

Neighborhood Based Family Housing Program

Building dreams in East St. Louis



In July, 1998, hundreds of volunteers gathered in Emerson Park, East St. Louis, to contribute both their time and energy to **providing affordable housing** to local families. "Blitz Build" brought both skilled and unskilled volunteers from all over the state, as well as Emerson Park residents and UIUC faculty and students to work from 7AM to 5PM, Monday to Saturday, building two new homes in three weeks. With everyone working together in **an environment of sharing and caring**, the dream of a new home was realized for two area families.

The Neighborhood-Based Family Housing Program, now in its second year, is working hard to eliminate poverty housing. Through **volunteer labor**, the program attempts to build simple, decent housing with the help of local residents and families. The homes are **sold to the families at no profit and financed with affordable loans**. Each homeowner family is required to put in many hours of their own labor and contribute to the design of their house, making each one different and unique.

Now, how does that work?



This project is vital when thousands of families in the East St. Louis area are forced to live in substandard, overcrowded housing, often without adequate plumbing or heating. To address the need, several local church-based and neighborhood-based organizations joined together to develop the Neighborhood-Based Family Housing Program. The Catholic Urban Program, Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House, the Emerson Park Local Development Corporation, the Family Center, and East Side Heart and Home Corporation have joined together to build twenty-five new homes in the Emerson Park and Olivette Park neighborhoods over the next five years.

