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NEWS RELEASE:

Habitat for Humanity of Minnesota Welcomes Twelve AmeriCorps VISTA Members

(September 1, 2007) Habitat for Humanity of Minnesota welcomes twelve AmeriCorps VISTA members who are serving with eleven Habitat for Humanity affiliates throughout the state of Minnesota. The VISTA members and the locations where they are placed include:

Molly Berg – West Central Minnesota HFH, Willmar

Marion Gianlorenzi – North Saint Louis County HFH, Virginia

Lindsay Jenson – Fergus Falls Area HFH, Fergus Falls

Jane Knealing – Lake Agassiz HFH, Moorhead

Jen Koth – Winona County HFH, Winona

Bethany Kuehne – Central Minnesota HFH, Saint Cloud

Connie McLemore – Itasca County HFH, Grand Rapids

Lisa Modry – Rochester Area HFH, Rochester

Emily Schwieger – South Central Minnesota HFH, Mankato

Brenna Severson – Habitat for Humanity of Minnesota, Minneapolis

Katie Tucholke – Lake Agassiz HFH, Moorhead

Sara Zidon – Bemidji Area HFH, Bemidji

Among the Habitat for Humanity VISTA members are two individuals who are embarking on their second year of AmeriCorps service. Marion Gianlorenzi is returning for a second year as a VISTA with North Saint Louis County HFH in Virginia, Minnesota. She will

be working to build and strengthen relationships with local churches that have an interest in supporting Habitat for Humanity's mission to eliminate poverty housing. Brenna Severson will be serving as the VISTA Leader with Habitat for Humanity of Minnesota. His role will be to provide support to the Habitat VISTA members around the state. Brenna previously completed one year of service with the AmeriCorps NCCC program.

Habitat for Humanity VISTA members spend one year working full-time on projects designed to increase the organizational capacity of local Habitat for Humanity affiliates. VISTA members recruit and coordinate volunteers, raise funds and secure in-kind donations, start new programs, and conduct outreach and marketing campaigns. In 2006 VISTA members recruited and coordinated more than 3000 volunteers who contributed over 22,000 hours of their time to Habitat for Humanity. In addition, Habitat VISTA members secured over \$110,000 in in-kind donations and \$210,000 in grants and monetary donations.

Administered and funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), AmeriCorps VISTA is a national service program, which provides people of all ages with the opportunity to serve full-time for one year with a community organization. In exchange for their service, VISTA members receive a modest living allowance, health benefits and student loan deferment. In addition, after completing the one year service commitment, VISTA members can choose to receive either a cash stipend of \$1200 or an education award of \$4725 to be used for tuition or student loans.

Habitat for Humanity of Minnesota (HFH-MN) is a state-wide 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. HFH-MN administers the grant that enables AmeriCorps VISTA members to be placed with Minnesota Habitat for Humanity affiliates.

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