

June 5, 2007

CONTACT:

Sara Wessling
VISTA Program Manager
Habitat for Humanity of Minnesota
Phone: (612) 331-4439 ext. 2
sara@hfhmn.org

NEWS RELEASE:

Habitat for Humanity of Minnesota Awarded AmeriCorps VISTA Grant

MINNEAPOLIS – (June 5, 2007) Habitat for Humanity of Minnesota (HFH-MN) was notified today of the award of an AmeriCorps VISTA Program grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The \$225,000 grant will fund the placement of seventeen full-time AmeriCorps VISTA members with Habitat for Humanity affiliates throughout the state of Minnesota. The VISTA members will carry out year-long assignments designed to build the organizational capacity of the affiliate and ultimately serve more families in need of affordable housing.

VISTA members will be working primarily in the areas of church relations, ReStores, volunteer recruitment and management, and resource development. Through the collective efforts of these VISTA members, the project will work to achieve the following goals: 1) to mobilize 2000 volunteers who will contribute 15,000 community service hours, 2) to develop new partnerships to increase in-kind donations to at least four Habitat for Humanity ReStores, 3) to achieve a 20% increase in financial contributions from faith communities at three Minnesota Habitat affiliates. Affiliates select to host VISTA members for the 2007-2008 program year include: Bemidji Area, Central Minnesota (St. Cloud), Douglas Co. (Alexandria), Fergus Falls, Freeborn/Mower (Austin), HFH-MN (Minneapolis), Itasca Co. (Grand Rapids), Lake Agassiz

(Moorhead), North St. Louis Co. (Virginia), Prairie Lakes (Glenwood), Rochester Area, South Central Minnesota (Mankato), West Central Minnesota (Willmar) and Winona Co.

The grant will also help fund training and support for the VISTA members. HFH-MN will provide an extensive leadership development training program designed to empower VISTA members with leadership skills to help them be successful not only during their year of service but also in their future careers and volunteer work.

Habitat for Humanity of Minnesota is a statewide resource development and support organization that serves, advocates for and advances the work of Minnesota's 35 Habitat for Humanity affiliates to build simple, decent, affordable housing in partnership with people in need. The HFH-MN VISTA program started in 1999 as a partnership with the Minnesota Housing Partnership, 2007 is the first year that HFH-MN will be a direct recipient of a VISTA grant. Since 1999 more than 100 people have served as VISTA members with 23 different Minnesota Habitat for Humanity affiliates.

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