

U of M Faculty of Medicine and Genworth Canada helping to find cure for poverty housing

Habitat home being constructed in U of M parking lot by faculty, staff and students

June 10, 2013, Winnipeg, Manitoba - A celebratory wall was raised on a Habitat home in a University of Manitoba Bannatyne Campus parking lot today by Manitoba's health minister, the Dean of Medicine, medical students, academic physicians, Habitat staff and other volunteers. The building of the home is made possible through the University of Manitoba Faculty of Medicine's new partnership with Habitat for Humanity to fund and build a home for a family in need. Genworth Canada is another major contributor to this year's build, which involves University of Manitoba Faculty of Medicine faculty members, staff and students as they raise money and volunteer time to help construct the house over 12 days from June 10-21st.

"Health and wellbeing is about more than just health services, it's about education, jobs, a clean environment and a safe home. That's why it's so fitting that the staff and students from the faculty of medicine are volunteering their time to build a new home with Habitat for Humanity, an organization focused on ensuring more families in Manitoba can live in a safe and affordable home," says Hon. Theresa Oswald, Minister of Health. The highly visible remote build location on Bannatyne Campus will attract more campus volunteers along with RBC and other volunteer supporters.

Through the generous contribution of faculty members, supported by several fundraisers, the U of M Faculty of Medicine is demonstrating tremendous community leadership by engaging their learners, faculty and staff in this important community project. "As a Faculty of Medicine, we believe that social accountability is a core value for our students and physicians to practice for the well-being of all members of society. This is a great opportunity for future physicians to become actively involved in the community with a chance to meet the family in need they are helping," says Dr. Brian Postl, Dean of Medicine, University of Manitoba.

Genworth's support of Habitat's school program was a natural fit with the Faculty of Medicine to help make this year's remote build a reality as the necessary funding and volunteer labour force came together to build the home. "We are very appreciative of Genworth's longstanding support of Habitat's school programs and having students involved from university, primary school and High School, working together to help those less fortunate is a great way to expose youth to community involvement," says Sandy Hopkins, Habitat Manitoba CEO.

The Genworth sponsored school programs involve High School students through High Schools for Habitat for Humanity Clubs (3H Clubs) while the elementary students participate through a national writing contest. Each year, students in grades 4 to 6 across Canada are encouraged to write an essay or a poem on the "Meaning of Home." For each entry, Genworth donates \$5 to the local Habitat. The winner of the 2012 competition announced earlier in this year resulted in a significant cash contribution to help fund the building of this home.

Upon completion to 'lock up', the house will be moved to its permanent residence at 884 McCalman Avenue, where it will be completed by Habitat build crews and tradespeople.

For more information, please contact:

Ken McIntyre, VP, Marketing and Communications
Habitat for Humanity Manitoba
Phone: 204-235-2402 / Cell: 204-250-9235
e-mail: kmcintyre@habitat.mb.ca

Ilana Simon, Director of Communications & Marketing
Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba
Phone: 204-789-3427/Cell: 204-295-6777
e-mail: ilana.simon@med.umanitoba.ca