

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Homes of Hope building on success

New LEED housing helps families live efficiently



By Madison Moore
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To celebrate 400 houses built in 14 years of operation, Homes of Hope — an organization providing affordable housing to low-income families and job training for men struggling with addiction — has launched a “400 for 400” campaign.

The organization is asking the community to join in the celebration by helping to fund further housing developments through donations made by Jan. 31.

“These aren’t only 400 houses we’ve built,” said community relations director Jordan Weldon. “These are 400 families we’ve helped, and we want to raise money to help the next 400.”

The 399th and 400th houses completed are the first two LoCAL houses built by the organization. LoCAL housing — long-term, compact, affordable and LEED-certified — solves the three biggest problems identified by Homes of Hope.

Poverty-level families — those making \$1,000 to \$1,300 per month — need energy-efficient homes, said CEO Don Oglesby. They need housing that will appreciate in value. And the men from the Homes of Hope training program need higher-paying, more marketable skills, which they will get through the LEED construction training.



Homes of Hope staff and men’s development interns work with Fluor Corp. on the organization’s 400th home. JORDAN WELDON/HOMES OF HOPE

The LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environment Design) certification ensures that the LoCAL homes are at the highest energy efficiency levels — and that families can own an asset that will appreciate in value.

“Families often only

have transient housing options, such as public housing, dilapidated homes or mobile homes,” said Oglesby. “But they aren’t going to be able to get out of poverty if they can’t build assets.

“We couldn’t solve these problems for 14 years,” he said. “They

were the three hardest to solve, and that’s why we’re so excited to finally have LoCAL.”

Homes of Hope houses are often built to embrace the neighborhood dynamic.

“You’ll notice we always build a big front porch on our houses,”

said Weldon. “We want to encourage neighbor relations and we usually see a beautiful picture of what community looks like.”

Homes of Hope aims to create an atmosphere for people to empower themselves, Oglesby said.

“Each house is a breath of fresh air for the families,” adds Weldon. “Once they can afford their rent in a safe place, they can look toward their future and new opportunities. What we do encompasses so much beyond the houses.”