



## PRESS RELEASE – March 8, 2017

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### **South County Habitat for Humanity Executive Director Announces Retirement After 24 Years with Organization**

**Charlestown, R.I.** – Lou Raymond accepted the position of Executive Director with South County Habitat for Humanity in 2002. Fifteen years later he announces his retirement. “It’s been a long and very rewarding run” commented Raymond, 74, who started out as a volunteer in 1993.

“As an organization, we’ve grown tremendously over the years”, he said. “When I first started volunteering at the Habitat build sites, we had served just one family here in South County. This year, that number will exceed 66 area families that have been helped by Habitat.”

With a background in construction, Raymond started out as a build site volunteer. He later became a member of the Board of Directors and served time as Board President during his tenure on the board. In 2001 he accepted the position of Associate Executive Director and become the organization’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Executive Director a year later. In addition to his Habitat responsibilities, over the years Raymond has been an active member of the housing community at large, serving as President of the Housing Network of RI, Vice President of the RI Coalition for the Homeless, a board member of Neighbors Helping Neighbor- RI, and a member of the advisory board of Thundermist Health Center- Wakefield.

“Under Lou Raymond's leadership, South County Habitat for Humanity has grown tremendously, including the establishment of its Operations Center and ReStore enterprise, which significantly enhance the organization's financial footing," said Rhode Island Housing Deputy Director of Homeownership & Administration, Peter Walsh. "More importantly, Lou's advocacy has enabled dozens of Rhode Island families achieve their dreams of homeownership - the impact of which will be felt by those families for generations to come. Rhode Island Housing is extremely proud to have partnered with Lou and South County Habitat to provide more than \$2 million in funding for 49 families to purchase homes."

“It has been an honor and privilege to have spent these years with such a great organization”, commented Raymond. “We have accomplished so much, from helping many area families find affordable housing, to the successful opening of our retail outlet, the Restore, just 10 years ago.”

In retirement, Raymond plans to further pursue his love for photography and woodworking. He recently became a member of the Wickford Art Association, to further enhance his photographic interests.

Habitat’s Board of Directors has established a search committee to identify a new Executive Director. They hope to name a new ED by late Fall 2017. Raymond’s last day will be December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Questions or inquiries by potential candidates should be sent via email to search@southcountyhabitat.org.

**About South County Habitat for Humanity**

South County Habitat for Humanity is dedicated to eliminating substandard housing locally and worldwide through constructing, rehabilitating and preserving homes; by advocating for fair and just housing policies; and by providing training and access to resources to help families improve their shelter conditions. For more general information, call 401-213-6711 or go to our website at [www.southcountyhabitat.org](http://www.southcountyhabitat.org).

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Lou Raymond, Executive Director,  
South County Habitat for Humanity