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Lebanon Area Habitat for Humanity Advances Inclusion Through National Community Building Initiative

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Lebanon, OR August 1, 2025 – Lebanon Area Habitat for Humanity (LAHFH) has successfully completed a slate of community-focused projects as part of a national initiative aimed at fostering belonging and inclusion across diverse populations.

In late 2024, LAHFH was selected as one of 14 Habitat affiliates nationwide to join the second cohort of a national community-building initiative focused on strengthening inclusive leadership and outreach. The **Team Up** project is a national initiative founded by Habitat for Humanity International, Catholic Charities USA, the YMCA, and Interfaith America. The Starbucks Foundation and AmeriCorps Volunteer Generation Fund supported the Team Up Project.

Beginning in January, the affiliate participated in community leadership training alongside a select group of peer organizations to foster belonging and build operational strategies that reach across racial, cultural, and economic lines. Affiliates were selected based on proposed inclusive projects.

With support from the **Team Up** project, LAHFH strengthened its outreach efforts and launched new initiatives to engage historically underserved communities. The affiliate held **DIY Housing Workshops**, providing renters and homeowners with hands-on training in home repair. Each session included a live Q&A with LAHFH's Executive Director, who offered information on homeownership and home repair programs. Spanish translation was provided to ensure accessibility for more residents.

These workshops became a gateway for deeper community engagement. LAHFH initiated dialogue with BIPOC-, Latino/a/x-, and low-income-serving organizations throughout its service area, leading to new collaborations with local groups and opening the door for future partnerships and events.

The organization also expanded accessibility by translating program brochures into Spanish and incorporating these efforts into future community education, volunteership, and relationship-building. This people-centered approach reflects LAHFH's ongoing commitment to empowering all residents through housing, education, and equity.

"It was a huge undertaking – learning about community outreach and organizing events at the same time. I'm grateful to Habitat for mentoring us along the way and the new opportunities for community involvement and engagement," said affiliate project lead Jennifer Puccio.

Founded in 1993, Lebanon Area Habitat for Humanity is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International. The affiliate serves Linn County communities in ZIP Codes 97355, 97327, 97386, 97345, and 97329. To learn more about LAHFH's programs and partnerships, board and committees, visit <https://www.lebanonoregonhabitat.com/>