA began to spearhead projects that were much smaller than a full lighting and drainage overhaul but brought changes to those in the community's quality of life. Creating a strong sense of community ownership takes more than improving the infrastructure of the neighborhood. By



enriching the lives of residents, Tanglewood was able to create a community that helps sustain itself.

Bolstering the safety and accessibility of the residents has been an essential factor in building a strong community. DuPage Habitat continued this push for a safer community by securing resources to purchase video surveillance cameras to distribute to Tanglewood residents. These devices allowed residents to have access to additional security for their homes.

As a former educator, Jim Slater looks fondly upon the revitalization projects that improved Tanglewood's youth's quality of life. With support from DuPage Habitat, a summer enrichment program began that provided students with tutoring from schoolteachers. Children also can read books from the Little Library and work on the community garden with the HOA board members. Jim feels that all of these projects have given him and the other HOA board members hope that they are planting the seeds of a strong community for the next generation. He takes pride in helping the next generation see a hopeful future for their community. He sees volunteering in the neighborhood revitalization projects as a lifelong learning experience that will stick with them for life.

Taking an active role in revitalizing their community has given Tanglewood residents a sense of pride and community ownership. Residents were encouraged to participate in the betterment of their environment. They were part of the process every step of the way. They created a deep sense of community by working on their property revitalization projects and those for their neighbors together. By working alongside one another to improve their neighborhood, Tanglewood residents have taken charge of their narrative. They've reaffirmed our belief at Habitat that anyone can be the hero of their own story when they have space and resources to improve their situation.

The community of Tanglewood has remained strong in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the added challenges that the pandemic has brought, Tanglewood continues to think about its community's future and how to make it brighter. In the summer of this year, they plan to update and modify their community facilities. They are also planning to install permanent handicap accessible entrances to their public spaces to help create a more inclusive community.

346

Individuals enriched their lives through the Neighborhood Revitalization program



3,515

volunteers

1,058

diverted tons of waste by three ReStores



Hope

Brianna Gillies' journey to becoming a volunteer Construction Leader began over nine years ago right here at DuPage Habitat for Humanity. During college, Brianna attended two volunteer spring break trips with Habitat, and she hasn't looked back since. She quickly worked her way up to crew leader, dedicating time each week to volunteer serving others. She fell in love with the construction sites and the teamwork needed to have a successful build. Through hard work and passion, Brianna was able to earn the title of Construction Leader over eight years ago.

"It's an amazing opportunity being able to work with everyone on the construction site, it becomes one big family."

Brianna has a knack for applying her skills in other areas of her life. As a second grade teacher she is able to bring her positive energy and collaborative nature to the build site. She enjoys sharing with her students how what they are learning relates to the build site and Habitat. She has gained a plethora of knowledge on construction and home improvement from the construction team, which has helped her with some of her own projects. Beyond all of the knowledge and life experience she has gained volunteering with DuPage Habitat for Humanity, Brianna is most grateful for the community she has created with other volunteers.

"It's just being around like-minded people that you meet on-site, and just knowing that you're all working toward a common goal while helping somebody achieve homeownership that makes it all worth it."



Brianna Gillies' determination to make a difference is inspiring to others, and she has taken Habitat for Humanity's mission to provide safe affordable housing for all and made it her own. Sharing her passion for creating affordable housing with other volunteers at DuPage Habitat for Humanity helped Brianna create a bigger and brighter community.

Through another church organization, she was able to participate in a rebuilding of a community in Costa Rica alongside other Habitat volunteers she met at a build site. Brianna has taken the passion she found volunteering at DuPage Habitat for Humanity and turned it into her own, and continues to serve her community faithfully.

Brianna Gillies is a true leader to the DuPage community both on the construction site and off. She uses her experiences gained through Habitat for Humanity to help inspire compassion and teamwork in her classroom. Despite working full time as a second grade teacher, she still dedicates time from her busy schedule each week to volunteer with DuPage Habitat for Humanity. She even goes out of her way to volunteer on weekends and breaks from school to have a bigger impact on her community. She inspires passion and diligence within the volunteers who work with her, and she has inspired and encouraged other individuals to serve the mission of creating affordable housing as faithfully as her. Brianna is a true inspiration to those at Habitat for Humanity, and the community is made brighter through her work.

5

Families
purchased
safe and
affordable
homes



150

Individuals learned
about responsible
homeownership

83

Individuals repaired
and improved the
place they call home



+ You

DuPage Habitat for Humanity is thankful for our many generous donors who seek a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Included on this list are commitments from donors whose gifts or grants were made directly to DuPage Habitat or represent a multiyear commitment.

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