

Press Release

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Publix Supermarket Charities (PSMC) announced on September 29, 2015, that it would donate \$4 million to Habitat for Humanity affiliates across the Southeast. The donation will provide funding to build 40 new homes in 2016 as well as increase support to more than 60 affiliates whom the Foundation currently funds. This generous donation continues the Foundation's commitment to meeting the basic needs of the communities it serves through additional financial support for housing. The average price to sponsor a house is \$77,000.

"Every family deserves an opportunity to have a roof over their heads and food on the table," said Carol Jenkins Barnett, president of Publix Super Markets Charities. "My father established our foundation in 1996 with a strong desire to see our communities thrive. As we honor my father's memory, we are delighted to continue our 26 year partnership with Habitat for Humanity by giving \$4 million dollars across Publix's footprint."

The \$4 million of full home sponsorships is welcome news and a significant commitment by Publix to affordable home ownership. This support from Publix in the Florida Keys will mean three new Habitat homes will be built with a full sponsorship in the upper, middle and lower Keys in 2016. The three Habitat affiliates in the Florida Keys are fortunate to have been selected for this strong support from Publix among the 58 Habitat for Humanity affiliates in Florida. The total amount given to the three affiliates is \$422,000, an average of \$140,000 for the three homes sponsored, which reflects the high cost of homes in the Keys.

Publix has been supporting Habitat for Humanity in action for the last 11 years in the Keys. Publix Key Largo has supported Habitat for Humanity in the upper Florida Keys since 2004 with annual grants that have helped build 4 homes in the Upper Keys. In the Middle Keys, the grant support from PSMC since 2012 has helped build 4 new affordable homes in Marathon. Since 2009, the Lower Keys Habitat for Humanity has used Publix's grants to build 3 new homes on Big Coppitt and to repair several other homes in Key West in the Brush with Kindness repair program. Since 2004, Publix has granted \$125,000 in total to the Florida Keys Habitats.

Habitat Middle Keys is so grateful for the partnership with our local Publix and PSMC. Habitat for Humanity of the Middle Keys has two partner family home owners who are long time

employees of Publix Marathon which also employs many of our homeowner's teen children in their first jobs.

The three homes that Publix is sponsoring in the Florida Keys in 2016 are a significant boost to the Habitat affiliates' building plans. The Lower Keys is building 10 homes on Big Coppitt. The Middle Keys is building four homes in the summer of 2016. The Upper Keys is building four homes in Key Largo between now and 2016. Publix's support comes at a critical time for lower income working class families in the Keys to experience the stability, equity and affordability of home ownership.

Each of these Habitat for Humanity builds has been made possible by the support of Monroe County over the years through the acquisition of suitable property for affordable housing by the Monroe County Land Authority. This partnership means that donations to Habitat can be directed to the cost of building homes.

Every citizen of Monroe County is urged to contact Representative Holly Raschien and Senator Dwight Bullard to send the message that the Sadowski Trust Fund for Affordable Housing must be fully funded by the Legislature. There are potentially \$323 million dollars in 2016 for affordable housing generated by the documentary stamp tax Florida voters created in 1992. In 2015, \$175 million was appropriated and \$88 million was swept. Prior to 2015, all of the funds were "swept", meaning they were not appropriated for their intended purpose.

These affordable housing dollars benefit the entire range of housing needs we face as a community; rentals, homeownership, shelters and assisted living, repair programs and set asides for special need individuals to name a few. Floridians created the funding to meet the housing crisis 13 years ago. The Legislature must honor our voice. Imagine the solutions that can be created after seeing the good that \$4 million from Publix is able to do.