



Columbia County
Habitat for Humanity[®]
Builders, Bankers, Family Advocates

1993-2013
YEARS



What does Columbia County Habitat for Humanity do?

Since 1993, we have built safe, sustainable, affordable housing for lower-income working families. We function as bankers for these families, providing no-interest loans to people who don't qualify for conventional mortgages. We serve as advocates for our families on an ongoing basis, helping them navigate the new and often challenging experience of first-time home ownership.

Columbia County Habitat for Humanity is also a forceful advocate throughout the wider community for more affordable, sustainable housing, which is so desperately needed by working families across the county. To date, Habitat volunteers have built 16 new homes for families in Hudson, Copake, Valatie and Chatham.

Women Build is an annual program co-sponsored by Habitat International and Lowe's to stimulate women's participation in Habitat

programs. Our first Women Build project in 2008, which brought many new volunteers to Habitat, was the construction of a house on Mill Street in Hudson. Five subsequent projects have been smaller – making interior and exterior repairs, installing fences and putting the final touches on new Habitat houses, all completed in the same year as new house builds.

“Getting a home was truly a blessing, but experiencing the kindness and generosity of Habitat for Humanity is life-changing.”

Kia Walker

We also operate the ReStore, a retail store that sells new and gently-used furniture, appliances, building materials, tools, lighting, and many other items that contractors, landlords, and individuals need. Our merchandise is donated by local businesses and by hundreds of generous area residents. All proceeds from the ReStore go directly to support Habitat's construction programs. ReStore revenue has allowed Habitat to

expand our construction capacity, so that we're now able to build multiple houses in the same year.

Who does Columbia County Habitat serve?

In 1993, a small group in Chatham, led by Paul Grunberg, Rebecca McBride, and Stephen Phelps, the pastor of St. Peter's Presbyterian Church in Spencertown, were looking for a way to engage the community in a common cause. They identified affordable housing as a need and Habitat for Humanity International as a viable organization with which to affiliate. As an early activist says, “There are all kinds of causes, but a home is so important!”

“We went from surviving to thriving, thanks to Habitat.”

Jane Weaver

We reach many layers of the Columbia County community.

First and foremost are our families, whose incomes are generally too high to qualify for subsidized housing, but not high enough to meet the standards of conventional mortgage lenders. Often our families are multi-generational; always, they live in expensive, overcrowded housing that's unsafe and unhealthy.

The stability of home ownership benefits every family member. A Habitat home gives children the privacy and quiet space they need to study and work as well as a healthier environment. More secure in their futures, parents can be more engaged in their children's schools, which creates a stronger sense of community and confidence for everyone.

Affordable home ownership promotes adult learning and career advancement

as well. Since buying their homes, some Columbia County Habitat for Humanity householders have continued their own education, earning undergraduate and graduate degrees as well as professional certifications. These accomplishments help homeowners to maintain steady employment, even during hard economic times. Equally important, such efforts

support Columbia County's economic growth by providing local businesses with a better-educated local workforce.

Habitat's programs are about neighbors helping neighbors. They offer a way for people from many different backgrounds and life experiences to come together in common purpose: building a home, creating community, and expanding the future, one family at a time.

In the process of building their homes, our Habitat families have invested a total of more than 5000 hours of sweat equity – their down payments on a brighter future. In addition to the 300 hours that each family must volunteer with Habitat, the prospective owners must also complete courses in budgeting and household finance offered by Housing Resources of Columbia County, Inc. before they can close on their houses. Habitat homeowners frequently continue to volunteer on new builds and Women Build projects.



Where does Columbia County Habitat build these homes?

We build on underused or undeveloped property previously owned by a municipality, organization, or private citizen willing to donate or sell the land to Habitat at little or no cost. We're always looking for new building opportunities because there is an urgent need throughout the county for safe, affordable housing for working families.

Since Habitat's first house was completed in 1997 in Chatham, volunteers have built 15 other homes: one in Valatie, one in Copake and 13 in Hudson. The first house took 18 months to build. The current pace of construction is two homes a year and is expected to accelerate in the near future.

Launched in 2006, the Mill Street Campaign in Hudson has transformed an isolated block of mostly vacant land into a thriving neighborhood with the addition of five Habitat homes and families. Plans for more houses on Mill Street are in the works.

In 2010, Habitat advanced to a new level of capacity and long-term sustainability with the Columbia Street Campaign. We are the only Habitat affiliate in New York State building to Energy Star conservation standards, an initiative begun in 2009 with the fifth house on Mill Street. The twin townhouses at 444-446 Columbia Street are Energy Star 2 certified. The following build, at 240-

242 Columbia Street, added handsome 2-story, Energy Star 3 twin townhouses to a block that had been avoided by pedestrians for years.

Columbia County Habitat for Humanity took a giant leap forward in energy conservation and economic sustainability with our 2012-13 build, Phase III of the Columbia Street Campaign: the Columbia Passive Townhouses. Designed by BarlisWedlick Architects, the homes were sited and built according to Passive House standards. Passive Houses use 90% less heating energy and 70% less energy for other household needs, yielding their owners dramatic savings every month for the life of the homes.



Jane Weaver

HOMEOWNER, MOTHER OF SEVEN

"Since we moved into our house and saw what other people – strangers at first – had done for us, we wanted to give back to others. Everyone in the family, at some time or other, has been an active volunteer in the community. Joshua, who was 17 when the build began, did a lot of the sheet rocking and framing. Micah worked on the new Columbia Passive Townhouses; Benjamin is a junior Master Gardener and junior firefighter. I volunteer at the RoeJan Library and teach a dog obedience class for kids through 4H.

"Our home is such a blessing. Because of this house, my parents could move in with us after my dad was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Habitat has changed the lives of three generations of our family."

Kia Walker

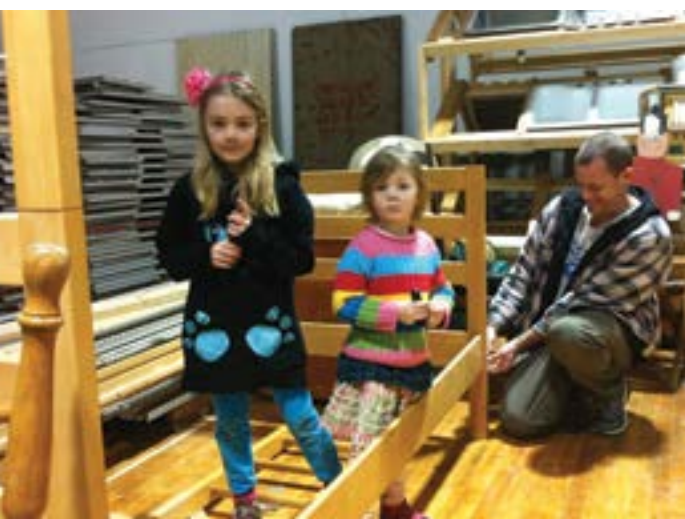
HOMEOWNER, MASTER'S DEGREE CANDIDATE

"The experience of becoming a homeowner for Habitat for Humanity is so overwhelming and yet humbling. We met so many people who gave up their time, talents, skills and money for a family that they knew nothing about. I didn't realize that there were still so many people in the world who cared. Sometimes I felt bad, because I knew that there was nothing that I could ever do to repay all those who helped make my family's dreams come true.

"On Mill Street we are not just five families who received a home from Habitat for Humanity. We are a community. Our children play together and look out for one another. We learn about each other's beliefs and respect each of the different cultures."

20 Years with Columbia County Habitat for Humanity





How does Columbia County Habitat work?

An all-volunteer organization when we began 20 years ago, Habitat hired its first executive director, Brenda Adams, in 2009. Initially part-time, that position is now full-time.

The ReStore opened in 2009 and this year added 50% more retail space, while the job of ReStore manager has become full-time. In addition, there are three part-time staff members working on communications and marketing, ReStore sales, and bookkeeping.

The 19 members of the Board of Directors lead and serve on the operational committees, including Family Selection and Advocacy, Site Selection, Construction, Finance, ReStore, and Development. Other volunteers also serve on committees, particularly Family Selection. Supervised by a Board member and the professional construction manager, volunteers on build sites, from diverse groups, including businesses, schools, and service organizations, work alongside the families who will live there.

To fulfill our mission, we depend on the commitment of volunteers to support every aspect of our work.

The ReStore, for example, which is open Friday and Saturday, serves more than 9,100 customers annually. This is possible only through the yeoman efforts of our volunteers, who work four days a week organizing merchandise, making pick-ups, and helping customers.

Volunteers donate more than 9,000 hours a year to Habitat, on construction, at the ReStore and for special events.

Regular ReStore volunteers include both individuals and members of community groups, such as Coarc, Berkshire Farm Center and Services for Youth in Canaan, The Red Door Community Residence in Hudson, and Ichabod Crane High School Habitat Club in Valatie.

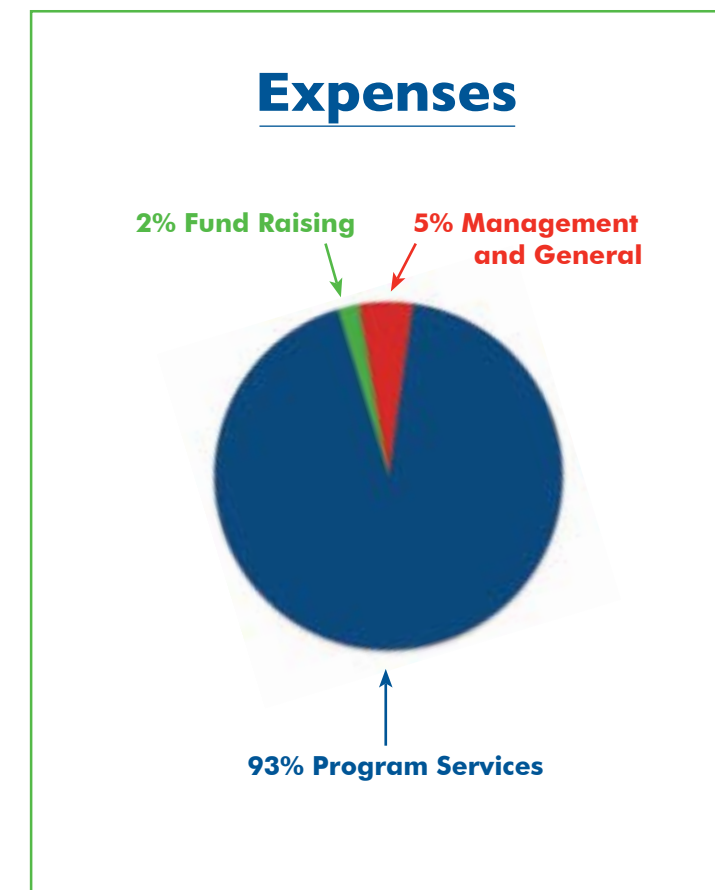
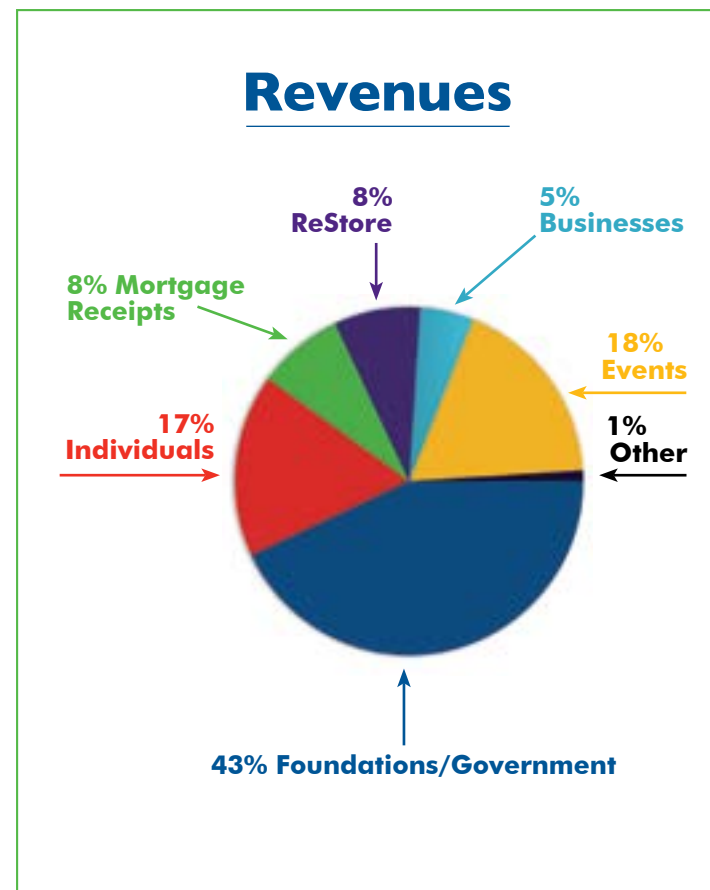
Columbia County Habitat has been recognized locally and statewide for our innovative and energetic programs. In 2012, the New York State chapter of

Habitat for Humanity awarded us its first Green Hammer award, acknowledging our progressive commitment to building energy-conserving homes, beginning with the Energy Star 1 house we built in 2009 and progressing to the Energy Star 3 townhouses completed in 2012.

This year, Habitat won the Community Service Award of the Columbia County Chamber of Commerce, saluting the Columbia Passive Townhouses project in particular.

Columbia County Habitat pursues financial support from a variety of sources, including grants from local foundations and businesses, the New York State Affordable Housing Program, and individuals. Habitat fundraising events take many different forms, from our Annual Gala, to brunches, to rock concerts, to our biennial ReCycle•ReCreate•Relmagine Art Show and Auction, and our Designer Show House. The ReStore's proceeds have enabled Habitat to build multiple houses in the same year, a significant boost in our capacity.

Habitat's homes have added \$1.9 million to County and local tax rolls.



93% of every dollar received by Habitat goes directly into building affordable housing.

"A house is not everything. People need food to eat. They've got to have a job. They've got to have education. But let me tell you something. A house is fundamental. A house is a foundation stone on which human development occurs."

MILLARD FULLER, founder, Habitat for Humanity International



Serving Working Families



20 Years = 16 Families Served

Investing in Sustainability

- 2009** Energy Star 1 home
- 2010** Two Energy Star 2 homes
- 2012** Two Energy Star 3 homes
- 2013** Columbia Passive Townhouses

To Volunteer

Visit www.columbiacountyhabitat.org or call 518.828.0892

To Shop at the ReStore

Stop in Fridays & Saturdays, 9am to 5pm
829 Route 66, just north of 9H, behind Village Dodge

To Donate Items to the ReStore

Call 518.828.0892

To Join Habitat's Email List

Email gmoore@columbiacountyhabitat.org

To Give to Habitat

Visit www.columbiacountyhabitat.org or mail your contribution to:
Columbia County Habitat for Humanity
829 Route 66, Hudson, NY 12534

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