



News

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Photos available on request

THESE WOMEN GET THEIR NAILS DONE WITH HAMMERS:

WOMEN CONSTRUCTION VOLUNTEERS CELEBRATE MOTHER'S DAY WEEKEND BY BUILDING AFFORDABLE HABITAT-NYC HOMES IN THE SOUTH BRONX

South Bronx, NY, May 9 — In honor of Mother's Day, 25 New York City women helped low-income moms build affordable homes in the South Bronx. This annual **Women Build** event, hosted by **Habitat for Humanity – New York City**, recognizes the power of women working together to help solve New York City's housing crisis.

The Habitat-NYC crews included women volunteers, women who will be living in Habitat-NYC homes, women AmeriCorps volunteers and staff members. And they proved that, even without construction experience, women working together are capable of great impact.

These Women Build volunteers framed drop ceilings on 12 Habitat-NYC units within the 50-unit affordable housing development, which is located in the Longwood section of the South Bronx. They also raised more than \$10,000 to help fund the project.

Building alongside the volunteers was Habitat-NYC family partner **Waunda Lashley-Greer**, a nursing aide, who will be moving into her Brooklyn Habitat home this fall. She currently shares a one-bedroom public housing apartment in Brooklyn with her husband, **Marcus Greer**, and two sons, **Amare**, 9, and **Trevon**, 4. Although the space is in good condition, the family must sleep in one severely crowded room that sometimes lacks heat.

"This home will fulfill our American Dream of homeownership. We are all so happy," says Waunda.

Why spend part of the Mother's Day weekend at a construction site, swinging hammers at nails instead of getting your nails polished at a relaxing spa?

Susan C. Kistler, an IT director at Columbia University Medical Center, shared, "I am participating in this year's Women Build because I want to respond to Obama's plea for volunteers to help change history's course." She added, "I chose Women Build because I am a single mother, as was my mother before me, and I want to help other single mothers in my area."

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Shauna Long volunteered with her own mother, **Carol Long**. As a Habitat-NYC Board Member, Shauna knows the impact and sense of accomplishment that comes with the event. “Women empower each other and recognize and celebrate the amazing things that we do. There is nothing better than standing beside your sister, mother, daughter or girlfriend and knowing that together we can make a long-lasting, positive impact.”

Shauna said she also was inspired by the struggle her mother faced. “I was raised by a single mom who triumphed against all odds to raise two kids on her own with no support system, no relatives and no Habitat for Humanity. My mom raised us to believe that we could be anything, no matter where we came from, but that hard work was always part of the formula. The key to her very special message of life was to give back.”

The Women Build volunteers worked in a new-construction co-op at Fox Street and Leggett Avenue in the Bronx. An innovative new model for Habitat-NYC, this seven-story “green” building is being developed in partnership with Blue Sea Development Company, a private affordable housing developer. It is the first “co-development” Habitat project nationally, a celebration in itself.

Moreover, the “green” building is being constructed with environmentally friendly construction materials and energy-efficient methods that will help protect the health — and pocketbooks — of its future inhabitants.

Women Build gives women an opportunity to take action in their own city and contribute in a valuable way. As Shauna Long observed, “A day of building will help make a life-changing impact on an entire family – which is what moms try to do every day with their own families.”

Habitat for Humanity - New York City transforms lives and our city by building quality homes for families in need and by uniting all New Yorkers around the cause of affordable housing. With the help of thousands of volunteers every year, Habitat-NYC has built more than 180 affordable homes in the five boroughs of New York City. Learn more at www.habitatnyc.org.

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