

# 2019 Annual Report



## Celebrating 2019

2019 was a busy and challenging year for HFH Wisconsin and the local affiliates we serve. The fiscal year brought a huge increase in the number of families served here in Wisconsin, from 260 in FY18 to 340 families in FY19, an increase of 80 additional low-income families! Much of that came from the expansion of repair programs like *A Brush with Kindness*, *Critical Home Repair*, *Veterans Build*, *Aging in Place* and *Rock the Block*. These programs provide affiliates, big and small, with more flexibility to better address the specific needs of their local communities.

As the statewide support organization tasked with providing our affiliates with the tools and resources they need in order to grow and build capacity, HFH-Wisconsin also focused on helping grow repair programs throughout our state in 2019. From offering sessions at our training conference to working with affiliates on creating Veterans Build opportunities to offering Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) repair program development positions to affiliates, we put an emphasis on assisting our affiliates with home repairs.

This year's annual report celebrates some of the highlights of 2019 and looks forward to a great 2020!

In service,

Sara Kierzek, HFH-WI Executive Director



## Supporting & Connecting Affiliates

Each year, Habitat Wisconsin provides affiliates in our state with a variety of training events. In 2019, HFH-Wisconsin offered state specific mortgage classes, construction safety, Veterans Builds, board of directors and new leadership training, regional meetings and other opportunities for affiliates to learn and connect with each other.

Our largest training event was our statewide conference, held at the beautiful Osthoff Hotel in Elkhart Lake. With over 30 speakers and topics ranging from construction management to family services, fund development and ReStores, there were sessions for everyone. It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces, and lots of new ones as well!



**Working toward a world where everyone has a decent place to live.**



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## VISTA Program: Home Repairs

As housing costs continue to rise, and Habitat affiliates around the state struggle to raise funds to build new homes, home repairs are becoming a more affordable way to make a greater impact. To help affiliates create or expand home repair programs, partnering with more families and preserving Wisconsin's aging housing stock, HFH WI launched a new VISTA initiative focused on home repairs. VISTA members are working with affiliates around the state to incorporate best practices, begin A Brush With Kindness, Aging in Place or Veterans Build programming, increase the number of critical home repairs, and develop partnerships with other local nonprofits and city and county programs.

## Veterans Build and Veterans Women Builds

There are 400,000 veterans living in the state of Wisconsin, and nearly 26,000 of them live in poverty, and almost 74,000 live in homes with one or more major problems of quality, crowding or housing affordability. In 2019, Habitat for Humanity of Wisconsin began working with Habitat for Humanity International's Veterans Build office to assist our affiliates with developing local Veterans Build programs throughout the state, connecting them with resources, training and collaborative partners.

From this program grew the first of its kind statewide Veteran Women initiative, working to bring awareness to the unique challenges of our women veteran population in Wisconsin. Looking forward, Wisconsin affiliates throughout the state will be hosting builds and repair events with women veterans on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020 for our first Veteran Women Build commemoration of the 1938 passage of federal legislation to allow women to serve in all branches of the US military.



VISTA member Michaela poses with the sign for HFH La Crosse's first veteran home build.



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*The VISTA Program is funded by a grant from the US Corporation for National and Community Service, and through contributions from Habitat host affiliates.*



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## Disaster Preparedness and Response

One of our responsibilities as a state support organization is to assist our affiliates in disaster preparedness and response. We were gifted a Mobile Response Unit (MRU) from Habitat International, which we use to raise awareness about the need to develop disaster plans, and also lend to our affiliates to assist in disaster response in their communities.

In 2018, flooding severely impacted a number of areas in the state. Some of the worst damage was in the small community of LaValle, Wisconsin. Working closely with the Wisconsin River Area Habitat affiliate and the community of LaValle, we were able to raise funds, recruit volunteers and send our MRU filled with tools to help repair an apartment building for low-income seniors who were displaced from their homes. By January of 2019, work was completed, and the seniors were able to move back in. HFH Wisconsin was pleased to be able to offer support to our Wisconsin River affiliate and the community of LaValle.

## Advocacy

2019 marked the launch of Habitat for Humanity International's first US advocacy initiative, Cost of Home. In order to support Wisconsin affiliates interested in doing advocacy on a state, local and federal level, we have been working with several of our affiliates to develop a statewide advocacy agenda and strategies for working together to strengthen our voice for affordable housing in our state.

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## HFH Wisconsin Staff

**Sara Kierzek**, Executive Director

**Jennifer Hartwell**, VISTA Program Director

## HFH Wisconsin VISTA Members

**Dan Nelson**, Program Development VISTA

**Yemisi Oni**, VISTA Leader



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An electronic version of this report is available on our website: [www.habitatwisconsin.org](http://www.habitatwisconsin.org).





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## 2019 Board of Directors

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Treasurer First Supply, LLC

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**Mary Vandehey**, At-Large Member  
Thrivent Financial

### TOTAL FY18 REVENUE: \$446,054



■ VISTA Program	\$311,099
■ Program and Service Revenue	\$85,877
■ Contributions and Public Support	\$67,078

### TOTAL FY18 EXPENSES: \$456,605



■ Program	\$435,587
■ Management and General	\$16,655
■ Fundraising	\$4,363

As a state support organization, we do not actively solicit individual donations, but do welcome individual contributions and participate in employee giving programs. HFH Wisconsin participates in the Combined Federal Campaign, Wisconsin State Employee Combined Campaign, Thrivent Choice, Amazon Smile, Network for Good, and other giving programs.



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## Thank you to our 2019 donors!

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