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**WELCOME TO OUR  
NEWEST AFFILIATES!**

**Family Promise of the Big Bend**  
Tallahassee, FL  
**Family Promise Greater Charlotte Metro**  
Charlotte, NC  
**Family Promise of Riverside**  
Riverside, CA

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**The Future  
Begins at Home**

*Together, we can help  
families in crisis begin  
building for the future  
at home.*



VOLUME 15  
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*Highlighting our achievements in the fight against family homelessness*



**A MESSAGE  
FROM OUR  
BOARD CHAIR**

As 2022 draws to a close, we continue to deal with the repercussions of the Covid pandemic as well as other widespread health issues. The real estate market remains competitive, even for the limited inventory of available affordable housing. Prices for basic necessities like food, fuel, and clothing continue to rise.

I mention these concerns not to end the year on a depressing note but to express the urgency and ongoing relevance of our work at Family Promise. More families than ever across the country are seeking assistance with housing, food, transportation, employment, and other fundamental needs. And Family Promise continues to be there for them. For example, as you'll read in this newsletter, this fall, Family Promise ensured families in Florida were prepared for Hurricane Ian, the deadliest storm to strike the state in nearly a century. Affiliates helped families weather the storm, then ensured life returned to normal as quickly as possible. You'll read about volunteers like Doug Holton, a recent recipient of Family Promise's Good Neighbor Award, whose longstanding dedication to Family Promise has benefitted countless families. The entire Family Promise community coming together is what makes our work possible and gives families facing homelessness the best chance of success.

*(Continued on page 2)*

**The Future Begins at Home**

Although Thanksgiving conjures images of family gathered around the dining table, that wasn't the reality for the Davis family. When Kendra's husband passed away, she and her five children lost their home and found themselves spending the night in their car – not a family celebration Kendra ever envisioned.



They entered the shelter program at Family Promise of St. Tammany in Slidell, LA, where Kendra received help finding childcare and housing. Once they found a new home, Family Promise assisted with rent and deposits to get the family off to a secure start.

Today, Kendra has a steady job, her children are thriving, and the family is in their own home.

"You don't have to be blood relatives to be considered family," she says. "Family Promise encouraged and supported us through a tough time. I'll always love them for that."

Thousands of children and parents turn to Family Promise each year for support with homelessness prevention, shelter, and stabilization. We accompany them on their journey to independence, ensuring they have the skills and resources to succeed.



**We need you!**

Use the QR code below or visit  
**[familypromise.org/  
futurebeginsathome](http://familypromise.org/futurebeginsathome)**  
to make a gift today.

Together, we can give children  
and their families hope for the  
future and the promise of home.





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Family Promise will continue to serve families in need, but we can't do it alone. We need your help. Families facing a housing crisis are desperate to regain stability and security. Your support ensures they have that opportunity. The future begins at home—please remember Family Promise this December so families in need can give their children the future every child deserves.

Thank you,

Betsy J. Bernard

Betsy Bernard  
Chair, Family Promise Board of Trustees

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FOUNDED IN 1988

FAMILY PROMISE  
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Family Promise is a national nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization addressing the crisis of family homelessness in the U.S. Through a comprehensive set of solutions involving prevention, shelter, and stabilization, Family Promise empowers families experiencing or at risk of homelessness to reclaim and maintain their independence.

Why I Give  
VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: DOUG HOLTON



When Doug Holton and his wife began exploring ways to give back to their Rockledge, FL, community, they wanted to effect change at a fundamental level. Finding

Family Promise of Brevard gave them exactly what they were looking for.

“One of the things that attracted me to Family Promise was the fact that they’re willing to peel back the layers of that onion and find out the root causes of family homelessness,” says Holton.

With an extensive background in information technology, he first provided Family Promise with IT support. Later, Holton joined the board and served as board chair for five years.

He currently chairs Family Promise of Brevard’s relocation committee and manages The Firehouse Project, a plan

to turn a decommissioned firehouse in neighboring Cocoa, FL, into the Affiliate’s new resource center. With 73 percent of the town’s residents earning below the national average income, Holton sees the location as the perfect place to serve families in need.

“The way we can resolve the atypical income level in Cocoa is through education,” he says. “The resource center will host different educational programs for families within Family Promise and the entire Cocoa community at large.”

The new location will allow Family Promise to serve more families and easily collaborate with other agencies for a truly holistic approach to addressing the crisis of family homelessness in Brevard County. Holton recently received Family Promise’s Good Neighbor Award for his dedicated work with the organization.

“I like the idea of assisting people to do for themselves instead of acting like a Band-Aid,” he says. “Helping these families reach a level of self-sufficiency is what has kept me at Family Promise all these years.”

Family Promise Welcomes New Board Member

John Ferrie, legal director at YouTube, has joined Family Promise National’s board of trustees. A member of the company’s leadership team, Ferrie oversees the teams that handle legal matters across a broad range of business areas at YouTube. He has a long track record of leading first-ever initiatives and has held a number of senior counsel positions within the entertainment, legal, and consulting fields.

As co-leader of YouTube’s Asians@YouTube Employee Resource Group, Ferrie seeks to connect Asian employees and ensure their diverse voices are heard.

“John brings a unique perspective to Family Promise through his vast legal experience and deep involvement in DEIA-related initiatives and programming at YouTube,” says Family Promise Board Chair Betsy Bernard. “His insight and expertise will be incredibly useful as we enhance the services we provide to families in crisis and expand our own DEIA work.”



Weathering the Storm

*When it rains, it pours.*

As if 2022 hadn’t presented enough challenges, late September brought a Category 4 hurricane to southwestern Florida, devastating communities along the Gulf Coast. For families experiencing homelessness, Hurricane Ian only added to the obstacles they were already facing.

Family Promise of South Sarasota County in Venice, FL, and the families it was serving at the time witnessed the catastrophe firsthand.

“We were looking out for several families as the storm approached,” recalls Family Service Coordinator Shantel Berry. “We had two families in shelter, plus families in our transitional housing program and graduate families living nearby and wanted to be sure everyone was ready.”

Anticipating the chaos after a major storm, Family Promise helped families prepare to evacuate if necessary and supplied food gift cards. Families in the transitional housing complex escaped significant damage (see sidebar to learn how Family Promise turned vacant transitional housing into a temporary storm shelter for a staffer and her family), while shelter families who had been living in a local hotel had to evacuate but were able to return within days. Only one graduate family living in their own home suffered major damage.



Family Promise of South Sarasota County and its Family Service Coordinator Shantel Berry have been instrumental in helping their southern Florida community recover from Hurricane Ian.

Says Berry, “All of the parents we were working with had jobs, although one family’s daycare center was damaged and closed for a few weeks, which meant a parent had to miss some work. The big problem has been housing.”

Families across the country have struggled to find affordable housing in recent years, and southern Florida is no exception. The devastation of Hurricane Ian exacerbated an already dire situation.

“All the agencies in our area are in the same boat—we can’t find affordable housing,” explains Berry. “Ian destroyed a lot of housing, and many people are still in emergency storm shelters even months after the storm. Shelters here are full.”

Although FEMA began offering displaced residents hotel vouchers, Berry notes that local hotels that survived the storm are at capacity, so families are forced to shelter in hotels up to two hours away. For families struggling with homelessness and who may not have their own transportation, this can be a huge roadblock on their journey to recovery.

But one thing Hurricane Ian didn’t destroy is South Sarasota County’s community spirit.

“It looks like a war zone in some areas,” Berry says. “But our volunteers and supporters are still here for families. They’re making meals, donating clothes, shoes, blankets. As always with Family Promise, we’ll get through this!”



Hurricane Ian drove home the idea that “homelessness can happen to anybody” for Family Promise of South Sarasota County’s Shannon Nordquist and her family.

Thanks to Family Promise of South Sarasota County’s transitional housing program, the Affiliate’s Development Associate, Shannon Nordquist, and her family recovered safely from Hurricane Ian. Their North Port, FL, community experienced the worst of the storm’s flooding, and power loss in the area cut off water and electricity for two weeks.

One of the Affiliate’s 10 transitional homes was vacant at the time of the storm, so when Family Promise learned of the Nordquists’ situation, they offered them use of the house.

“We’d never been in a situation where being able to sleep in our own beds was beyond our control,” says Nordquist. “It was eye-opening and a little unsettling for me. If not for Family Promise, we’d have been at home with mosquitos and flies and no lights or running water, and it wouldn’t have had anything to do with how hard my husband and I worked.”

Nordquist was back at work immediately after the storm and has been heartened to see the community come together to help those in need. In their home once again, the family is addressing water damage and still awaiting a tarp for their damaged roof.

She says, “Life is getting back to normal. But something like this just reinforces the fact that homelessness can happen to anybody.”



Night Without a Bed is a Night to Remember

Friends of Family Promise got out of bed on October 22 for the third annual Night Without A Bed, an event to raise awareness and support for families facing homelessness. Supporters across the country spent the night sleeping anywhere except the comfort of their own beds.

The event raised more than \$120,000 for families in need.