



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Roger Schwierjohn 602-262-8640
President / CEO

Habitat House Leads the Way with Energy Efficient “Green Building”

**Habitat’s Goal -
To Build its First LEED-Platinum Certified Home in the United States**

PHOENIX, AZ (*September 23, 2008*) – Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona (HFHCAZ) is excited to announce its goal to achieve Platinum level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification on a home in Glendale which starts on September 27, 2008. A wall-raising ceremony marks this “green” occasion at 9:00 a.m. at 6601 N. 54th Avenue in Glendale (54th Ave. & McLellan). **Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs, Glendale City Councilmember David Goulet, and Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon** will present remarks during the ceremony

From a property blighted with trash and unsightly weeds to a new Habitat for Humanity home, this Glendale neighborhood will be transformed over the course of two weeks. This two week accelerated build project will have hundreds of volunteers from Arizona Foursquare Churches, proud first-time homeowners and several corporate partners helping to make a difference.

When **Arizona Foursquare Churches** approached HFHCAZ about building their sponsored home “Green”, they didn’t stop there. In a collaborative effort, this partnership knew they were on to something even better: “LEED Certified” with the possibilities of achieving a Platinum level.

Having lived in Glendale’s public housing for nine and one-half years, the Acosta family is proud to become first-time homeowners. Mr. and Mrs. Acosta, along with their two grandchildren they are raising, were approved for the homeownership program by Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona after a rigorous application process. They are overjoyed at the prospect of their home being affordable through an interest-free mortgage. And they are thrilled about lower utility bills due to building practices that are environmentally responsible.

"It has been our joy and privilege that the Arizona Foursquare Churches have had this opportunity to live out loud the message of Jesus Christ - that we should love our neighbor in word as well as in deed," said Pastor Mark Leuning of Desert Springs Foursquare Church.

One hundred forty-four Platinum level homes have been built and registered across the U.S. Another 749 Certified, Silver and Gold homes are also registered. This Glendale home will be the third Platinum level home and the first “Affordable Housing” Platinum level home in Arizona and possibly the first in the USA.

LEED, the Green Building Rating System developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), provides a suite of standards for environmentally sustainable construction. LEED certified buildings use key resources more efficiently when compared to conventional homes or buildings which are simply built to code. LEED certified buildings are healthier living environments, which contributes to higher productivity and improved health and comfort.

These benefits do not come without a cost, however. Green buildings can cost more both to design and to construct when compared to conventional buildings. However, the savings for the homeowners are both immediate and measurable, especially with water and energy consumption. This house brings together several entities each making a significant contribution. The City of Glendale, through their Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, partnered with Habitat on this property. This home is being built for the Acosta family by the **Arizona Foursquare Churches** and made possible by the generous contributions from **Jenny Norton, Bob Ramsey and Schaefer Construction Company**. After agreeing to underwrite a portion of the building cost, Jenny Norton and Bob Ramsey provided additional funding for the extra expenses related to building this home LEED certified.

“With our history in alternative and renewable fuels promotion, solar and wind energy research and promotion, and housing first needs, Jenny and I are privileged to help Habitat for Humanity achieve the Platinum designation for the Acosta’s home. We hope to journey together towards affordable housing partnered with global sustainability,” said Bob Ramsey.

Mark Schaefer, owner of Schaefer Construction Co., and HFHCAZ have also secured numerous in-kind partners to make this project possible: T & T Concrete Contractors Inc., Waste Management of Arizona, Whirlpool, BEST Landscaping, Alliance Plumbing, Sharp Drywall, and Square Care are some of the generous in-kind donors participating in this project.

The LEED program is designed to require third party validation to verify “green” construction. Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona is proud to distinguish themselves through their upcoming platinum build. Now as official members of the USGBC, Habitat Central Arizona looks forward to future building sites implementing LEED build practices.

ABOUT HABITAT FOR HUMANITY CENTRAL ARIZONA

Serving Central Arizona since 1985, Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona (HFHCAZ) is a grassroots Christian housing organization dedicated to eliminating poverty housing by building affordable housing. Habitat helps families of low and moderate incomes become homeowners. HFHCAZ also builds community partnerships that promote spiritual values and individual responsibility.

Since its inception in 1985, the Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona affiliate is one of the most active of the Habitat affiliates and is responsible for the building of more than 703 new homes. Currently the affiliate is active in Apache Junction, Avondale, Chandler, Gilbert, Glendale, Mesa, Peoria, Phoenix and Surprise.

Habitat for Humanity International, based in Americus, Georgia, is an ecumenical Christian ministry dedicated to eliminating poverty housing. Habitat International will be soon be dedicating its 300,000th house and has over one million people living in Habitat homes they helped build and are buying through no-profit, zero-interest mortgages.

Visit our website: www.habitatcaz.org

For more information about building Green visit

National USGBC www.usgbc.org or AZ Chapter <http://chapters.usgbc.org/arizona/>

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