



THANK YOU FOR BEING A HABITAT HERO



And for joining a community of changemakers
building hope, one home at a time

Dear Friend,

What are you grateful for this holiday season? For many of us, gratitude comes from life’s simple joys - the laughter of children taking their first steps, holidays shared around the dining room table, or quiet moments at home that bring comfort and peace.

At Habitat for Humanity of Sonoma County, we know that home is where life’s most meaningful moments begin. For the Rodriguez family, home has become a constant: a foundation of safety and strength for parents Maricela and Benigno and their children, no matter what life brings. Their lifelong dream of home became a reality in 2010. Before moving into their Habitat home in Santa Rosa’s Roseland neighborhood, their family of six lived in a small two-bedroom apartment in Sebastopol. Their youngest daughter Mariana, now 20, shares: “Stability and comfort is what everyone hopes for and we have. I’ve always been happy in this home. Happy in this community.”

Over the years, their Habitat home has been a bedrock for growth and resilience. Maricela earned her teaching credential and began teaching preschool. When she was diagnosed with cancer two years ago, she was grateful to face recovery with the security of her home or her “slice of safety.” “I see the news, that things are happening or people can’t afford rent, and I thank God we have this. I go to bed happy that [my family is] safe. That **we** are safe.”



2010



2025

“I thank God that we have this [home]. I go to bed happy that [my family is] safe. That we are safe”

- Maricela

This home has been a constant blessing, not only for Maricela and Benigno, but for their children and now six grandchildren. When their eldest son, Benny, returned to California with his wife and children and struggled to find work, the family home was there to welcome them as they got back on their feet. Today, Benny is an electrician apprentice in San Francisco. Their youngest, Mariana, is preparing to study nursing at Sonoma State University. Three of their four children have pursued higher education, studying and building careers in teaching, public health, forensic science and firefighting.

Their Habitat home has always been more than four walls and a roof. It’s the place for singing, laughter, cooking, and the annual holiday family photo that celebrates another year together. A place where love, and generations, grow.

Building on Their Foundation: Introducing the Families of Blankenship Place

As we celebrate the Rodriguez family’s blessings, we also look to the four families at Blankenship Place, who are about to begin their new chapters. This is their last holiday season before they move into the homes they’re helping to build with their dreams within reach.



Kerrily



Maria



Jeremy & Melissa



Alaina

- **Kerrily:** Is excited for the generational change a home will bring to her sons' lives. "I am the most grateful to have the ability to settle down for good and give my boys the chance to really sink their roots into this amazing community. I can't wait!"
- **Maria:** Is grateful for the financial and emotional security owning her own home brings. "Knowing I won't have to move again or worry about the monthly payment going up. And knowing our family will finally have some genuine housing stability."
- **Jeremy & Melissa:** Are looking forward to the impact that space to thrive will have on their two kids, after years of this family of four sharing a small cottage. "The one thing we are most thankful for this holiday season is for our family to have a home to call our own. A place we can build new memories and build upon the ones we already have."
- **Alaina:** Is thankful for the chance to create lifelong memories with her daughter, who can now grow up in the same community where she goes to school. She's "excited to provide a space for us to gather and grow," knowing that owning a home is their ultimate place of safety & love.

Your generosity made stories like these possible. And right now, it's needed more than ever.

Rising to Meet the Need

In 2025, **more than 14,000 low-income renters in Sonoma County lack access to an affordable home**, and thousands of families are spending over half their income just to keep a roof over their heads (2025 California Housing Partnership report). The need for safe, stable, and affordable housing and a place to call home has never been greater. To meet this growing need, we're laying the groundwork to serve even more families in the years ahead.

Our future projects include two new housing developments planned for 2026–2028. These upcoming builds in Windsor and Healdsburg could provide up to 26 additional affordable homes in our community. From securing land to handing over the keys, every Habitat home takes years of planning, and the generosity of supporters like you fuels each step of the journey. Your continued support ensures that these projects become a reality and that more families can move from uncertainty to a place they call their forever home.

Together, We Build Hope

Every Habitat home begins with a vision: to give families the stability and opportunity to build brighter futures. For the Rodriguez family, that vision became reality. Their home has been a place of safety and love, and a launching pad for their children to pursue meaningful careers and bright futures. Now, four families at Blankenship Place are beginning their own journeys of homeownership, creating futures filled with the same sense of security and hope.

Each home we build is more than just a place to live. It's the start of a new chapter, made possible by the generosity of our Habitat Heroes. Take Sophie, one of our Heroes, for example. She donates just \$5 a quarter, yet her support helps local families thrive. Imagine **if every adult in Sonoma County gave just \$5 this quarter**. Together, **we could raise approximately \$1.45 million**, unlocking the potential to change lives across Sonoma County. One small act, like Sophie's, can create a ripple of change for generations to come.

Please join us in building homes — and hope — that last for generations. Everyone deserves a decent place to live. Everyone deserves a neighborhood to call home. Everyone deserves a community to where they belong.

With gratitude and best wishes for a joyful holiday season,



Misty Bastoni
CEO, Habitat for Humanity of Sonoma County