



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Contact:

Habitat for Humanity Chicago  
Elza Ter-Arutyunov  
312.563.0296 ext. 447  
Elza.Ter-Arutyunov@habitatichicago.org

## Habitat for Humanity International and 84 Habitat affiliates receive transformational \$436M gift from MacKenzie Scott

Habitat for Humanity Chicago and DuPage Habitat for Humanity/Habitat for Humanity Chicago South Suburbs will use gifts to build healthy communities through affordable homeownership and neighborhood development

**CHICAGO, IL (March 22, 2022)** — Habitat for Humanity Chicago (Habitat Chicago) and DuPage Habitat for Humanity/Habitat for Humanity Chicago South Suburbs (DuPage/CSS), along with Habitat for Humanity International and 82 other U.S. Habitat affiliate organizations, recently received \$436 million in unrestricted giving from American author and philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. Of that, Habitat Chicago and DuPage/CSS received \$6 million, which will be used to expand the organizations' work and make catalytic investments in their focus neighborhoods. This transformational donation will substantially help further Habitat's vision of a world where everyone has equitable access to a safe, decent and affordable place to call home.

“Habitat Chicago is extremely grateful for this unexpected, and exceptionally generous gift by Ms. Scott,” said Jennifer Parks, executive director of Habitat Chicago. “Her donation will bolster our continued investment in neighborhood health by growing our programs in our focus neighborhoods of West Pullman and Greater Grand Crossing on Chicago’s South Side, as well as our expansion to Austin on the West Side.”

“This transformational gift will have an incredible and lasting impact on the communities we serve,” said Jennifer Taff, interim executive director for DuPage Habitat for Humanity/Habitat for Humanity Chicago South Suburbs. “Our approach is to collaborate with residents of a neighborhood to improve their quality of life. This generous gift will help us continue the work we have been doing in the Greenbrook Tanglewood neighborhood located in DuPage County, as well as launch our efforts in the Chicago South Suburbs neighborhoods.”

Habitat Chicago and DuPage/CSS will use this \$6 million unrestricted gift as a strategic investment in its focus neighborhoods to identify their greatest opportunities for growth. The affiliates work in partnership with residents to grow and expand healthy communities through homeownership, civic engagement, and



neighborhood development projects. These efforts help communities build generational wealth and bring about cyclical change.

The affiliates' focus neighborhoods have been impacted by decades of disinvestment, and past exclusionary housing policies, such as redlining and racial restrictive covenants, have blocked Black families from affordable homeownership opportunities, further widening the racial wealth gap and straining neighborhood health. With the support of transformational donors like Ms. Scott, these Habitat affiliates can, in partnership with residents, positively change the trajectory of their focus neighborhoods, and help families and communities thrive.

Habitat International will use its \$25 million portion of the donation to prioritize advocacy and programmatic efforts designed to dismantle systemic racism in housing. Specifically, the donation will allow Habitat to advocate for policy proposals and legislation that enable millions of people access affordable housing through its [Cost of Home](#) advocacy campaign; increase Black homeownership in the U.S. by targeting current systemic barriers through a new initiative that will launch this summer; and leverage innovative capital investments that service communities of color.

“Habitat works to break down barriers and bring people together — to tear down obstacles and build a world where everyone, no matter who we are or where we come from, has a decent place to live,” said Habitat for Humanity International CEO Jonathan Reckford. “This incredible gift helps make that work possible.”

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#### **About Habitat for Humanity Chicago**

Habitat for Humanity Chicago (Habitat Chicago) is a nonprofit organization that champions healthy neighborhoods by investing in affordable homeownership and community development projects. Habitat Chicago works at a community level to bring strength, stability, and self-reliance to our focus neighborhoods of West Pullman, Greater Grand Crossing, and Austin. For more information, visit [habitchicago.org](http://habitchicago.org).

#### **About DuPage Habitat for Humanity/Habitat for Humanity Chicago South Suburbs**

DuPage Habitat for Humanity/Habitat for Humanity Chicago South Suburbs is driven by the vision of a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Our mission of affordable homeownership as well as the development of thriving communities is the work that we believe transforms lives and builds strength, resilience, and hope. Visit [dupagehabitat.org](http://dupagehabitat.org) to learn more.

#### **About Habitat for Humanity International**

Driven by the vision that everyone needs a decent place to live, Habitat for Humanity found its earliest inspirations as a grassroots movement on an interracial community farm in south Georgia. Since its founding in 1976, the Christian housing organization has grown to become a leading global nonprofit working in local communities across all 50 states in the U.S. and in more than 70 countries. Families and individuals in need of a hand up partner with Habitat for Humanity to build or improve a place they can call home. Habitat homeowners help build their own homes alongside volunteers and pay an affordable mortgage. Through financial support, volunteering or adding a voice to support affordable housing, everyone can help families achieve the strength, stability and self-reliance they need to build better lives for themselves. Through shelter, we empower. To learn more, visit [habitat.org](http://habitat.org).