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Pride Build Gains Momentum in Montgomery County

HFH-MC's inaugural Pride Build gains support from local decision makers and LGBT supporters

GAITHERSBURG, MD (April 6, 2011) – In December of 2010 Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery County, Maryland, Inc. (HFH-MC) launched its inaugural Pride Build venture. “Pride Build 2011” is a “specialty home-build” in which members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community, along with their friends and families, commit to raise the funds and volunteer to help rehabilitate a distressed home in Montgomery County. The project will result in a deserving family moving into a simple, decent, energy efficient and affordable home which will be sold to them with a 30 year, 0% interest mortgage as part of the HFH-MC program.

HFH-MC has a rigorous application process for their future partner families. All potential applicants are required to attend an information session on the HFH-MC program. HFH-MC's next information session will be in mid-May at the HFH-MC office in Gaithersburg. HFH-MC accepts applications from every race, color, cultural heritage, national origin, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, physical condition, political affiliation, source of income, and veteran status.

In launching “Pride Build 2011”, HFH-MC became the third Habitat for Humanity affiliate in the United States to partner with gay rights leaders in such an undertaking. Since December, the all volunteer Steering Committee of Pride Build has been working to raise the money necessary to finance construction on a home. To date the group has raised \$23,000 of the \$60,000 necessary to complete the project. “The Pride Build committee has done amazing work so far. They’ve gained great momentum for the project, but there is still a lot of work to do,” Executive Director of HFH-MC, John Paukstis said.

“Pride Build 2011” has received endorsements from local and state legislators, along with major LGBT groups. The Honorable Jeffery Slavin, Mayor of the Town of Somerset, a member of the Pride Build committee said, “I am thrilled to be a part of the Pride Build project because it engages the LGBT community of Metro Washington, DC in a project like none other. It also raises awareness of the issue of poverty housing in our area, something that affects all demographics.”

In addition to Mayor Slavin, Pride Build has the support of Maryland State Delegates Anne Kaiser (District 14), Bonnie Cullison (District 19) and Heather Mizeur (District 20) and Mayors Peter Fosselman (Kensington) and David Lubin (Chevy Chase). Along with these legislators, Pride Build has also earned support from the Capital Area Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, *The Washington Blade*, and Marriott International.

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Adding fuel to their strong momentum, Pride Build will be holding the “Building Upon Pride” reception on Thursday, May 19th, at Mayor Slavin’s home in Chevy Chase/Somerset. Guests will include state and local legislators and officials, as well as a collection of prominent LGBT business executives and community leaders. Donations to this event will go towards Pride Build efforts.

If you would like to learn more about Pride Build, register for the “Building Upon Pride” reception, or to donate specifically to Pride Build please visit http://www.habitat-mc.org/events/pride_build.html.

About Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery County

HFH-MC is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International. Since 1982, Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery County has been partnering with the community and low-income families living in substandard conditions, to build simple, decent, affordable housing. To date, HFH-MC has served 66 local families. 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. Visit our website at www.habitat-mc.org.

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