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Ramsey Social Justice Foundation joins global effort to build sustainable and affordable homes

*Sustainable Neighborhoods for Wellbeing and Happiness Commitment to Action
launched at Clinton Global Initiative America*

Tempe, AZ – The Ramsey Social Justice Foundation is honored to announce a Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) America Commitment to Action, titled *Sustainable Neighborhoods for Wellbeing and Happiness*. The commitment was launched at the sixth annual CGI America meeting earlier today in Atlanta, GA.

The *Sustainable Neighborhoods for Wellbeing and Happiness* commitment, led by Jenny Norton and Bob Ramsey of the [Ramsey Social Justice Foundation](#), in partnership with the [City of Tempe](#), [Arizona State University's Julie Ann Wrigley Global Institute of Sustainability](#), [Habitat for Humanity of Central Arizona](#), Habitat para la Humanidad Guatemala, Habitat for Humanity International Arizona and [New Course](#) aims to create sustainable and affordable housing for the least among us.

“Our commitment isn’t just about creating two sustainable neighborhoods,” explained Jenny Norton, Co-Founder of the Ramsey Social Justice Foundation. “We want to establish a scalable project that can serve as a model for realizing many more sustainable and healthy neighborhoods for our marginalized neighbors, while working to preserve our Mother Earth.”

The Ramsey Social Justice Foundation has a long history with Habitat for Humanity, which includes building the first LEED Platinum Certified Sustainable affordable home in the nation. Since then, they have completed a NetZero home, built more than 100 green-built affordable homes and help to provide clean water and shelters in nations of need.

In an effort to ensure the Sustainable Neighborhoods mission is met, the partners will engage and educate community members throughout the process.

“Empowering communities to define and achieve their priorities is a key to sustainability,” stated Mick Dalrymple, Director, University Sustainability Practices, Arizona State University.

The initial scope includes the Victory Acres neighborhood in Tempe, Arizona and three communities in Guatemala - Santo Domingo, Milpas Altas and Santa Lucia.

“The City of Tempe is excited to participate in the initiative that will help transform Victory Acres into a more sustainable community,” Tempe Mayor Mark Mitchell said.

Victory Acres, an established and low-income neighborhood in Tempe is comprised of several third-generation Tempe families. The transition into a sustainable community will include renovating and weatherizing existing homes, as well as building new green-built homes. These efforts will help to improve the homeowners’ health and safety, while reducing their housing operation and maintenance costs.

“Affordable housing issues are not limited to those needing a new home, but also in neighborhoods with existing homes,” HHCAZ’s Chief Program Officer, Lisa Weide stated. “Habitat has expanded its service to include home repair and neighborhood revitalization.”

In Guatemala, community improvements will focus initially on ensuring households have access to clean energy, improved wash facilities including access to clean water and latrines, and in some cases, installation of cement flooring. In an effort to ensure continued progress, residents will receive training in community organization, financial education, disaster prevention and mitigation, use and maintenance of products and construction.

“The needs of these communities are so great and diverse,” shared Steven J. Cook, Director of International Resource Development Guatemala. “We are encouraged to be working together with families in need to assist them in improving their living conditions.”

“Making sure clean energy and home repairs benefit all the members of a household helps to build resilience for the entire family.” Dr. Jamie Bechtel, CEO of New Course further explained “We are excited to be working on this inclusive program with such a dedicated team of practitioners and community members in two very different scenarios.”

Additional information, including an executive summary is available here:

http://www.ramseyjusticefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/1997_001.pdf

About Ramsey Social Justice Foundation

Ramsey Social Justice Foundation is a community services foundation that serves as a champion for the underrepresented. Through charitable work, healthcare access, social ministries and community partnerships; RSJF aims to help address the basic needs of the unemployed, uneducated, underinsured, uninsured, undocumented, children of the undocumented, those living under a freeway, under a bridge, outside of and underneath the margins of Life. For more information on issues, commitments and events that RSJF serves, please visit www.RamseyJusticeFoundation.org.

About Clinton Global Initiative America

Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) America brings together leaders from the business, philanthropic, nonprofit, and government sectors to develop solutions that encourage economic growth, support long-term competitiveness, and increase social mobility in the United States. CGI America's annual convening is designed to be a working meeting that promotes collaboration. Each CGI America participant makes a Commitment to Action: a new, specific, and measurable plan that supports increased economic growth and opportunity. To date, CGI America participants have made more than 500 commitments, which have improved the lives of nearly 2.4 million people.

About City of Tempe

Tempe is among Arizona's most educated cities. With more than a dozen colleges, trade schools and universities, about 40 percent of our residents over the age of 25 have Bachelor's degrees or better. Being located in the center of the Greater Phoenix Metropolitan Area, Tempe is an easy commute from Sky Harbor International Airport and downtown Phoenix. Location is just one reason that Tempe is a workforce importer, with approximately 150,000 people employed in our city of just 161,000 residents.

About ASU Global Institute of Sustainability

The Global Institute of Sustainability is the hub of Arizona State University's sustainability initiatives. The Institute advances research, education, and business practices for an urbanizing world. Its School of Sustainability, the first of its kind in the U.S., offers transdisciplinary degree programs focused on finding practical solutions to environmental, economic, and social challenges. For more information, please visit sustainability.asu.edu.

About Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona

[Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona](#) is a local affiliate of Habitat of Humanity International, the renowned humanitarian organization based in Atlanta. Each affiliate operates as a separate 501c3 nonprofit, and is responsible for leading its own fundraising and operations management, while adhering to the Habitat for Humanity mission of serving communities within its area. Established in 1985, Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona partners with families in need of decent, affordable housing, and promotes [volunteer](#) programs with corporations, groups and individuals. Their services include new home constructions, re-constructions, renovations, repairs (even emergency repairs) and neighborhood revitalization projects. Consistently ranked

among the Top 10 of 1,600 affiliates nationally, Habitat has completed more than 1,100 homes in the metro Phoenix area. To learn more, please visit habitatcaz.org, or find us on Twitter [@habitatcaz](https://twitter.com/habitatcaz).

About New Course

New Course works with women to find solutions to the integrated problems of poverty and environmental degradation. New Course works around the world to help change the way individuals think about the links between people and the environment as well as the way organizations develop and deploy solutions. But most importantly, New Course was established to ensure that the ideas, the passion and the vision that women have for their future and for future generations is used to build a world free of poverty and filled with healthy ecosystems.

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