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New Habitat Homeowners Get New Chance At Happiness For Their Blended Family

Brevard, NC - Emily and Michael wanted nothing more than stability and growth for their small blended family, which includes 7-year old Emali and their three cats. Today, they signed the paperwork to make that dream a reality thanks to their sweat equity, dedication to family, and of course, a little help from Transylvania Habitat for Humanity and its supporters.

Founded in 1984 as an affiliate of Habitat International, the local nonprofit has become one of western NC's premier organizations for community involvement and has been awarded GuideStar's 2022 award of Platinum Transparency, the highest achievement a nonprofit can accomplish. Working with other local organizations such as the Community Foundation of WNC, Dogwood Health Trust, Brevard/Transylvania Housing Coalition, local churches, and numerous volunteers, Habitat for Humanity's mission focuses solely on bringing people together to "build homes, communities, and hope."

"From the origins of Habitat for Humanity in rural Georgia, to our amazing volunteers, donors, ReStore, and staff, the very core of this endeavor is one that believes everyone deserves a place to call home," states Angie Hunter, Executive Director. "Affordable housing benefits everyone – through resources meeting basic health needs and higher achievement in educational standards for children, to simply forming stronger ties with the community around you."

For Michael and Emily, the decision to reach out to Habitat came as their rental space became incompatible with their family needs, which included a lack of playmates and outdoor play space for their daughter. Rental prices continued to soar ever since the pandemic in 2020, and the peace and quiet of having a home was a dream for Emily, who continues working on her master's degree in clinical and mental health counseling from Lenoir-Rhyne College.

When asked what she looked most forward to in the new home, Emily was quick to respond. "Having children for Emali to play and interact with will be amazing. There are a few that she's met already

and it's made such a huge difference." When Michael was asked the same question, he simply stated, "I'd love to have a garden."

To enroll in the homeownership program with Habitat for Humanity, interested individuals or families must qualify based on the need, willingness to partner with Habitat through 200 hours of sweat equity, ability to pay their affordable mortgage, and hold residency or live in Transylvania County for at least one year. After working together to complete the new home construction, future homeowners meet with staff from Habitat for final contracts and the big moment at hand – passing over the keys to a new life and new opportunity.

Emily had one final thought on what it meant to her to be given the keys to their new family home. "Amazing. Surreal and amazing. Thank you so much!"

For more information about Transylvania Habitat for Humanity at-a-glance, please visit our website at www.transylvaniahabitat.org. To learn more about the Habitat application process for 1,2, 3, or 4-bedroom homes, please call 828-862-5117 for Family Services Manager Jenni Kerr. To become a volunteer for Habitat and make a true difference in our community, please contact Community Outreach Manager Adam DeWitte at 828-883-3907 or email at adam.dewitte@transylvaniahabitat.org.

Be sure to visit our Habitat "ReStore" on Ecusta Road for new and gently used furniture, appliances, home décor, vinyl records, and building materials. Proceeds help our residents build strength and stability in life through affordable homeownership!