



N. Humes
Habitat for Humanity of Missoula
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Local/ State/Regional

For Immediate Release

Big Sky High School Students Contribute to the Design of Missoula's 50th Habitat Home – Ground Breaking Tonight

Architectural Design students in Big Sky High School teacher Chris Jacaruso's class are participating in the ultimate hands-on experience – designing and constructing a full-scale home for a Missoula family. Over one year ago, Mike Sehorn, Habitat for Humanity of Missoula's Building Site Supervisor, contacted Jacaruso to see if his students in the Architectural Design Class would be interested in creating a floor plan for a Habitat home. Jacaruso agreed to the proposal and started the project with his students when the school year began last fall.

Sehorn visited the class and presented details of the need for a floor plan for a two bedroom home. Late last year the Big Sky H.S. class toured Habitat's 49th home in Missoula, which took a team of nearly 500 volunteers and eight months to finish. The students went over the house plans, construction details, and the energy efficiency features in order to begin the work on the home plans for Habitat's 50th home. Subsequently, the group stopped by the build site on Burlington Avenue to see the lot where the two bedroom, one bath home design will be built for the Fimmel family this year.

"This project couldn't be a better win-win for our community," states Noreen Humes, Habitat for Humanity of Missoula Executive Director. "What a great way for our high school students to participate in a real life project. Habitat is utilizing the plans the students created, providing them a learning opportunity, and providing us a design that benefits our partner family and the community. We are grateful to Chris Jacaruso and his students partnering with us on this project and hope we can do it again."

During the creative process, Sehorn and Habitat's Building Committee Chair, Gerry Knudsen, visited the class periodically to monitor progress and answer any questions. Jacaruso's class finalized their design in January. Sehorn then took the students' plans to architects Chris Martison and Kate Tilleman, of A&E Architecture. With their suggestions, and features from the students' plans, they combined the designs to generate the official construction plan. A&E Architects took over the blueprints and the students will continue their involvement this summer by volunteering on the construction site.

"A&E Architects continues to be excited and inspired to be a part of the process of providing what is essential, and by providing the essentials, a family can be empowered through new opportunities," states Chris Martison, Principal at A&E Architects and Habitat for Humanity Board Director. "Each year, I am completely moved by the commitment and dedication of time and hard work by Missoula's volunteer community to build homes that support our partner families and further the mission of the Habitat Board."

This collaboration with Big Sky High School students has proven to be a wonderful experience for all involved. Habitat hopes to continue involving local student architects in future projects. Thanks to Chris Jacaruso and his Architectural Design students for their passion and interest in this project, and to the A&E architects' willingness to encompass the students' work. The ground breaking ceremony on this home will be held Thursday, April 14, 2016 starting at 5:30pm located at 2217 Burlington Ave. in Missoula.

Habitat for Humanity of Missoula works to eliminate poverty housing in Missoula County and throughout the world as an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International.

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