



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Cathy Herlinger
Communications Manager
Habitat for Humanity Susquehanna
Direct: 410-980-7390; Main: 410-638-4434
cherlinger@habitatsusq.org

Volunteers from Harford Academy contribute maximum allowable limit (100 hours) towards Habitat homebuyer's "sweat equity" hours

Habitat homebuyer's daughter has cerebral palsy and is a student at the school

BEL AIR, MD (Feb 2, 2023) – On January 28, approximately 15 members of Bel Air's Harford Academy (formerly known as the John Archer School) volunteered to help Habitat homebuyer LaTera Lawhorn towards completing her required 250 hours of "sweat equity." The volunteers contributed the maximum allowable limit -- 100 Friends & Family hours -- in a show of support for the single mother of two, whose older daughter attends their school.

"Harford Academy staff is spending one of our Saturday's to volunteer because our school community is a family and this is what we do. We come together to support each other. Family is what our school is all about," said Harford Academy's volunteer build organizer, Rachel Otremba, who is a Special Education Teacher and Technology Support Specialist at the school.

Although they worked at Habitat for Humanity Susquehanna's current build site on Erie Street, Havre de Grace, construction of LaTera's future home on Ohio Street won't begin until the March timeframe. It will include wheelchair-accessible features, as

LaTera's daughter has cerebral palsy and does not walk. Members of the school plan to come back once that home build site is open to volunteers.

"Samiya has been attending Harford Academy since she was 3 years old," said LaTera. "That school has been family to us, so when her teacher Ms. Rachel found out when we're getting a house, she instantly asked how she could help. I explained to her about my construction hours. Ms. Rachel, along with other teachers, were 100 percent on board."

As with all Habitat Susquehanna homebuyers, 200 of LaTera's required "sweat equity" hours will go towards building her Habitat home or the home of another; and, the remaining 50 hours will go towards taking mandatory financial literacy classes (in order to learn good money management skills) and home maintenance classes. Approved homebuyers must go through the rigorous financial review process to ensure they are eligible candidates for Habitat Susquehanna's Homeownership Program. The eligibility criteria include demonstrating a housing need; showing an ability to make monthly mortgage payments; and, willingness to partner with Habitat Susquehanna.

"My family is so grateful for the school and staff," said LaTera. "It makes me feel like I will never be alone. They have my back."

People interested in volunteering at any of the current home build sites can register through Habitat Susquehanna's website at www.habitatsusq.org.

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About Habitat for Humanity Susquehanna, Inc.

Habitat for Humanity Susquehanna, Inc. is an ecumenical Christian housing organization devoted to building, renovating and repairing houses in partnership with the community in Cecil and Harford counties. Since its inception in 1993, Habitat Susquehanna has served over 700 families through its Homeownership, Repair and



Financial Literacy programs. For more information, call 410-638-4434 (Harford County) or 410-398-3399 (Cecil County), or visit www.habitatsusq.org.