



## **Whirlpool and Habitat for Humanity Raise Walls in Phoenix with Whirlpool® Building Blocks: Building 9 homes in 5 days**

### **Second Annual Community Build Continues Whirlpool Corporation and Habitat for Humanity's Mission to Eliminate Substandard Housing**

PHOENIX, May 14 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Whirlpool and Habitat for Humanity are raising walls on the second annual Whirlpool® Building Blocks project, a signature program created by the appliance brand to raise awareness of the affordable housing crisis in the United States. Starting today (and running through May 18), Whirlpool, Habitat for Humanity International, Valley of the Sun Habitat for Humanity and nearly 300 volunteers from around the country will build nine homes on a recently donated piece of land in Guadalupe, a small community located between Phoenix and Tempe, Arizona.

Roughly 300 volunteers traveled to the Phoenix metropolitan area for the Whirlpool® Building Blocks project, including Whirlpool employees and volunteers from across the United States. From start to finish, the volunteers will raise walls and roofs, landscape, paint and perform all other tasks to complete the nine homes in just five days.

"Whirlpool® Building Blocks is about bringing people together from all over the country to build homes in partnership with families in need," said Tony Chang, general manager, Whirlpool Brand. "Our goal is to have people experience the life-changing work of Habitat for Humanity and to create urgency and energy among consumers to join us to help eliminate poverty housing in this country."

"We are so happy to have a partner like Whirlpool that is committed to finding new ways to engage people in the work of Habitat as well as raise awareness and resources to support Habitat families around the world," said Chris Clarke, senior vice president of Communications for Habitat for Humanity International. "Through their efforts and passion, they initiated this project which only adds to the generous support they've provided to more than 35,000 families since our partnership began."

Whirlpool is one of Habitat for Humanity's largest corporate partners. The company donates a range and ENERGY STAR®-qualified refrigerator to every new Habitat for Humanity home built in North America. Each year, thousands of Whirlpool employees volunteer their own time to Habitat builds around the country. The partnership began in 1999, and Whirlpool plans to support every new Habitat home built globally by 2011, either through product donations, cash or home sponsorship. Whirlpool® Building Blocks began in November 2006 in Nashville, Tenn., where 300 volunteers from around the nation joined forces to build homes with 10 partner families in one week.

Each year, Whirlpool® Building Blocks recognizes an outstanding Habitat for Humanity affiliate in the United States and its relationship with its local community by holding a similar week-long building blitz.

"Whirlpool has been a generous Habitat partner for years. We feel grateful that our time has come to welcome their generosity to our community, and together, we will celebrate with the people of Guadalupe," said Christine Odom, CEO for Valley of the Sun Habitat for Humanity.

Arizona is growing three times faster than the rest of the nation. The recent building boom in Phoenix cannot keep pace with the need for decent, affordable housing for low-income families which has created an affordable housing crisis in the city. The Phoenix metropolitan area must produce 9,000 units of affordable homes a year simply to maintain status quo, but current production is only 1,800 homes per year, according to the Community Development Coalition of Arizona.

Census studies show the median price of an existing home in Guadalupe is \$58,900 and homes are about 25 years older than those in Phoenix, with many lacking plumbing, kitchen facilities, or phone service. The median wage in Guadalupe is \$15 per hour, pricing its 5,500 residents out of Phoenix market homes. Whirlpool employees, customers, and Habitat volunteers will work together to make the dream of home ownership a reality for families who would otherwise be priced out of a decent home.

In January, entertainment icon Reba McEntire joined Bernadette Jimenez, Mayor of Guadalupe, Whirlpool and the Valley of the Sun Habitat for Humanity affiliate representatives to announce the 2007 Whirlpool Building Blocks program.

For more information about this year's build, visit [www.whirlpool.com/buildingblocks](http://www.whirlpool.com/buildingblocks).

## **About Whirlpool Corporation**

Whirlpool Corporation is the world's leading manufacturer and marketer of major home appliances, with annual sales of approximately \$18 billion, more than 73,000 employees, and more than 70 manufacturing and technology research centers around the world. The company markets Whirlpool, Maytag, KitchenAid, Jenn-Air, Amana, Brastemp, Bauknecht and other major brand names to consumers in nearly every country around the world. Additional information about the company can be found at <http://www.whirlpoolcorp.com>.

## **About Valley of the Sun Habitat for Humanity**

Serving metropolitan Phoenix since 1987, Valley of the Sun Habitat for Humanity is a grassroots ecumenical housing organization whose mission is to eliminate substandard housing. The mission is to build affordable housing and community partnerships that promote spiritual values and individual responsibility. The Valley of the Sun affiliate is one of the most active of the Habitat affiliates and is responsible for the building of more than 400 new homes. Currently the affiliate is active in South Phoenix, as well as, Chandler, Mesa, Glendale and the Capitol Mall area. Additional information is available at: <http://www.habitataz.org>.

## **About Habitat for Humanity International**

Habitat for Humanity International, based in Americus, Ga., is an ecumenical Christian ministry that welcomes to its work all people dedicated to the cause of eliminating poverty housing. Since 1976, Habitat has built more than 200,000 houses in nearly 100 countries, providing simple, decent and affordable shelter for more than 1 million people. For more information, visit [www.habitat.org](http://www.habitat.org).

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