



Habitat Happenings July 26, 2016

Habitat Bergen's 22nd Annual Gala By Pamela Nall



Thank you to our sponsors, guests, donors, volunteers and staff who made our 22nd Annual Gala on May 10th a success! Guests spent the evening enjoying the chance to win one of many wonderful silent auction items and tricky tray baskets, which included prizes ranging from an HDTV donated by our corporate sponsor Samsung, to a trip for two to Napa Valley to a variety of gift certificates to local restaurants. The guests were treated to entertainment by Lori Michaels and her salsa dancers from The Viibe Dance Center who not only WOWed the crowd with their dance moves but got the crowd showing off moves of their own on the dance floor. Thank you to AJ Luna, Director of Veteran Services at the Bergen County Division of Veteran Services, who spoke about the importance of veteran services locally. Visit our Facebook page to see our 22nd Annual Gala [photos](#).

Want to get involved, but don't want to build? Join our Family Support Committee! By Pamela Nall



Habitat Bergen is seeking volunteers to join our Family Support Committee, and we need your help! With the construction of our Bergenfield home currently underway, our partner family and future homeowners, Carlos and Geovana Pimentel, will soon begin working with the Family Support Committee to prepare for first-time homeownership!

What is the Family Support Committee?

A volunteer-driven committee that serves to prepare and guide our partner families throughout the process of first-time homeownership, and provide ongoing support to homeowners after they move in.

What do committee members do?

- Prepare for closing on the home with the Construction Team
- Work directly with the Pimentel family to ensure they successfully complete their 400 hours of sweat equity in time for the closing date
- Develop and implement a Homeowner Readiness program, which includes recruiting and training a partner family mentor(s) and building a homeownership education program with classes such as:
 - Budgeting and financial management
 - Homeowner maintenance and safety
 - Closing process and legal matters
- Plan the Home Dedication Ceremony with Habitat Bergen's staff, when the Pimentel family will be presented with the keys to their home

The Committee meets monthly, at Habitat Bergen's office in River Edge, during a weekday evening. If you are a Bergen County resident, this is a great way to **get involved** with Habitat Bergen **without lifting a hammer!**

Please contact [Pamela Nall](#) if you are interested in joining the committee.

Meet our NYC Marathon Team

By Pamela Nall



It's hard to believe that in less than four months our team of five runners will be participating in the NYC marathon. Not only are they running 26.2 miles throughout the five boroughs of NYC, they are also raising money on our behalf to aid us in our efforts to provide affordable housing in Bergen County. Here's a sneak peek into our inspiring team of runners. Click on their name to read more about each one and we encourage you to donate a dollar a mile to one runner. Your support is appreciated.

Lauren used her training for the Wyckoff triathlon in June to jump start her marathon training! Having completed multiple half marathons and the NJ marathon, this is her first NYC marathon which she's hoping to finish in four hours. Her "go to" pre-race energy meal is peanut butter on flat bread.

Tara has conquered the NYC and Philadelphia marathons before, but this is her first time running the NYC marathon on behalf of a charity partner. She's hoping to break the five hour barrier this year and finish in 4.5 hours or less! Her race mantra is "I can do this, I will do this, at the end of today I will have run the NYC marathon!"

Matt is a communications associate at the Urban Institute focusing on housing policy in America and is thrilled to support a local cause that provides affordable housing. He has run three half marathons in cities around the world - Tanzania, London and New York, and is thrilled his first marathon is in NYC!

Catherine has been running her whole life, but she didn't catch the "long distance bug" until college. She's currently a senior at Washington University in St. Louis where she has competed in four half-marathons with a personal best of 1:32:47! As if being a pre-med student in her senior year wasn't going to be busy enough, Catherine decided she'd use this as an opportunity to tackle her first marathon!

Marilyn discovered her love for running by accident one day when she was late for an appointment and had to begrudgingly run for two blocks straight. When she finally reached her destination, she realized that small jog was a stress reliever. Running has

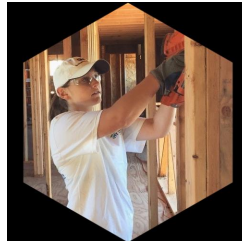
been her therapy ever since. This will be Marilyn's second time running the NYC marathon for a charity. Her race day mantra is "quitting is not an option, go get that medal!!!"

November 6, 2016. Five boroughs. 26.2 miles

Intern Corner: Meet Meghan

By Meghan Englert

I am thrilled to be Habitat Bergen's summer intern! I am a rising sophomore at George Washington University where I major in Mechanical Engineering, play club softball, and enjoy midnight strolls to the national monuments with my friends. I am enrolled in the Clark Engineering Scholars program at GW, which requires a semester abroad, attendance at monthly networking dinners and events, and summer internships. What motivated me to apply to Habitat Bergen was my love for hands-on projects and helping others. As the intern, I spend three days a week in the office answering phones, drafting press releases, visiting our corporate team builds on the construction worksite, sending thank you letters to donors, among many other things. I also have the opportunity to spend one day a week volunteering on our Bergenfield construction worksite. Coming into the internship I did not realize that I would have so many opportunities to be on the build site, which is one of my favorite parts of the summer. So far I have helped frame the ceiling upstairs and paint siding that will eventually get attached to the exterior of the home.



Whenever asked if my internship is similar to what I was expecting, I always say yes, which is mostly true. The one thing about this internship that I was not expecting was the people. By the end of the first two weeks I felt like I had known the people around me for months. I have never felt so welcomed in a place. Being around people who all have the same goal, to help others and enjoy themselves in the process, is one of the best things I could have asked for in a summer internship.

If you are interested in interning with Habitat Bergen please contact [Pamela Nall](#).



Volunteer Spotlight: Meet Janet and Vanessa

By Angela King

Meet Janet Eyerman and Vanessa Garcia, a mother-daughter team also known as "the dynamic duo," who are two of our fierce female volunteers that framed our Bergenfield home on **National Women Build Week Media Day** in May.

Growing up, Janet's father, a carpenter, taught her everything about building with tools. When most young girls were playing with dolls and dollhouses, Vanessa was taking them apart, figuring out how to put them back together and *carving out her future*. Those same skills that were passed on to Janet were passed on to Vanessa as her grandfather took her under his wing and taught her how to use construction tools.

Now, Vanessa, an emergency inspector for SUEZ, and Janet, an assistant inspector,

are the women you want to call when you need help with your water utility service in Bergen and Hudson County!

Let's learn more about how these women lead by example as **Habitat Bergen Women Build** volunteers!

Why do you build with Habitat Bergen?

Janet: Habitat Bergen helps women to be strong and confident by proving that women can do what men can. It builds confidence, and I learn aspects of construction that I can apply to the needs of my own home as well.

Vanessa: I support Habitat for Humanity because it teaches the volunteer a new skill while giving a home to a deserving family. The **Habitat Bergen Women Build** program is especially significant for me as a woman out in the field. When women come together for a good cause and also learn on the build, it is not only gratifying, but empowering.

Proudest Accomplishment:

Janet: Being a mother, I have three awesome kids. Being a single mom is the hardest thing I've overcome. I call myself "Iron Woman."

Vanessa: The best feeling is seeing the women I've trained at SUEZ succeed in the field. I trained my mother and another co-worker. That person is the first female to work on a valve truck, and my mother is the second female to be an assistant in the field.

Final Thoughts?

Work hard, play hard. Be positive. Be patient. Laugh. Be happy.



Passing on the Torch: Bergen Youth United Class of 2016 By Angela King

The Olympic Games are not the only ones passing on the torch this summer! This fall, we welcome the incoming Bergen Youth United Steering Committee as we bid a fond farewell and express our gratitude to our outgoing leaders! Over the course of their tenure, our enthusiastic outgoing leaders were the successful recipients of two State Farm Youth United grants, earning the affiliate \$10,000 in matching grant funding in addition to the \$10,000 Youth United raised through student led fundraisers such as their annual gingerbread house and craft fair events. We wish them the best of luck as they head off to college to become part of the graduating class of 2020.

Congratulations, Class of 2016!

- **Blu Frankel**, President: Harvard University
- **Monica Gu**, Co-VP: Columbia University
- **Kailey Phan Mitchell**, Co-VP: DePaul University
- **Paige Heiman**, Treasurer: University of Pittsburgh
- **Sabeena Singhani**, Secretary: New York University

Welcome Our Incoming Steering Committee

- **Max Hofstetter**, President: Bergen Catholic (Junior)
- **Brian Lee**, Co-VP: Tenafly High School (Senior)
- **Mansi Bhargava**, Co-VP: Indian Hills High School (Junior)
- **Heath Patel**, Treasurer: Clifton High School (Junior)
- **Alyssa Picinich**, Secretary: Indian Hills High School (Junior)
- **Willie Choi**, Marketing Lead: Northern Valley Regional - Demarest (Senior)

Are you a high school student interested in joining a fun and dynamic student-led volunteer program? Meetings restart in September. Email [Youth United](#) to join.



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You have the power to make a difference
Join Habitat Bergen at our upcoming event:
[Casino Night, October 5th](#)

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