

East Cooper Habitat for Humanity Media Kit: Testimonials

Allison Herrin

Homeowner, McAdams Court

East Cooper Habitat for Humanity has changed my life. Prior to my involvement with them, I was living in unaffordable housing and getting evicted often. I now have financial stability. As a result, I am less stressed and a better parent, and because this house has brought physical stability to my children's lives, they are more emotionally stable as well. I love my home. People kept telling me that owning a home was different, but I didn't understand until I actually had my own home. You take pride in what you have. It's kind of like not knowing how much you can love your own children until you have them.

If you need housing right now, this is not your answer, but if you are looking for long term stability and a future full of hope for your family, then go for it. Put in the application and do everything you need to do to qualify and then be patient.

I just recently started a non-profit organization for single mothers. I would not be where I am today and able to help others if it weren't for the stability that East Cooper Habitat for Humanity has provided.

Bruce McAdams

Past president and current board member

We're filling a very basic need: putting a roof over someone's head. As a Christian, I find that participating in the work of Habitat for Humanity is an affirmative response to God's command and call to love our neighbor. It is an opportunity to be a servant to lend a helping hand to those who are less fortunate.

In 1989, I read an article in *Reader's Digest* about the founder of Habitat for Humanity, and it had a big impact on me. Our church decided to get involved with Sea Island Habitat for Humanity, the only affiliate in the area at the time, and this effort led us to believe that we needed a similar effort East of the Cooper. We had our first organizational meeting in August of 1989, one month before Hurricane Hugo hit the area, and we officially formed East Cooper Habitat for Humanity in January of 1990. Although I was the first president, there were several who made the effort happen and continue to do so. After three years, I stepped aside to allow others to step forward, and that happened quickly. Since then, I've served on the board a couple more times, and I want to continue to stay involved, but it's great to see how many people help out now.

Abbey Robertson

Homeowner, Kent Street

I have been familiar with Habitat for Humanity since I was a child, and my husband became involved a few years back when he helped build a home on James Island with some guys from our church.

East Cooper Habitat for Humanity has truly changed our lives. We feel blessed to be homeowners – something that Frank and I have longed for since before we even met. Not only did we get this opportunity, but we also got a beautiful home! It has also brought serious financial freedom to our little family. This home has given [our girls] room to play in their room and space to run! We are now in a wonderful school district, and their future is very bright - not just because they are great girls, but because we are in a stable living situation now.

We just never thought we would be blessed to this magnitude. We are more than thrilled to be able to partner with East Cooper Habitat for Humanity. The people we have met along the way are so wonderful and so helpful, and their dedication to the vision is admirable. We are so thankful that Habitat saw something in us and believed in us and chose us. We are so thankful and so humbled that we have this home to call ours.

We have amazing neighbors! They are so kind, have been welcoming and one neighbor even mowed our grass since we didn't have a mower when we moved in!

Jimmy Carroll

Contributor and former board member

Quite honestly, I do not remember how far back I go with East Cooper Habitat. I have a couple of pictures hanging on my wall showing me and members of the Realtors “East Cooper Top Producers Club” all working on a home we sponsored back in the early 1990s.

I am a firm believer in giving back to my profession, to my church, and to my community. What I love about Habitat is that instead of giving hand-outs, we are giving a “hand up.”

I [have] loved working alongside members of the families working on getting a home. We eat our lunches while sitting on blocks and sawhorses with wood dust all over us. Last year, I had my son volunteer with me at Habitat. Today, he is a Peace Corps volunteer in Guatemala.

We could use more money in our office, yes, but there are those who need help more than our having a few more dollars, hence our continued giving.

Terri Naguib

Homeowner, McAdams Court

I couldn't find a place to rent that I thought was an acceptable place for my daughter to grow up, and I felt trapped since I couldn't find a job that would pay enough to qualify for a traditional mortgage. After searching for a year and a half, I got up enough nerve to apply for a Habitat home and was accepted within three months. We've been living in this beautiful home for five years now, and almost every day, my daughter says, “Mom, I love our home!” Living on McAdams Court with so many other East Cooper Habitat homeowners is a great experience. I feel very safe here and can rely on anyone in the neighborhood. We also love the diversity of people in our neighborhood.

Building a home through East Cooper Habitat for Humanity was such a phenomenal experience. They have an amazing organization, and they are now like family to me. I especially loved the partnership aspect of the process. It's one of the best confidence-building experiences I've ever had. I'm proud to say East Cooper Habitat doesn't give hand outs. You still have to put in the hours and show that you have good credit and strong finances. They are giving people a "step up" to help people build their lives. It is such an honor to be blessed with a Habitat House. Five years later, I still can't believe I own a home. I'm filled with awe and gratitude.

Elizabeth Venning

Homeowner, McAdams Court

I didn't know much about Habitat for Humanity, but my family encouraged me to go to a meeting. I went and decided to fill out the application, but didn't think anything would come of it. Through this process, I have learned to always keep a positive mind; it may seem far away, but it can happen! I never thought I'd see the day that I would own a home. It's beautiful, and I love everything about it.

Before moving into my home, I lived in an apartment where I never saw my neighbors. At McAdams Court, everyone is friendly, and we see each other out in the neighborhood. I also have lots of family and visitors constantly stopping by.

East Cooper Habitat for Humanity is such a wonderful organization. Everyone is always upbeat, even when working at the site, and they are always so supportive. They gave me the confidence to buy this house -- something that I was scared to do before.

Even though I've finished my volunteer commitment, I still want to help with other projects and at the ReStore. It was fun working on my house. I had never poured cement, but I learned how! My family and co-workers even joined in. I'll keep going back because it's a good feeling to help others, just like people helped me. This house is such a blessing to me.

Sandra Manigault

Homeowner since 1994, Awendaw

Sandra Manigault and her sister began working with East Cooper Habitat for Humanity in 1990, the year the agency first started. They went through the application process and their home was completed in 1994 through the work of many volunteers. Sandra and her sister completed paying their mortgage in 2013.

"I didn't think I'd get a home, but someone encouraged me to apply. The East Cooper Habitat committees and volunteers really worked with us to get us through the process. They were a very nurturing group and so helpful. They had just started out, and it took a while to build the house, but I didn't care; I was just so excited to get a home. They helped provide a home for me and my younger brother, whom I raised after our mother passed, and for my sister and her children. It's wonderful to have the mortgage paid off, and I'm so thankful to have something to leave to the next generation.

It's been such a blessing to us to be able to buy this home, and it was a blessing to me to know that there were people who wanted to help. I was younger when we started this process and didn't realize there were so many people who cared. Through Habitat, I found that people really do care. It's like a family.

If you're considering applying, I'd say go for it. Don't be discouraged. The program really works."

Hope White
Homeowner, McClellanville

Hope's mother, Dorothy Huger, originally partnered with East Cooper Habitat for Humanity to purchase their home in 1994. Hope, her brother and mother lived in the home until her mother's passing in 2006. Hope picked up the mortgage at the time of her mother's death and continued the payments until it was fully paid in December of 2013. She continues to live there with her brother today. Hope is now working with a woman she encouraged to contact ECHFH who has now started the process of getting her own home.

"Having this house has made a huge difference for my whole family. The people of East Cooper Habitat were always there for me. We had our ups and downs, but they never gave up on us, and now we have a home. My mom worked so hard to get us this house; I wanted to continue what she started. I would encourage others to contact East Cooper Habitat for Humanity. Take your time, and don't give up. They won't give up on you."