DSU, Other Agencies Celebrate Home Completions in Coverdale Crossroads

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Delaware State University, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and nine other Delaware social agencies recently celebrated the construction completion of three new homes in the Coverdale Crossroads community in Sussex Country.

During a Dec. 17 media event at the Coverdale Crossroad Community Center, representatives of the partner agencies celebrated the joint initiatives that made the dream of home ownership possible in an affordable way for the residents.

Under the direction of Milford Housing Corporation, three single females – two of whom also have children – were trained and supervised to build their own homes. These homes include three bedrooms, two baths, porches and two-car garages. The families – a led by single female household heads – have low 30-year mortgages financed through the U.S. Department of Agriculture. At closing and move-in, each family possessed approximately $50,000 of equity in their homes.

Rene Brown stands in front her new home that she helped build.

In addition to the home construction, DSU has worked with its partners and the Coverdale Crossroads Civic Association to provide services to the youth and families (Western Sussex Boys & Girls Club) and entrepreneurial training opportunities (DSU Center for Enterprise Development). Additionally, the partnership has provided pre- and post-homeownership counseling, financial literacy workshops and assistance with credit restoration for members of the community.

The new residents of the three new homes in Coverdale Crossroads are Rene Brown, LaToya Bruce and Amanda Sheppard.

“It taught me that I can do anything I set my mind to do,” said Ms. Brown, a homeowner of one of the newly built houses.

The partners – led by DSU – consisted of the following agencies and organizations: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Agency, Milford Housing Development Corporation, Interfaith Community Housing of Delaware, Delaware State Housing Authority, Boy & Girls Clubs of Delaware (Western Sussex Club), The Coverdale Crossroads Community Council, Inc. and First State Community Action Agency.

Dr. John Austin, director of the DSU Office of Sponsored Programs who conceived the project, was instrumental in bringing together the partner agencies and crafting the successful competitive grant application that resulted in about $600,000 to support the project. The partners -- including DSU -- added another $1 million.

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