



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Press Release

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## New Beginnings for Two El Paso County Families

### Joint Ground Blessing and Home Dedication Spotlight Local Families

**Colorado Springs, CO** (Apr. 24, 2025) — Two local families will celebrate a new beginning on their journey to affordable homeownership on **Saturday, Apr. 26**, at The Ridge at Sand Creek neighborhood, 5303 Beauport Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80915. The families are partnering with Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity to help build and purchase their affordable homes in this mixed-income development.

At 9:30 a.m., Pikes Peak Habitat will hold a ground blessing for [Jessica and her family](#), followed by a home dedication for [Tonya's family](#) at 10:30 a.m.



*Above left, Jessica's family, and above right, Tonya's family*

Although **Jessica** works full-time, she struggles with the high cost of living in El Paso County. She doesn't want to leave Colorado, though—it's where her two youngest children were born and are growing up, and she has family in the area.

Plus she wants to stay in the state for her youngest son, Mason, who is showing early signs of autism. He was born via emergency C-section, and the umbilical cord was wrapped around his neck four times. Jessica says if the doctors had waited even one more day, neither she nor Mason likely would have survived.

Colorado offers more resources for children with special needs than many states do, says Jessica, and that's part of why she has chosen to stay here. "I'm ready to own something," she says. "It's my first home. I've never owned a home before, and without this opportunity, I don't think I'd be able to. [With] the price of the market out here in the state where I want to stay, it's not feasible."

Jessica's home will be Pikes Peak Habitat's 4<sup>th</sup> George Hammond Build, honoring longtime volunteers Laurel and Art Thorstensen.

Following Jessica's ground blessing, Pikes Peak Habitat hosts the dedication for **Tonya's family**. Originally from Baltimore, Tonya and her family moved to El Paso County in 2015 to stay with her father, who has since passed. "I was going through a lot of hardships in Maryland, and I just wanted a change," she explains.

Right now, she, her kids, and her grandson share a three-bedroom apartment. They're crowded, and the area isn't great. Moving into their Pikes Peak Habitat home—which will have five bedrooms—is a dream come true for Tonya because it represents safety for her family.

"I wanted to have a home for us so that none of my kids would have to be with somebody because they don't have nowhere else to go. I've slept places that I wasn't welcome, nor was I comfortable, because I had nowhere to go. I never had a home." Now Tonya will finally have her own home.

Tonya's home is a Fund for Humanity home, built wholly with a collection of funding sources, including capital from loan sale programs, loan payoffs, monthly Habitat mortgage payments, unrestricted fundraising, and net proceeds from the ReStore.

All Pikes Peak Habitat future homeowners invest 200 hours of sweat equity in helping build their home. Working on the construction site also provides a way for them to build relationships with future neighbors before they even move into the community.

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### **About Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity**

Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity builds strength, stability, and self-reliance through shelter in El Paso County. We construct permanent, affordable homes in partnership with the community and prospective homebuyers, who purchase their homes with affordable mortgages. In addition, our home repair program works with seniors, veterans, and other cost-burdened homeowners in El Paso County, who "pay it forward" by serving their communities. Pikes Peak Habitat has been an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International since 1986 and has partnered with more than 300 families in El Paso County. For more information, visit <http://www.pikespeakhabitat.org> and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

### **About the George Hammond Build**

The George Hammond Award was created by the Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors in April 2018 to honor the legacy, extraordinary service, and outstanding contributions of longtime volunteer George Hammond. The George Hammond Award honors individuals who, through their tireless service to Pikes Peak Habitat, have exhibited qualities of leadership, an unwavering belief in Habitat's ministry, and a deep devotion and passion to serve the community and people of El Paso County, CO. The 4th George Hammond Home (Build) will be dedicated in honor of Laurel and Art Thorstensen.