



Habitat Pinellas and West Pasco Habitat announce merger to serve more families in need



Good morning Habitat Pinellas supporters,

This morning, elected officials, community partners and supporters gathered for an exciting announcement concerning Habitat for Humanity of Pinellas and West Pasco Counties. **Habitat for Humanity of Pinellas County CEO, Mike Sutton and Habitat for Humanity of West Pasco CEO, Kobus Appelgrijn announced that the two nonprofit affiliates will officially merged, resulting in Habitat for Humanity of Pinellas and West Pasco Counties.**

The two affiliates have made great strides in creating affordable housing in our community; Habitat Pinellas was established in 1985 and is ranked as the second highest performing affiliate in the nation based on new home construction, and Habitat West Pasco has served over 80 families since 1993.

Habitat Pinellas recently celebrated their 500th home build in St. Petersburg, with a current total at 515 homes as of February 2019. In 2018, the organization served 140 families with 60 homes built, 60 homes funded overseas, 20 critical home repairs completed and with over 73,000 volunteer hours logged.

“Over the past 12 months, Habitat Pinellas and West Pasco Habitat have engaged in conversation 100% focused around serving more families”, said Mike Sutton, Habitat Pinellas CEO. “We know this step to merge the two organizations will lead to a stronger Habitat for Humanity presence in Tampa Bay and will exponentially provide more affordable housing opportunities in the region.”

Habitat for Humanity of West Pasco recently launched a 5-year project to revitalize a West Pasco neighborhood on Van Doren Avenue and Leisure Lane, known as Town and County Villas. Habitat West Pasco was established in 1993 and just last year impacted the community via home builds, essential repair work and over 12,000 volunteer hours.

“The need for affordable housing has never been greater”, explains Kobus Appelgrijn, Habitat West Pasco CEO. “Organizations that serve a similar population to Habitat are decreasing their reach or going out of business. This collaboration of two Habitat organizations will allow our organization to serve more families in our region. We will be able to consolidate our back office operations in both organizations, expand our reach with our ReStore retail operations, and most importantly build more homes in a larger service area.”

Habitat for Humanity of Pinellas and West Pasco Counties will serve the newly merged service area out of the main office in Clearwater and two offices in New Port Richey and St. Petersburg. No positions at either affiliate will be eliminated. In fact, the 56 employees in Pinellas and 12 employees in Pasco will soon grow as 2-3 new positions will be added in the coming weeks. The Board of Directors will merge to have 20-25 members. Mike Sutton will serve as President and CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Pinellas and West Pasco Counties.

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