



building **stability, strength** and **self-reliance** through shelter

January 6, 2020

Dear Friends,

You made it! We are officially done with 2020, the year that challenged us in ways we never imagined. Congratulations, and Happy New Year!

Last year started as any other; we had BIG plans and full hearts. Days before our March 3rd luncheon, news about the COVID-19 virus was gaining traction and the threat looked to be more serious. By March 16, I sent our office staff home for what we *thought* would be just two weeks of remote work. Little did we know it was only the start of a season full of trials for us all.

Stay home orders and related uncertainties tested our ability to be nimble on all sides. But I was continually inspired by your generosity. With your response to our Hand Up for Habitat campaign, you reminded us in our darkest hour that we are blessed by a community that believes in us and honors our work. Your continued support, along with a PPP loan, buoyed our faith during the leanest of times. To see our donors, volunteers, staff, and future homeowners dig deeper still to make things work was just what my heart needed to carry on. I will be forever grateful for all the ways you showed up for us.

It is because of ***you*** that Tacoma/Pierce County Habitat for Humanity served more individuals in 2020 than ever before. It was an unprecedented year of generosity and kindness, in which we offered a hand-up to 236 households. Remarkable!

Your generosity enabled us to leverage partnerships into new programming, including our foreclosure prevention and mortgage relief work with Pierce County for local homeowners struggling to make their payments due to job loss or reduction of hours. With your help, we also remained focused on upholding our promises to future homeowners and delivered the forever homes we committed. Thanks to our intrepid construction team and our Regular Volunteers – who, even with a two-month shutdown, provided more than *100 days of labor* - we sold **9 homes** in 2020, 6 of which closed *after* the onset of the pandemic.

The challenges of 2020 didn't define us but did offer opportunities for refinement. The death of George Floyd and the resulting demands for justice hit us hard, reminding us of Habitat's origins as a racial justice organization. While more than 60% of Tacoma Habitat's homebuyers in the

last decade have been households of color, we recognize historic discrimination in US housing policy is one of the chief drivers of racial inequity today. Our 2021 advocacy efforts double down to better serve communities of color, using our collective voice to advocate for *all* types of affordable housing.

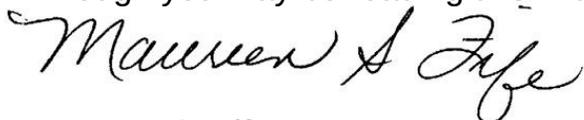
While we have made it to 2021, solid ground is still a ways off. But thanks to your ongoing support, *we are prepared*. Last year, Tacoma Habitat became a HUD Certified Housing Counseling Agency and 3 staff members earned their counseling certificates – making us just the second organization in the *county* to provide this service. This distinction uniquely qualified us to partner with Pierce County to distribute over one million dollars of CARES Act funding earmarked for mortgage relief, which was accomplished between August and December. As more relief funding becomes available, we hope to continue working with our government partners to serve the community in this way.

As we look toward the future, please join us for our *virtual* Changing Lives Luncheon on Tuesday, March 2. In a brief and powerful program, you'll hear from Habitat homeowners and I will share more details about our new Aging in Place repair program for seniors, and all that's in store for the coming year. RSVP at <https://tpc-habitat.salsalabs.org/luncheon2021> to get the link for the livestream.

Enclosed is your 2020 giving summary, along with an impact report illustrating all we accomplished together - despite all the year threw at us. While the dollars and cents make a big difference, and help our neighbors in need, **it's your heart that impresses me most.**

Thank you again for believing in us – in Habitat, in my team, and in *me*. I am blessed by your willingness to lean in, proving us not just with the means to sustain our work but to continue to innovate and even thrive. Your faith in us and this work means more than you know.

Though you may be reading this in the dark of a winter evening, *there is light ahead.*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maureen S. Fife". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Maureen S. Fife
CEO