



Rebuilding
Together[®]

Kent County

2019

in Review





Safe homes and communities for everyone.

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Dear Friends & Supporters,

The Rebuilding Together affiliate network has never been stronger and continues to impact thousands of neighbors across the country. Since the national Rebuilding Together organization began over thirty years ago, 200,000 homes and community spaces have been renovated, mobilizing over four million volunteers in over 250 communities.

While our affiliate here in Kent County achieved remarkable successes in 2019, not all of them had to do with roofs, ramps or renovations to help seniors age in place.

At the end of 2018, Rebuilding Together Kent County received a HUD grant to improve our infrastructure and therefore our capacity to repair homes while creating a more sustainable organization.

Our Board got to work and hired an Executive Director in the spring. Computer systems were upgraded, a new website was developed, and a robust database management system was installed to better track volunteers, projects, donors and grant compliance.

We successfully [Re]Launched Rebuilding Together Kent County in September with our effort to provide free home safety check-ups for our neighbors. The newly created RT Express Teams installed smoke detectors, handrails, CO monitors and performed other critical home repairs.

We applied for and received a grant from the USDA and a grant from Maryland Affordable Housing Trust, providing more funds than ever before to repair homes in 2020.

In addition to upgrading our systems, the Capacity Building Grant from HUD also allowed us to add two part-time staff to the team. With a Construction Program Manager we are better able to harness our volunteer labor pool to stretch our funding for more repairs. Our new Development & Community Engagement person is helping to ensure we thrive once the HUD funding is finished.

This year Rebuilding Together Kent County has the potential to serve even more neighbors and engage more volunteers. Building a more robust and sustainable home repair organization is a top priority for 2020 as we work toward a safe and healthy home for every person in Kent County!



Wayne Rickert
Executive Director

Len Litkowski
President



Brandon's Story

HOMEOWNER

After Brandon's toilet fell through the floor of his bathroom, forcing him to use a port-o-john, he began to feel like the home he had inherited was more of a burden than a gift. But he had no where else to go and no means to pay for the repairs.

And the toilet wasn't the only situation. Years of neglect and accumulated junk had rendered his house almost uninhabitable, a health risk for both himself and his puppy, Glader. There were so many problems, he wasn't even sure how to start to tackle them.

Then Brandon encountered Rebuilding Together Kent County...





“I felt completely overwhelmed by my situation and my ability to fix it. Rebuilding Together has helped me to feel like I have new control over my home environment.”

Over the course of several visits, volunteers, contractors and staff from Rebuilding Together Kent County were able to work a remarkable transformation for Brandon and Glader. The first order of business was a working bathroom and owing to the advanced state of the damage, we elected to use funds to hire a professional plumber to do the most technical work.

In October, twelve local residents (and a visitor from Delaware) spent a solid day cleaning, patching dry wall, pouring new concrete steps, removing hazardous debris and generally prepping for the final two big ticket items—the roof and the rotten carport covering.

At Rebuilding Together Kent County, safety is our TOP priority and luckily, owing to the generous grant from Lowe’s, we were also able to contract the roof repair. We prefer to use volunteer labor whenever possible, but when it comes to the heights, we’re happy to call the professionals.



The carport cover was a challenge that we could meet with our volunteer pool. A core group of six folks worked to safely tear down the rotten canopy, ensuring it didn't fall down and cause a serious injury.

Final touches by volunteers included installing gutters and downspouts, clearing away trees that threatened the structure, adding banisters to newly repaired front steps, and of course, getting the site cleaned up and all the accumulated garbage hauled away.

Brandon admits that he wasn't enthusiastic about letting strangers see his home.

"It's hard to let people see all the mice in your closet, but hey, everyone has had a low period. No one that was part of the Rebuilding Team made me feel like I was some charity case—they made me feel like their neighbor!"

Today, Brandon says he has a different perspective on asking for help. "I felt like I had no way to fix any problems—now I'm empowered to tackle more." Because of not only the repairs, but the support shown by community members, Brandon is now applying for jobs and taking more steps toward self-sufficiency.

"I think back about the unhealthy environment I was living in and the negative consequences, physical and emotional, and I know now that it IS possible to make changes and there is support available to do so."

“I felt like I had no way to fix any problems—now I’m empowered to tackle more!”



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PAM VOGEL



SKIP BUSHBY, GENEVIEVE CROKER &
WAYNE RICKERT



519

Hours of Volunteer Labor



72
Homes
Served



2019 Donors

INDIVIDUALS

Joan Baccala
Polly & James Barndollar
Sheilah & Jim Barry
Suzanne Benjamin
Richard Bennett
Lynn & William Bickley
Nancy & Richard Biggs
Perry Bird
Anne & Albert Briggs
Barbara & Robert Brillhart
Kay & Herbert Brodie
Anne Charles
Thomas & Ginger Clark
Barbara & Frank Creegan
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Annie Woodall
Debra Woodruff-Capper
Eugenia Wooton
Mark Zwanger & Malcom Kram



ORGANIZATIONS

Constance & Carl Ferris Charitable Foundation
David Bramble Foundation
Dixon Valve & Coupling
Emmanuel Episcopal Church
Home Builders Care Foundation
Lowe's
Maryland Affordable Housing Trust
Presbyterian Church of Chestertown
Sgt. Preston Ashley Post #228
Still Pond Church
United States Department of Agriculture
United Way
Wesley Chapel UMC

\$13,191

Value of Volunteer Labor



2019 Volunteers

Skip Bushby
Jonathan Chace
Joseph Cook
Lisa Cook
Genevieve Croker
Linda Culp
Nancy DiAngelo
Tom DiAngelo
Larry Dinoff
Tom Eager
Jane Ferguson
Jeff Ferguson
Barbara Ferris
Bill Ghio
Bill Gowdy
John Hauge

Susan Hauge
Grace Hazelhurst
John Hobson
David Holyoke
John Leek
Len Litkowski
Don Lynd
Donna Lynd
Kayla Mehrtens
Ed Minch
Larisa Okshewsky
Robert Ortiz
Patricia Pfeiffer
Vic Pfeiffer
Gary Priddy
Amy Rickert

Jen Rickert
Wayne Rickert
Hester Sachse
Les Scanlon
John Sjostrom
Dave Slama
Despina Thomas
Maggie Thomas
John Trently
Jim Trumbauer
Phyllis Tucker
Elynn Vail
John Vail
Pam Vogel



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