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**Join us Nov. 18  
and celebrate  
the ICF build at  
360 Chestnut St,  
Holyoke**

Details inside on **Page 3**

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Greater Springfield  
**Habitat**  
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**NEWS** November 2022



Volunteers from MassMutual help build the insulated concrete form (ICF) at the Chestnut Street build site in Holyoke.

## Habitat begins ICF build

Construction on Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity's (GSHFH) newest home is taking shape and it's noticeably different than neighboring and previously built homes. The four-bedroom, two-bathroom Chestnut Street house in Holyoke will be built using insulated concrete forms (ICF) instead of traditional wood framing and sheathing. The project is a collaboration between the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association and Habitat for Humanity International to build 50 ICF homes across the country.

"We are very excited to have been selected to be a part of the 'Build with Strength' partnership,"

said Aimee Giroux, GSHFH executive director.

Habitat will utilize ICF blocks manufactured by Integraspec, which consist of 2-inch foam panels that are separated by spacers. The blocks are stacked together much like children's plastic building blocks. Once assembled, concrete is poured between the foam panels. The 6-inch concrete core along with the foam panels create a super insulated and resilient home. The panels will be used for all of the exterior walls from the foundation to the second story.

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# Memories from Fall Festival

Share your #FallFestival pictures with us on [Facebook.com/gshfh](https://www.facebook.com/gshfh)



Greater Springfield  
**Habitat for Humanity**

You're invited  
**Behind the Build**  
10am, Friday, Nov. 18, 2022  
360 Chestnut St, Holyoke, MA





## SPOTLIGHT ON Brandy O'Brien Marketing & Communications Manager of Enfield, CT



**How long have you been a staff member?** Two years.

**What attracted you to the position?** The mission is phenomenal. The position challenged and excited me.

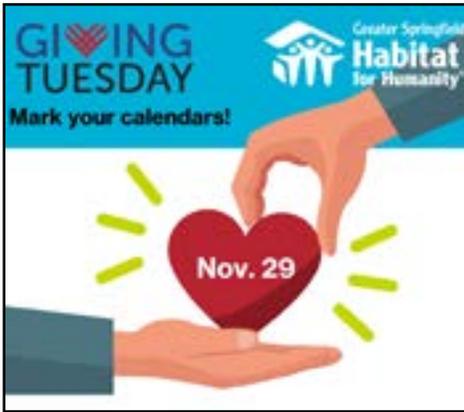
**What word do you always mispronounce?** Anonymity. I still have no idea how to pronounce it.

**When did you find out Santa Claus wasn't real?** Wait. What?

**What's the best prank you ever pulled?** When I switched out my college roommate's tall glass of tap water with vodka without telling her. She had the best reaction ever.

**What popular trend bothers you?** Anything having to do with a Kardashian/Jenner.

**How old were you when you had your first celebrity crush? Who was it?** Eleven, maybe; Actor Jay R. Ferguson. So cute then. Not as cute now. \*Sigh\*



**In honor of Giving Tuesday, please create a Facebook post asking your network to donate to Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity. It's easy.**

1. When creating a post, click on the three dots in the "Add to your post" section.
2. Select the "Raise Money" icon.
3. Type and choose "Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity" in the search bar.
4. Type your personal message and click "Post."

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"I like it," said Sheri L. Green, GSHFH Construction manager. "I'm very excited about it. It's volunteer-friendly with the right training, and it's going to be great."

David Stevens, a carpentry teacher at Roger J. Putnam Technical Vocational Academy in Springfield who admitted he'd never seen an ICF build in person, agreed.

"It's cool," he said. "No tornado will take it down."

Because the foam panels are supported by concrete, experts have said the ICF doesn't break down, collapse, and can withstand high winds from hurricanes and tornadoes, seismic activity, and fire.

ICF offers several additional benefits to the builder and homeowner. For starters, the foam panels are made from recycled material. ICF walls do not off-gas, whereas conventional walls sheathed with oriented strand board (OSB) off-gas through glues and resin. ICF walls are resistant to mold, moisture, and rot, which provides a better living environment for those suffering from allergens or asthma. Also, due to the rising cost of lumber, this method significantly reduces the need for wood for framing and sheathing the exterior, meaning less trees are cut down.

Since an ICF house has foam on both sides of the concrete, they provide increased thermal mass.



Springfield College Habitat for Humanity Club volunteers pick up where MassMutual volunteers left off in stacking insulated concrete form blocks to build the frame of the Chesnut Street, Holyoke, home.

This means wall temperatures won't change throughout a day because they eliminate the gaps in regular construction that can cause cold spots. It'll cost less to heat and cool the home, which leads to energy savings typically sparing a homeowner 30-70% on heating, cooling, and dehumidification expenses. Also, foam and concrete walls insulate sound better than wood-framed walls. An ICF home will likely be quieter than a traditional house.

As with any new building method there are learning curves, Aimee said.

The square footage of the home will need to be adjusted to accommodate the increase in wall thickness. Measurements for doors,

windows, and utilities have to be exact. Once the concrete is poured, fixing errors can prove difficult.

"If you would like to be a part of learning this new building method with us, come out and volunteer with us on site," Aimee said.

To volunteer, go to [habitatspringfield.org/volunteer](http://habitatspringfield.org/volunteer)

