
Louisiana

Success Story:

Four Louisiana Families Help Themselves to Brand New Homes—Through the Self-Help Housing Program

Outline of Need

Affordable homeownership is seen as a barrier to many Louisiana families who would like to own their own homes. Rural Development's Self-Help Housing Program is providing an option to rural families willing to invest a little "sweat equity" to lower the cost of housing.

How Rural Development Helped

As part of Homeownership Month activities in Louisiana, ground was broken on June 11, 2003, at the site of a new concept in neighborhoods in Louisiana—self-help housing. Through the USDA Rural Development Self-Help Housing Program, four families are working together to build their own homes.

"Homeownership strengthens our rural communities and adds to the overall quality of life," said Michael B. Taylor, State Director, USDA Rural Development. "Rural Development's Self-Help Housing Program empowers families to invest a little 'sweat equity' and gain a substantial investment in a new home."

Through the Self-Help Housing Program, USDA Rural Development awarded a \$240,000 technical assistance grant to Seventh District Pavilion, Inc., to recruit and assist twenty families in building their own homes throughout Calcasieu, Evangeline, and St. Landry Parishes (Counties). Rural Development will also provide new home financing for each homeowner. The June 11, 2003, groundbreaking event marked the start of construction of the first four homes in Calcasieu Parish.

"These families are very excited about beginning construction," said Dazetta Thorne of Seventh District Pavilion, Inc. "Our organization recruited these families for this program, and we will work with them throughout the construction and financing stages."

The Results

Four families are working in Calcasieu Parish to improve their quality of life. During the next few months, 16 additional families will work together to build new homes for their families through the Self-Help Housing Program. They will be working together to build a home, a community, and a future of financial security for their families.

June 2003

(see page 2 and 3 for photographs and captions)



Ground is broken in Calcasieu Parish for Self-Help Homes. L to R: Debbie Redfeam, Rural Development; Michael B. Taylor, Rural Development; Rosa Lawson, Seventh District Pavilion, Inc.; Mayor Randy Roach, City of Lake Charles; Kevin Cummings, Self-Help Client; Martha Cummings, Self-Help Client; Dazetta Thome, Seventh District Pavilion, Inc.; Willie Maynard, Jr., Seventh District Pavilion, Inc.; Bob Davis, Owner-Developer; Claudia Savoy, Self-Help Client; LaToya Jones, Self-Help Client; and Ida Woods, Self-Help Client.



Check representing \$240,000 Self-Help Technical Assistance Grant to Seventh District Pavilion, Inc., to recruit and assist twenty families build their own homes.



Michael B. Taylor, Rural Development State Director, presents grant check to Dazetta Thome of Seventh District Pavilion, Inc.



Michael B. Taylor, Rural Development State Director, looks on as Dazetta Thorne of Seventh District Pavilion, Inc., signs Self-Help Program grant agreement.



It is a special day for Claudia Savoy. The groundbreaking ceremony was featured on local television news.