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MEDIA RELEASE

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Habitat for Humanity/Metro Jackson selected to participate in Habitat for Humanity International's Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative

Program encourages expansion of services to reach more families in need of decent, affordable housing

JACKSON, Miss. (June 30, 2010)– Habitat for Humanity/Metro Jackson (HFH/MJ) has been selected as one of 163 affiliates nationwide to participate in Habitat for Humanity International's initial phase of its Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (NRI). That effort will focus on improving housing conditions while partnering with other community organizations to provide services that enhance the overall quality of life across struggling neighborhoods.

"HFH/MJ has been working to strengthen some of Jackson's most challenged inner city neighborhoods for 24 years," said Cindy Griffin, HFH/MJ executive director. "The NRI will broaden this work to incorporate additional community partners to work with HFH/MJ to develop strong, sustainable, holistic communities."

As part of the first phase, HFH/MJ will receive training and guidance on how to revitalize communities through a variety of housing solutions and community development efforts.

In 2009, Habitat for Humanity International announced the formal launch of the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative. The initiative encourages affiliates to serve more families and to create more resilient and sustainable communities by offering a variety of services in addition to new house construction.

"The affiliates selected to take part in the first phase of the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative are a diverse group so that we can learn how NRI will work in as many different affiliate situations as possible," said Larry Gluth, senior vice president of Habitat's U.S. and Canada area office. "We'll take lessons learned from this first phase and incorporate them as the program expands over time. The Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative adds another dimension to our mission of providing families with decent, affordable places to live."

Through the initiative, HFH/MJ will work with other community organizations to determine the projects that will be carried out locally. Habitat services may include new house construction, rehabilitation of vacant and foreclosed properties, house repairs for low-income homeowners, and weatherization to make houses more energy-efficient and affordable.

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“If we are going to help families thrive in healthy neighborhoods, we have to direct some significant efforts into healing America’s troubled communities,” said Jonathan Reckford, CEO of Habitat for Humanity International. “These affiliates will work together to develop strategies and create strong networks that can address individual neighborhood issues.”

About Habitat for Humanity/Metro Jackson

Habitat for Humanity/ Metro Jackson is an ecumenical group of concerned Christians that believes everyone deserves a decent place to live. Working in partnership with low-income families and using volunteer labor and donated materials whenever possible, the organization is building basic, affordable houses that are then sold to families at cost with no profit or interest. A Habitat homeowner, with the help of family and friends, is required to invest “sweat equity” hours working on their and others’ homes.

About Habitat for Humanity International

Habitat for Humanity International is an ecumenical Christian ministry that welcomes to its work all people dedicated to the cause of eliminating poverty housing. Since its founding in 1976, Habitat has built, rehabilitated, repaired or improved more than 350,000 houses worldwide, providing simple, decent and affordable shelter for more than 1.75 million people. For more information, or to donate or volunteer, visit www.habitat.org.