

# January 2019

## News from the CREW

Happy New Year and welcome to the first-ever “News from the CREW!” We are really excited for 2019 and new Women Build activities coming up in Portland. Thank you for being part of Women Build through your generous financial contributions. We truly cannot do this work without you.



*Habitat Portland's Women Build creates space for women and girls to learn, build, and lead.*

### New ways to step up for Women Build

**Join the CREW** -- What's the CREW, you ask? **The CREW stands for “Connecting Resources to Empower Women”** and we are fueling Women Build's work in Portland. This year's effort is to support women who will be part of Habitat's 12-home build site which will be breaking ground soon on North Olin Street in Portland. If your personal resources allow you to make Women Build a high priority in your charitable giving this year, and you can help connect others to our work, please contact me to learn how you can join the CREW!

**Bring your own crew to a build** -- As a valued donor to Women Build, you are eligible to bring your personal crew of 3-8 friends, colleagues, and family to come out to the build site for a CREW build experience. Contact me at [Lauren@HabitatPortlandMetro.org](mailto:Lauren@HabitatPortlandMetro.org) to get started.



### Did you know...

There are **NO neighborhoods where an average single woman with children can live affordably in Portland?** The median income for a single mother with two children in Portland is about \$26,000 and, according to the City of Portland’s Housing Bureau report released in December 2018, affordable housing for single mothers is nowhere to be found in the open market.

For all moms, housing instability causes frequent moves and creates challenges in school for children and stressors at work. If a mom doesn’t move, she risks living in crowded and even unsafe living conditions. Housing instability has profound negative effects on a mother’s physical and mental health, and her children’s well-being.

And, in areas with high student turnover due to housing instability, frequent moves negatively affect classrooms and whole schools as children continuously readjust and lose ground in their academic skills.

**The term for spending more than 30% of income on housing is “cost burdened.”** With unaffordable rent and other fixed or rising expenses (transportation, school supplies, phone, utilities, food), women with low incomes are forced to double up and live with family or friends, go without many necessities, or risk going deep into personal debt.

**Nearly 40% of Habitat homeowners in Portland are single parents,** and the vast majority of those are in women-led households. Some women have fled domestic violence, others have struggled in other ways to gain independence in their lives. They have all persevered against the odds – and instead of being cost burdened, a Habitat homeowner can depend on an affordable mortgage payment in a well-built home. She can take care of herself and her family **on her own terms.**

Not only is Habitat homeownership incredibly empowering for her, she takes pride in helping to build her own and her neighbors’ homes. And after she moves in, she is building equity in an asset that she can share with her children in the future.



## Mark Your Calendar for Women Build!

**March 2-9 is Habitat's 2019 Women Build Week!** International Women's Day is March 8 and we're getting ready to celebrate in Portland. Volunteer spots are available for a very special Women Build Day on **March 9** at our Cully build site. Contact [Cassie@HabitatPortlandMetro.org](mailto:Cassie@HabitatPortlandMetro.org) if you want to volunteer on the build site.

**April 24 is Habitat's annual HopeBuilders Breakfast.** Please join us for the most inspiring hour of the year! Host a table and bring your friends, co-workers, and family members to the Oregon Convention Center. Contact me at [Lauren@HabitatPortlandMetro.org](mailto:Lauren@HabitatPortlandMetro.org) to be part of this amazing event on behalf of Women Build.

**May 11 is Mother's Day with Women Build** – save the date and contact [Cassie@HabitatPortlandMetro.org](mailto:Cassie@HabitatPortlandMetro.org) to learn more about this special build day on May 11.

**June 15 is NE Portland's Cully build site home dedication** (Phase One), including the dedication of the home of Minh Nguyen and her five daughters, generously sponsored by the amazing Women Build team in 2017-2018.

## Finally, a Home of Their Own

"Every mortgage payment will be a gift to my children," stated Tonya, one of our newest homebuyers, as she was beginning her journey with Habitat in 2017. Tonya is a nursing assistant and a single mother of three. She was living in a rental apartment in Southeast Portland with her two sons. Her daughter lives in a medical foster home because her disabilities require constant care.

Although Tonya visited her daughter often, she was unable to have her visit their apartment because it was not accessible to a wheelchair. Tonya was featured in our HopeBuilder Breakfast video in 2017 ([click here to watch](#)), completed 300 hours of sweat equity, and purchased her ADA accessible home with an affordable Habitat mortgage in our new 10-home Brooklyn Pines community in SE Portland.

Not only do Tonya's lively boys now have space to grow and play, her daughter can be with her family for visits. "There's finally some peace to know that I will be able to sit next to my daughter, have dinner, and be with all of my children at the same time."

**Thank you for your support. We hope to see you soon!**



In partnership,

Lauren Johnson, for the CREW

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