



For Immediate Release:
March 31, 2021

Habitat for Humanity of Marion County Achieves Community Land Trust Certification in Pioneering Statewide Program


Tallahassee, FL: The Florida Housing Coalition, the state's leading nonprofit provider of training and technical assistance dedicated to affordable housing from ending homelessness to first-time homeownership, today announced that **Habitat for Humanity of Marion County** received its Community Land Trust Certification – the first such non-profit in the state to be awarded the distinction.

The Community Land Trust Institute, founded in 2001 by the Florida Housing Coalition, seeks to ensure permanent affordability by separating the ownership of the land from the home. For many renters, Community Land Trust (CLT) homes represent a vital pathway on their journey to permanent homeownership. CLT homebuyers purchase a home for below market value and agree to pass on that benefit to subsequent purchasers of that home, creating a permanent supply of affordable housing in the community. The Florida Housing Coalition teamed up with Freddie Mac in 2020 to launch a national pilot program to build the organizational capacity of CLTs around the state and standardize CLT operations.

“For so many communities in our state, CLT’s are an essential solution for ensuring permanent affordability,” stated Florida Housing Coalition President and CEO Jaimie Ross. “We are thrilled that our state is leading the nation in standardizing CLT best practices. Big congratulations to Habitat of Humanity of Marion County for being the first to meet all the standards for certification.”

Barbara Beck, the President/CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Florida and a Board Member of the Florida Housing Coalition, is a staunch advocate for CLT homeownership and was thrilled to hear that a Habitat Affiliate was the first to be designated as a Certified CLT through the program. Beck stated, “Upon moving to Pinellas County, Florida in 2003, I was struck by how Habitat for Humanity needed more tools to serve such a densely-populated county. As one of the organizers of the Pinellas County Land Trust, I am sold on the idea of CLTs as a way to set-aside property in perpetuity for affordable home ownership. As the state Director for Habitat for Humanity of Florida, I am proud that Marion County has adopted this model!”

(cont.)



“Affordable housing inventory is in short supply, and the CLT model provides an affordable and sustainable solution for homebuyers. Through the Florida Housing Coalition Certification program, CLT’s benefit from standardized operations and increase capacity to focus on their mission of providing permanently affordable housing in communities,” stated Freddie Mac Affordable Lending Manager Dennis Smith. “Congratulations to Habitat for Humanity of Marion County for completing the certification.”

Participating in the national pilot program are seven other CLT’s in the state including: Community Land Trust of Palm Beach County, Communities that Care CLT, Delray Beach Community Land Trust, Collier County CLT, Tallahassee Lenders’ Consortium, Hannibal Square CLT, and Community Housing Trust of Sarasota. For information on the Florida Community Land Trust Institute visit <https://www.flhousing.org/community-land-trusts>.

Save the Date: Annual Conference, August 30-Sept 1st

Formal presentation of the certification will take place at the Florida Housing Coalition’s Annual Home Matters Conference, being held August 30-Sept 1st.

###

Contact: Jaimie Ross, President and CEO, 850-212-0587 ross@flhousing.org.

Pictured: Habitat for Humanity Staff Marion County with their CLT Certificate. From left to right: Tyler Starr, Volunteer Coordinator, Shawnya Waiter, Family Partner, Joanne Black, Development Director, Dave Layman, President/CEO, Rob Peters, Project Manager, Jeff Ruttenber, Senior Project Manager, Tori Arens, Executive Assistant, Heather Thrall, Family Programs Specialist