



Elicia Nekut
Future Homeowner

Annual Report



Habitat
for Humanity®
The Heart of Wyoming, Inc

Looking Forward

A word from Habitat for Humanity, The Heart of Wyoming's Executive Director



In December 2019, Habitat for Humanity homeowner Tifanee Jackson (above) purchased her first home through the Homeownership Program.

Together is where our best work happens.

The very concept of working together is at the center of our mission. Habitat for Humanity homes are built in Natrona County because volunteers, supporters, future homeowners, and staff work together.

In a year of uncertainty, access to safe, affordable housing has never been more important. Together, in spite of many challenges, we were able to build three homes with partner families. Together, we were able to select five new future homeowners to participate in the Homeownership Program. Together, we are able to look forward to more ways we can serve our community.

On behalf of Habitat for Humanity, The Heart of Wyoming's staff and Board of Directors, we continue to be humbled by the community's commitment to fulfilling our mission. Together, we can make homeownership possible for deserving members of our community, and in turn make it a better place for us all to call home.

Best,

Tess Mittelstadt
Executive Director

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Sarah Thayer
The Heart of Wyoming's
17th Homeowner

A Dream is Realized

Sarah Thayer purchased her home from Habitat for Humanity, The Heart of Wyoming in 2001. This year, Sarah paid off her mortgage in full, becoming the second homeowner in the organization's history to achieve this goal.

While giving a tour of her home, Sarah recalled the building process. She drew attention to kitchen cabinets built by a dedicated volunteer and her shed, which was constructed by local Eagle Scouts. With each story Sarah shared of the community's role in building her house, her pride in her home became more apparent.

Since purchasing her home 19 years ago, Sarah has continued to invest in the property, installing a sprinkler system and building a detached garage. Almost two decades after the unforgettable experience of building her own home with support from her community, Sarah is now anticipating reaching another unforgettable milestone: having her mortgage paid in full.

"It won't sink in until the first month I don't have to make a payment."

Sarah Thayer
purchased her
home (right)
in November
2001.



A Place to Grow

Future Homeowner Elicia overcomes obstacles to be selected for the Homeownership Program

With no construction experience to speak of, Elicia Nekut, 25, is excited to build her own home for herself and her daughter Emmi, 7.

“When people come to visit my home, I can say ‘I built this,’” Elicia said. “I have never built anything, but I think building my own home will make me value it more.”

Elicia has been a sales representative with 307 Metal Works for more than three years. She enjoys her job, but had her hours reduced earlier this year as a result of the pandemic. After applying to the Homeownership Program in January 2020, Elicia was not sure if she wanted to try again. It was her mother that encouraged her to do so.

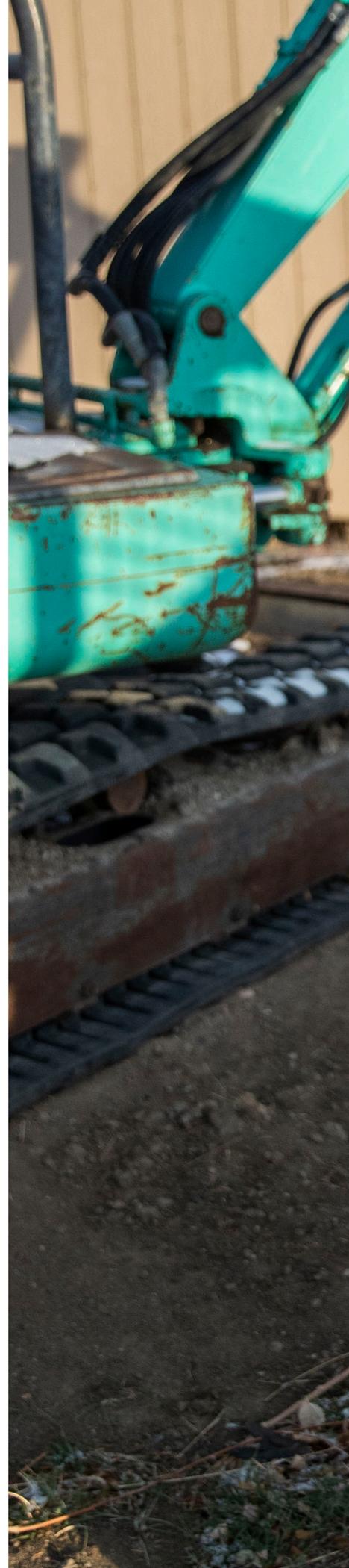
Elicia has been living in affordable housing for six years, but does not feel like her apartment is truly her home. Her daughter, who loves the outdoors, has not had a place to play outside due to safety concerns. Consequently, Elicia and Emmi spend much of their time at her parents’ home.

By becoming a homeowner, Elicia will be able to host company in the future and invite her extended family to her own home. More importantly, Elicia wants to provide safety and stability for her daughter.

“I want somewhere she can grow up, and where I can start a new chapter as a mom,” Elicia said.

While her daughter may not fully understand how homeownership will change their lives, Elicia is eager to free herself from the restrictions that come with living in an apartment building.

“I’m looking forward to closing day and moving in,” she said. “I want my own home.”





Affordable housing enables people to pay for other basic needs such as utilities, food and medical care. It also increases the amount families can put toward savings for the future.

Emmi Nekut
Future Harris
Crossing Resident



Chelsea Thomas
Future Homeowner

Under Construction

Future Homeowner Chelsea reflects on the building process

Future Homeowner Chelsea Thomas was selected from the January 2020 Application Cycle. In April, construction began on Chelsea's home in the Harris Crossing subdivision. Being a part of the construction process has given her a new perspective on homeownership.

Chelsea had been looking for a home for herself and her daughter, Lillian, for more than two years. Every home in her price range was a foreclosed property that needed extensive repairs. With limited options, Chelsea began to explore other opportunities, including Habitat for Humanity.

"Having a child, you need someplace you can go right into and not be worried about any health issues," she explained. "I am ready to take on my responsibility and see this as a new milestone in my life."

Before her partnership with Habitat for Humanity, Chelsea had never built anything. Today, Chelsea has spent more than 80 hours at the construction site, building her own home and those of her neighbors. That means she's more than halfway to reaching her sweat equity requirement.

"Being a part of the building process has given me a sense of pride that I wouldn't have gotten another way," said Chelsea.

"I have learned to appreciate the hard work that goes into owning a home. Knowing that you will be responsible forever is a huge deal, but it also gives me the opportunity to be independent and overcome a challenge."

In reflecting on her partnership with Habitat for Humanity, The Heart of Wyoming, Chelsea believes it is important that future homeowners like her understand the work will be hard but worthwhile.

"This is an opportunity to take a step toward a better life. Know that the effort put into this is a reward in itself. Do not be afraid to ask questions, and feel pride for yourself that you have made it here."

Since the infrastructure was completed in December 2017, seven homes have been built in the Harris Crossing subdivision. Currently, two additional properties are under construction and four families are actively participating in the Homeownership Program.



For Her Family

Future Homeowner Constance takes a step toward homeownership

Constance Lozano was one of three partners selected to participate in the Homeownership Program from the August 2020 Application Cycle. Like all future homeowners, Constance's path to homeownership is unique, but her motivation to purchase her own home has always been her family.

Constance, 43, was at work when she learned she had been accepted into Habitat for Humanity, The Heart of Wyoming's Homeownership Program. As a receptionist for Central Wyoming Skin Clinic, Constance knew she had to remain professional, but inside she was filled with disbelief. Once at home, she cried tears of joy.

Constance will be sharing her new home with her two youngest sons, Xavier, 16, and Joseph Kane, 12. Her eldest son Alex, 19, is attending college.

"I was so elated. I was over the moon," said Constance. She celebrated by making phone calls to her tearful mother, her sisters, and her father.

And then there is Grace.

Grace, Constance's daughter, died from kidney and liver disease in 2016 at the age of 17, but she will always remain part of the family.

Constance believes Grace saw their need for a home and has had an important role in their family reaching this milestone.

Currently, Constance and her family live in income-based housing. Their apartment has been broken into, and violent crimes regularly occur in the area. When first moving to Casper, Constance and her children lived in her sister's basement, but Constance wanted more for her family.

"Casper has been very kind to us," she said, mentioning other programs that have helped her advance professionally and personally. Constance had learned of Habitat for Humanity's Homeownership Program, but she did not believe she had the financial stability needed to be considered.

Constance is looking forward to building her own home and helping her Habitat for Humanity neighbors do the same. Though nervous about the construction aspect of the program, Constance believes the experience of building her home will make it much more personal.

"The experience of putting something together that you're going to live in – you're going to want to keep it that way and take care of it," said

Constance. And when her family finally moves into their home, Constance knows Grace will be with them.

"To be able to talk about her brings me so much joy. Your loved ones are never really gone," Constance said. "Grace would have been so excited."

So is Constance.

"The experience of putting something together that you're going to live in – you're going to want to keep it that way and take care of it."



Habitat for Humanity, The Heart of Wyoming hosts two application cycles annually. For more information on the Homeownership Program and how to apply, visit heartofwyoming.org/apply.



Constance
broke ground
on her new
home at the
Harris Crossing
subdivision in
November 2020.

Constance Lozano
Future Homeowner

Building By You

Supporters committed to future Habitat for Humanity Homeowners

Like most organizations, Habitat for Humanity relies on those in the community to fulfill its mission. It is through volunteers and donors that we can continue to build.

In a year without events, Habitat for Humanity, The Heart of Wyoming hosted the first virtual Building By You campaign. Through Building By You, supporters were inspired by the cost of actual building supplies, with contributions of every amount directly supporting local building efforts.

“That sense of connectedness and a willingness to actively help shape the world around us for the better have always been a hallmark of Habitat and supporters like you. We have always believed that we will only find our way forward together. It’s true every day — and will be even truer now. The need we

work so hard every day to meet will only grow,” said Jonathan Reckford, Habitat for Humanity International CEO.

Above all else, the Building By You campaign reminded us that we cannot build alone. Through giving at all levels, supporters invested in our mission and committed to making a difference for future Habitat for Humanity homeowners in Natrona County.



Learn more about how you can support building locally at heartofwyoming.org.



Building Together

A special thank you the 2020 Building By You sponsors. Their generosity and the support of many others allows us to continue to build.

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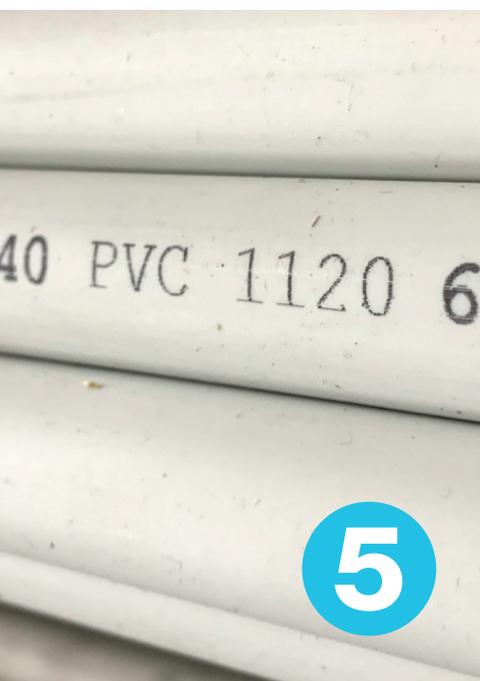
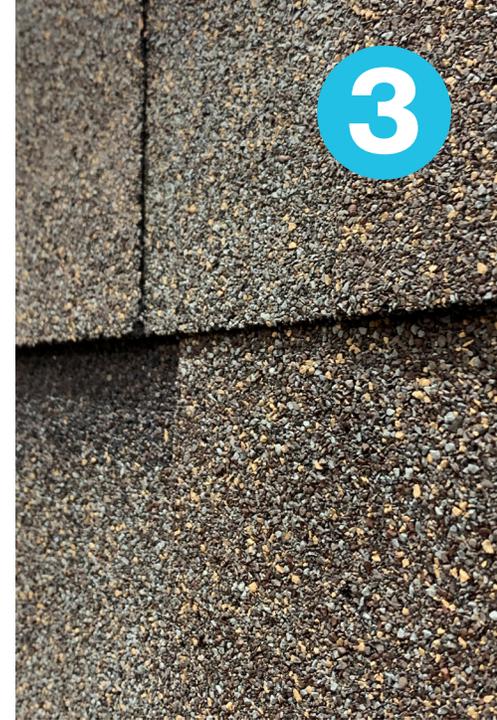
Grants and Foundations

U.S. Bank Foundation
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1. A donation of \$5,000 can help to purchase all framing supplies needed to build a Habitat for Humanity home.

2. A donation of \$30 can help to purchase a box of nuts and bolts.

3. A donation of \$60 can help to purchase two bundles of shingles.



4. A donation of \$250 can help to purchase a roll of electrical wiring.

5. A donation of \$70 can help to purchase 140 feet of PVC for plumbing.

6. A donation of \$10,000 can fund all materials needed for a foundation and driveway.



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232 E. 2nd St., Suite 204
Casper, WY 82601



Michael Simoneaux
The Heart of Wyoming's
41st Homeowner