



From the Foundation

**Local giving.
Lasting change.**



Photo credit: Juan and Sandra

Saily stands in her paramedic uniform in the kitchen of her parents' Springfield home.

Homeowner kids thrive in new homes

Juan and his wife Sandra said they clearly remember the day they walked over the threshold of their newly-purchased Springfield home. For them, and the many other families who are positively impacted by Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity (GSHFH), it was a turning point.

“When we first opened the door, the girls rolled across the carpets with impeccable smiles,” said Juan. “Then, Saily ran to choose her room and Melanie kept going up and down the stairs in different ways.”

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Jennifer, a Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity homeowner, beams as she holds up a key to her new home.

Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity (GSHFH) operates much like other nonprofits — with ambitious goals, growing needs, and limited resources. What makes us unique is our scale: a four-person full-time team managing daily operations, programs that benefit our partner families, donor engagement, and construction efforts across our service area. Community support isn't just appreciated — it's what makes this work possible.

READ MORE





Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity

PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT

**SUNDAY
March 29
8 AM to 6:30 PM**

All proceeds benefit Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity.

THE PICKLR

Tickets are: \$50/each
This is a Round Robin-style 2-player teamed event.
Registration: bit.ly/4ri4lyK

Must pre-register to participate.
Event will be divided into timed sections based on skill level.

- Raffles • Merchandise

The Picklr
415 E Main St
The Westfield Shops
Retail A-1
Westfield, MA

Registration:



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Greater Springfield Habitat manages two programs — homeownership and home preservation — serving families across Hampden County. While our expenses currently exceed revenue by \$27,000, and individual donations account for 13% of our income, this gap represents an opportunity for our community to strengthen and sustain this vital work.

“When you donate directly to GSHFH, your impact is exponential,” said Michael Clemente, vice president of the Greater Springfield Habitat Board of Directors. “Local donations stay right here. We prioritize keeping our operating costs low to ensure every dollar maximizes its impact within our community.”

Even with these challenges, Greater Springfield Habitat continues to build two to three new homes annually, while completing multiple home repair projects across Hampden County. Three new construction projects are in development for 2026.

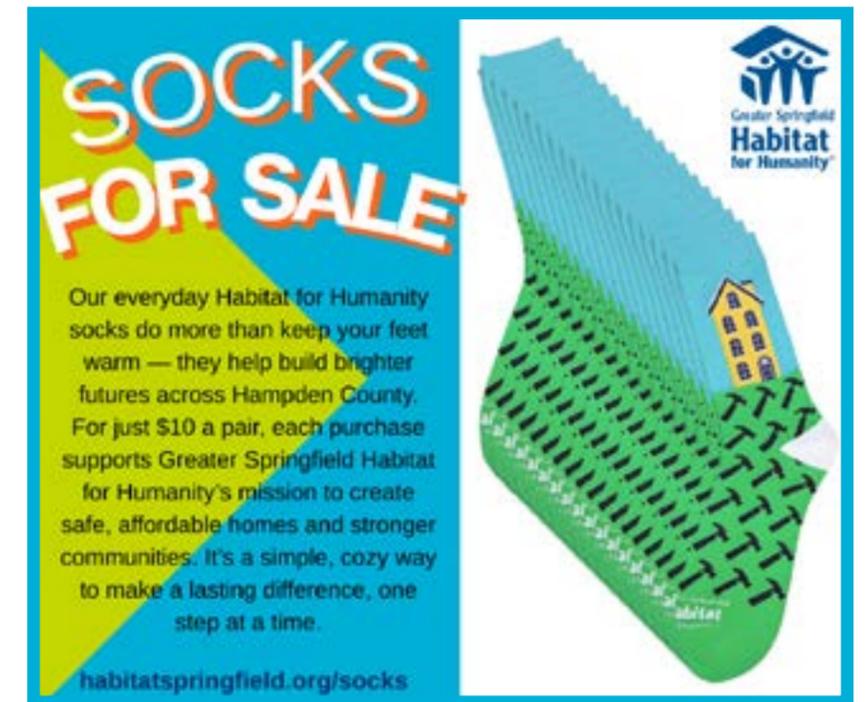
“I’ve always been a fan of the ‘octopus’ partner concept that leads to a finished home — the many hands, including Habitat for Humanity, the donors of every size, the volunteers and the eventual owners,” said Kevin Bowler, new GSHFH volunteer. “As a believer in the value of building familial wealth, any time a neighbor can have the opportunity for that brought into their reach, I’m a fan.”

In June 2025, GSHFH sold a colonial home in Springfield to a Moroccan family of six. “This house represents stability for us,” said new homeowner Driss. “It will allow us to focus on raising our children and helping them achieve their goals, so they can grow and contribute positively to society.”

In December 2025, the affiliate celebrated the completion of construction on a modular home. The project was a collaboration between Holyoke



Antonia (far left) and her children pose in the kitchen of their new Holyoke home.



SOCKS FOR SALE

Our everyday Habitat for Humanity socks do more than keep your feet warm — they help build brighter futures across Hampden County. For just \$10 a pair, each purchase supports Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity’s mission to create safe, affordable homes and stronger communities. It’s a simple, cozy way to make a lasting difference, one step at a time.

habitatspringfield.org/socks

Housing Authority (HHA), the University of Massachusetts DesignBuild program, and GSHFH.

“We at the Housing Authority are always excited to see vacant parcels become homes, particularly at a time when there’s a huge demand in the Commonwealth for good housing,” said Matt Mainville, HHA executive director, at the dedication. “... we also recognize

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housing resources are limited, dollars for development are hard to acquire. So, when we're able to partner with Habitat, UMass, and the City, it's always a recipe for success."

The work we're doing today is meaningful — but it represents just a fraction of what's possible. With greater local investment and engagement, Greater Springfield Habitat could expand our programs, serve more families, and bring our board's long-term vision for affordable housing to life.

Michael said if the affiliate had an abundance of resources, he'd like to see old mill buildings in Holyoke, Springfield, Chicopee, West Springfield, Westfield, and Ludlow converted into housing.

"These larger spaces would allow us to support dozens of families at once. Commercial developers often struggle with abatement costs and regulations. GSHFH is uniquely positioned to secure grant funding and navigate these processes. It's a long-term goal that could truly transform our community. The first step is funding."

Greater Springfield Habitat hosts a variety of community-friendly fundraisers throughout the year, bringing together supporters of all ages to celebrate, connect, and invest in affordable housing in Hampden County.

Our upcoming Pickleball Tournament will take place on Sunday, March 29, at The Picklr in Westfield.

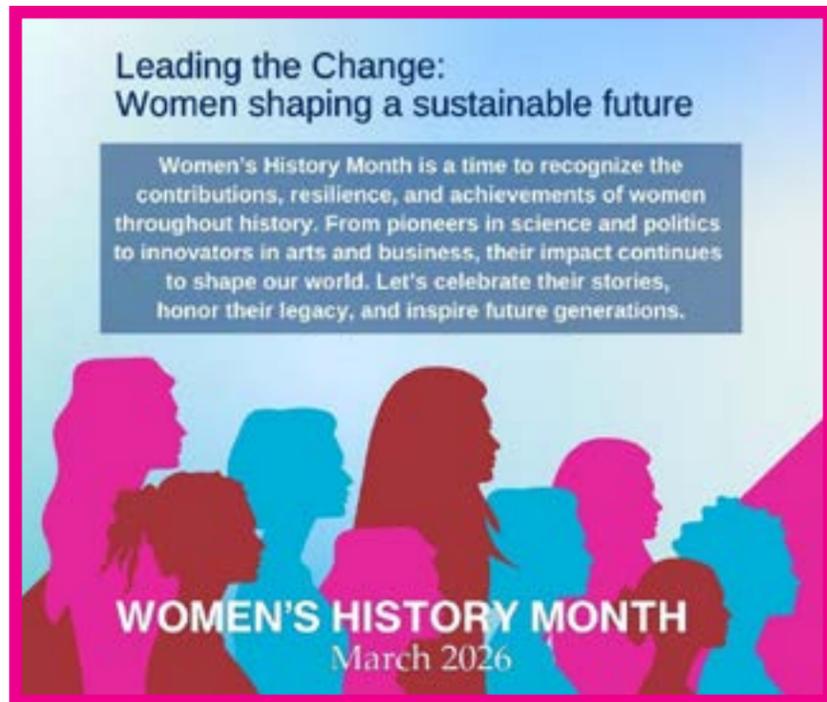
Whether you're a seasoned player or just looking for a fun way to support a great cause, this event promises friendly competition and meaningful impact. Learn more at habitatspringfield.org/pickleball.

Supporters can also participate in Hops for Habitat — an ongoing partnership with local breweries that allows craft beer enthusiasts to give back while enjoying their favorite pours. Learn more at habitatspringfield.org/hops-for-habitat. We continue to offer our popular,



Habitat-themed in-house designed dress socks for purchase (habitatspringfield.org/socks), and our signature fall fundraiser, Habitat Family Fun Fest, will return this October. Throughout the year, we also host bingo nights, raffles, and other fun opportunities for community participation.

Every event — big or small — helps build and preserve homes for families across Hampden County. Every gift makes a local impact. To support our work, visit habitatspringfield.org/donate



**Leading the Change:
Women shaping a sustainable future**

Women's History Month is a time to recognize the contributions, resilience, and achievements of women throughout history. From pioneers in science and politics to innovators in arts and business, their impact continues to shape our world. Let's celebrate their stories, honor their legacy, and inspire future generations.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH
March 2026

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That was 15 years ago. Today, Saily is a 26-year-old paramedic whose goal is to become a flight medic.

Melanie, 21, is a junior at Westfield State University studying criminal justice.

Juan and Sandra said they realize the girls' achievements may not have been possible without Greater Springfield Habitat. Before purchasing the three-bedroom colonial in the City's Upper Hill neighborhood, the family lived in an uncomfortable apartment with many limitations, including a play area for the girls. As much Juan and Sandra tried to meet their emotional needs by giving the girls attention, care, and the love they needed, the girls still struggled. Particularly with their self-esteem, and feelings of stability and security.

That changed when the family moved into their new home.

"The girls looked more excited and happier. They could enjoy a good backyard and each had their own personal space to study; this was very meaningful to them. They also began to enjoy time with friends and this helped them a lot in their social lives," Juan said. "I think that the Habitat for Humanity program has been a very important basis in the growth and stability of our daughters. I understand that we would not have been able to achieve it without them."

Single mother and GSHFH homeowner Marielis agreed. She, like Juan and Sandra, said she has seen a significant change in her children since she purchased their North End, Springfield, home in summer 2020.

"Owning a home through Habitat is very important to me because it gave me an opportunity to grow, provide, and establish a home for my kids," she said. "Before I became a homeowner, I lived in a two-bedroom apartment without a backyard. My kids were not happy."

Now is a different story. Marielis said her children have a backyard to play in and their own rooms. When the family moved in, Angelis, who was 8, said she played with her Barbies in her room and with her friends, she made "snow" angels on the plush living room area rug. She wanted to become an oncologist and cure

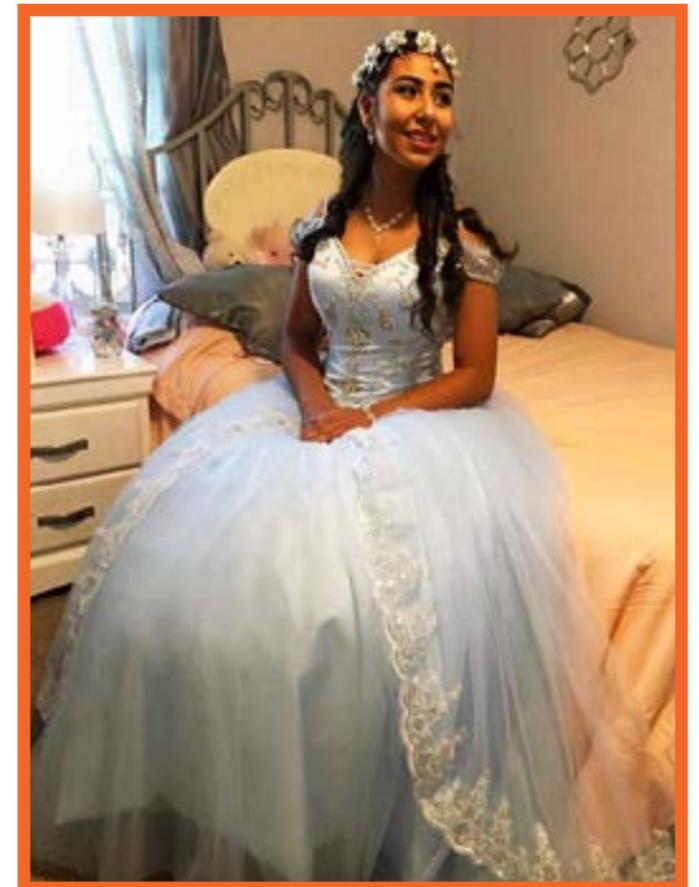


Photo credit: Juan and Sandra

Melanie, dressed in her quinceañera dress, poses in her bedroom.

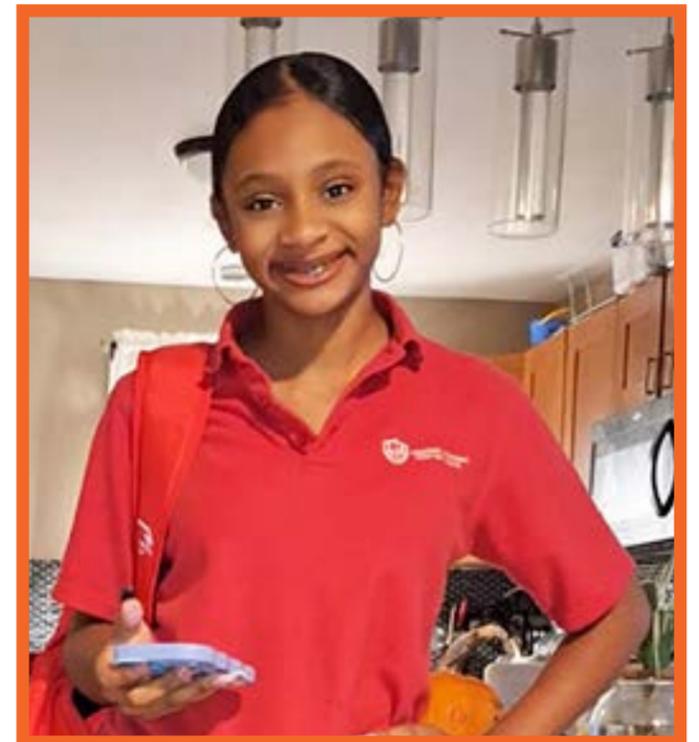


Photo credit: Marielis

Angelis stands in her family's Springfield kitchen before leaving for school.

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HOPS for HABITAT beer passport is back!

To participate:

1. Purchase a Hops for Habitat beer passport by clicking on the QR code to the right. Follow the instructions. Physical passports will be mailed to the address listed on the order form. Participants may also pick them up at the Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity administrative office (268 Cold Spring Ave, West Springfield).
2. Visit each brewery listed on the passport. Order and pay for beverage. Show the passport to the bartender, who will stamp the box of the correlating brewery. As a participant in the Hops for Habitat promotion, the bartender will fill your order and give you a gift of equal value (which may include a gift card for a second beer).
3. After you've visited and collected stamps from each of the passport's listed nine breweries, make sure your name and contact information is written on the document. Return the passport to one of the breweries or mail it to Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity administrative office (260 Cold Spring Ave, West Springfield, MA 01089) to be entered into a raffle for a grand prize.

Frequently asked questions:

- Q. How soon after I order a passport will it arrive at my home?
A. Passports are mailed via two-day priority mail.
2. Can I purchase a passport at a participating brewery?
A. No.
3. When I visit a brewery, will the bartender know to stamp it?
Yes, when you make a purchase and show the bartender the passport, they will know to stamp it.



Participating breweries:



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cancer. Now at 13, her career aspirations remain the same. Her 8-year-old brother, Castiel, wants to become a cop.

"If it wasn't for Habitat, I would still live in an apartment and my kids probably would still be uncomfortable," Marielis said.

It should be of no surprise that children growing up in stable homes are likely to perform better in schools. In fact, according to a Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) brief published in September 2024, children growing up in poor-quality housing experience are more likely to experience symptoms of depression, anxiety, and aggression from elementary school through young adulthood when compared with children in higher-quality housing.

Furthermore, homeownership leads to better test scores and higher rates of high school graduation and college attendance, especially among children of low-income homeowners. HFHI research shows stable households are crucial for child development, with children of low-income homeowners being 11% more likely to graduate high school and 4.5% more likely to pursue higher education than their peers in rental housing, according to an HFHI Evidence Brief published in November 2020.

Johnniel just might embody the HFHI research. When he was 15 years old, his parents purchased a Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity bungalow in the Forest Park neighborhood of Springfield.

Prior to his parents buying the Habitat house, Johnniel said he remembers growing up in rough Springfield neighborhoods. But, his parents were determined to keep Johnniel and his siblings safe in a stable and loving



Photo credit: LinkedIn
Johnniel, son of Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity homeowners

environment. Johnniel said his parents signed him up for sports and he played year-round baseball or basketball.

After his parents were selected for the Habitat house, Johnniel helped them with completing the required sweat equity hours. He also assisted his aunt and a family friend with the sweat equity hours for their Habitat houses. He enjoyed the work and studied it at Roger L. Putnam Vocational Technology High School, before it became an academy. Upon graduation, Johnniel worked in the carpentry trade, but at the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, he

switched gears and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering. These days, Johnniel is in his early 30s and is a project manager at Palmer Paving Group in Springfield.

"I think living in a Habitat house inspired me to keep pushing forward," he said. "If my parents can put in the time and effort to finally own a house of their own, I can achieve the goals I have as well."

Bipartisan cooperation

advances effective

housing policy.

Urge members of Congress to prioritize housing supply and affordability and finalize a comprehensive housing package.

habitatspringfield.org/advocacy

