

Business Magazine Greenville

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Habitat for Humanity

CEO BUILD

Nancy Fitzer, education director
with Upstate Forever

It's Not
Easy Being

GREEN

Flat Fee

REAL ESTATE



shine the **LIGHT** on your nonprofit

BY DEBBIE NELSON, DNA CREATIVE COMMUNICATIONS
PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN FOWLER



Debbie Nelson is the president and founder of DNA Creative Communications, a public relations firm that partners with nonprofit and government organizations. Each month, Debbie shares a success story from one of the more than 240 nonprofits that have attended DNA's Shine the Light on Your Nonprofit educational workshops. For more information, visit www.dnacc.com.

Homes of Hope: Building Homes and Re-Building Lives

Rokeisha Suber, a mother of three, remembers having to shield her young children from the drugs and crime surrounding her old apartment in a poverty-stricken area of Greenville. Her children, now ages 6, 7, and 9, were getting older and beginning to ask questions about their surroundings. Determined to raise her kids in a safer environment, Rokeisha began looking for a new apartment about three years ago, but her search was limited by her tight budget.

One day at work, a friend handed Rokeisha a Homes of Hope business card. Rokeisha decided to give them a call, not realizing that this phone call would change her life and her children's lives forever.

Homes of Hope is a faith-based community development organization dedicated to building and providing safe, affordable, and energy-efficient homes to low-income individuals and families. Applicants go through a selection process. Once selected, Homes of Hope works with tenants by providing financial wellness training, including banking, budgeting, and building savings. For those on the path to homeownership, Homes of Hope provides homeowner and credit counseling.

Most importantly, Homes of Hope takes pride in assisting individuals to break the cycle of generational and situational poverty.

"My parents grew up in apartments, I grew up in apartments. I never thought that I would be able to live in a house," Rokeisha states, recalling her application process and the subsequent approval to rent her home. "Now my children know they can become homeowners because they saw that their mother was able to get into a house."

Prior to moving into her new home, Rokeisha lived in an income-based apartment complex where there was no incentive to work or get ahead. She's now employed full-time and is sending her kids to a magnet school, ensuring her children are well-educated and positioned to succeed.

Rokeisha also appreciates having a home built to energy efficient standards. She enjoys now having a garden and teaching her kids how to maintain the beauty of their new home, an experience that they would have never had in their previous neighborhood.

The benefits of being approved for a home by Homes of Hope are far-reaching, giving residents an incentive to stay employed, become financially literate, and broadens their mindset to one of self-sufficiency.

"Homes of Hope has given me more than just a home, they've given me self-confidence," says Rokeisha. "Now that I'm maintaining a home, I have become more independent and I have grown so much both as a person and as a mother. I now aspire to start my own business and I can see a future far beyond today."



Telling and Selling Your Story
Wednesday, August 7, 2013
8:30 a.m. - noon • Kroc Center
Register at dnacc.com

