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LONG JOURNEY TO HOMEOWNERSHIP FOR LACOMBE FAMILY Federal Home Loan Program Helps Family

LACOMBE, June 17, 2009 – June is celebrated nationally as Homeownership Month to promote the benefits of homeownership and encourage potential homebuyers and others to consider the benefits of homeownership. In Lacombe, Louisiana—a rural community in St. Tammany Parish, one new homeowner is celebrating in a new home thanks to a federal home loan program.

Sharon Horton lived in St. Bernard Parish until 2005 when Hurricane Katrina changed everything.

“I was happy living in St. Bernard Parish and working at Mobile. I was uprooted after Hurricane Katrina—and lived in Texas and South Carolina—but I wanted to come home,” said Horton. “I lived in a FEMA trailer, a camper trailer, a motel room, and a one-bedroom mother-in-law apartment.”

Horton learned about a federal home loan program through USDA Rural Development, and now, she and her son are enjoying a home of their own.

“Rural Development afforded my son and me the opportunity to purchase a home of our own,” said Horton. “We are so happy, and I love my house—even the dog is finally happy!”

Horton purchased her home through a direct USDA Rural Development home loan. This federal home loan program offers 100 percent financing, extended financing periods, and fixed-rate financing. Eligibility for USDA Rural Development homeownership programs is primarily based on income, repayment ability, and acceptable credit history.

Cathy Accardo, USDA Rural Development Single Family Housing Specialist, worked with Ms. Horton through the application process. Accardo recently presented Horton an American flag for her new home in celebration of Homeownership Month.

“It is very rewarding to see Sharon in her own home,” said Accardo. “Homeownership Month gives Rural Development an opportunity to celebrate Sharon’s success and encourage others to give us a call to learn more about our programs.”

Further information on USDA Rural Development’s homeownership programs can be obtained from Cathy Accardo, Single Family Housing Specialist, Amite Area Office, (985) 748-8751, extension 4, or by visiting <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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