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March 16, 2009

## **Youth Advocate for Affordable Housing**

*Habitat's Act! Speak! Build! Week scheduled for March 29th through April 5th*

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GAITHERSBURG, MD (March 16, 2009) – On March 29, 2009 Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery County (HfH-MC) will kick off its week of youth advocacy with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Lego Blitz Build event. At the event, HfH-MC and the Westfield Montgomery Mall will host teams of Montgomery County youth for a fun day of Lego building, and a reflection on the work of Habitat and the need for affordable housing in our county.

Act! Speak! Build! Week is Habitat International's, student-initiated advocacy campaign that seeks to empower young people to educate themselves and their communities in order to move people to social action. This year's theme is "Make Housing a Matter of Action!" Along with the Lego Blitz Build, HfH-MC has planned a number of fun and educational advocacy activities for Act! Speak! Build! Week.

"We are very excited about last year's success in getting youth involved with Act! Speak! Build! Week, we hope to not only mirror that success this year but to out shine it," said Theresa Dellomo, HfH-MC Youth Programs VISTA.

Other Act! Speak! Build Week activities include the "Paper House Campaign" which consists of stringing up rows of 30 paper houses throughout the county along with information about Habitat for Humanity. The 30 paper houses represent the 300,000 Habitat homes that have been built worldwide. The goal of the project is to show community members that Montgomery County youth care about the need for affordable housing and to inspire them to get involved in Habitat's mission. The "Poverty Awareness Dinner" is an event that gives youth the chance to learn firsthand about the importance of affordable housing. Youth will take part in an interactive dinner that provides them with a greater understanding of poverty housing issues.

Registration for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Lego Blitz Build is open to youth ages 7-18. Individuals or teams can download the registration form online at [www.habitat-mc.org](http://www.habitat-mc.org). Questions about any of HfH-MC's Act! Speak! Build! Week events can be directed to Theresa Dellomo at 301-990-0014 x21 or [theresa.dellomo@habitat-mc.org](mailto:theresa.dellomo@habitat-mc.org).

### **About Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery County**

HfH-MC is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International. In November, 2008, the affiliate launched the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP). In partnership with the Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA), Habitat will purchase and rehab vacant foreclosed properties in designated areas of the county. HfH-MC supports the notion that good, stable housing matters for neighborhoods. Better quality of living leads to stronger citizens and families. Habitat for Humanity is about changing lives, one home at a time.

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