



**PRESS RELEASE – April 26, 2019**

**For Immediate Release**

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**Habitat for Humanity celebrates volunteers and 29 years of providing affordable homeownership opportunities in Washington County.**

**South County, R.I.** The colossal efforts of South County Habitat for Humanity volunteers were celebrated at the annual 2019 Volunteer Appreciation Reception, held at Christ the King Church in Kingston.

As the cost of housing continues to rise, the demand for affordable housing is clearly evident with Habitat seeing a 140% in the number of applicants over the prior year. Gratefully, the number of volunteers generously donating their time to Habitat’s mission has also seen a dramatic increase, with 878 volunteers in the past year, an increase of 75%. These 878 volunteers contributed an unbelievable 24,144 hours, equivalent to a \$613,982 donation. Volunteers that attended the event were served a meal catered by West Bay Gourmet and all volunteers received reusable insulated shopping bags sporting the Habitat logo (fittingly timed, given the growing ban on plastic bags).

“This April, we’ve had more than 60 families apply for the Habitat Homeownership Program. Rent and homeownership costs are skyrocketing, while wages are not keeping pace. Far too often families locally are struggling to make ends meet. We may be a small affiliate, but thankfully we have a mighty base of dedicated volunteers, whose efforts are changing lives and providing opportunities for families across Washington County, but there is still more work to be done.” said Alicia Johnson, Volunteer & Family Services Coordinator.

In addition to celebrating the massive efforts of all volunteers, the evening concluded with the presentation of the affiliates two major annual awards. The J. Whitney and Nancy Bancroft Long-term Service Award was presented to Sue and Alex Amoruso of Narragansett, who have been volunteering with Habitat in many capacities for more than 18 years.

The Mark Smith Volunteer of the Year award was presented to Michael Faggella of South Kingstown, who has made a profound impact on the organization in the past year with his efforts to strengthen ties with the University of Rhode Island student chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

**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 visit our website at [www.southcountyhabitat.org](http://www.southcountyhabitat.org).

**Photo Credit:** Michael Salerno

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