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# Joining Forces to Provide Spaces for Refuge

*HomeAid Phoenix continues to help those experiencing or at risk of homelessness find places to call home*

By **Cindy Quenneville**

**H**omeAid Phoenix entered the Phoenix metropolitan market in late 2019. We established a strong board of directors and set off to help those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. The first year of operations, as many of you recall, was one of learning how to work in a virtual environment while supporting those who need us the most.

HomeAid Phoenix joined forces with Sojourner Center. Sojourner Center provides shelter to those escaping domestic violence. They provide women, men and children an opportunity to refocus on themselves and start anew. HomeAid Phoenix, in partnership with our builder captain, Taylor Morrison, was able to transform six apartments into pet-friendly residences, add a large pet park and spruce up the existing pet shelter area. HomeAid Phoenix is proud to say that 79% of the construction was provided in-kind. Sojourner began accepting families and their pets in 2015, the first time the pet will be housed with the resident and what a difference that will make. Statistically, over 40%


of families will not leave a domestic violence situation if it means leaving their pets behind; they are family too. It was a successful first project and showcased the difference HomeAid makes in a community.

Our work continued in providing needed resources to several non-profit organizations supporting those facing homelessness. Our Seats and Feet drives have provided over 75,000 pairs of socks and undergarments to hundreds of people. It lifts spirits and gives people a sense of dignity. This program is successful because of the gracious support of our homebuilding industry. Mattamy Homes, Landsea Homes, Pulte Homes and William

Ryan Homes provided teams to help us spread the word and get the donations collected. VIP Mortgage provided us with a space to store and sort all the goods and Applied Photography captured the moments. This truly was a community-driven effort that continues to make an impact.

HomeAid Phoenix has partnered with House of Refuge for the past three years to hold a one-day paint-a-thon. House of Refuge provides transitional housing to families, they have over 84 homes available to assist the community. In our first two years, we could paint 13 homes in a day. In 2023, with the support of our builder's painting contractors, we doubled our impact, painted fencing and cleaned up their community park. There were over 170 volunteers from several builders, mortgage companies and title companies, working side by side to make this transformation come to life. Residents were in awe of the work being done, and it boosted their confidence and reinforced for them how much the community cares.

Our work has just begun. At the end of 2023, HomeAid Phoenix partnered with Maggie's Place to improve their Family Success Center. Maggie's Place was founded in 2000 to welcome "pregnant and parenting women and their children into a safe and loving community, providing life-changing programs and ongoing services to help them to become self-sufficient." The project focuses primarily on improving the overall program offerings and broadening supportive services through the expansion of the physical footprint of Maggie's Place's Family Success Center. The Center is the central hub of Maggie's Place. The space will go from 4,200 to 5,944 square feet, adding four additional offices and two additional conference rooms and expanding the donation storage area. This project is being led by PWI Residential and Woodside Homes with support from Shea Homes.

Understanding the need to provide more beds, HomeAid Phoenix plans in 2024 will be to work with our non-profit partners, assisting those facing homelessness, by bringing in resources and expanding the number of beds we have available in our community. The reasons, the wide range of people affected, and the increasing numbers of people experiencing homelessness make addressing the issue difficult, but not impossible. 

**Cindy Quenneville** is the executive director of HomeAid Phoenix.