



16th Annual Habitat for Humanity State Conference
Marriott Northwest Columbus
5605 Blazer Parkway
Dublin, Ohio

Plenary Sessions | Thursday November 6

10:00 A.M. Welcome and Opening Remarks

10:30 A.M. Joy Café: Rediscovering Community, Connection, and Belonging

12:30 P.M. Lunch
Amplifying our Voice: Advocacy in Action

Workshop Sessions (1) One | Thursday November 6 | 1:30 P.M.

Discover your Strengths

Led by Jeff Williamson, PhD, Founder of Converge

In a world that tends to focus on what's "wrong" with us, the truth is we grow exponentially faster when we begin with our top strengths. Yes, we all have weaknesses, but when we apply our strengths more strategically, we can deal with weaknesses and still grow personally and professionally. As a Gallup-certified Strengths Coach, Jeff has trained hundreds of people in the past two decades utilizing this proven tool that is used by over 95% of Fortune 500 companies. Let's start with the best things about you!

Diving Deep into Development Strategies

Led by Kenneth Oehlers, Executive Director, HfH of Southeast Ohio

This is your opportunity to have the fundraising discussions you've dreamed about. In this session, we will dive deep with peer-to-peer discussions on cultivation/prospecting, the ask, dealing with objections, and stewarding gifts. Bring your questions, best practices, and ideas to share.

Advocacy Strategies for Promoting Good Policy

Led by Mecole Snyder, Federal Relations Manager, HFHI, and Derek Kendall-Morris, Associate Director of State and Local Relations, HFHI

The Cost of Home campaign demonstrated the power of Habitat's unified voice in creating change. Habitat for Humanity is increasing its commitment to policy and systems change through our advocacy initiative, Habitat Voices in Action. Attendees will delve into the tactical elements of integrating advocacy into our work and exploring the wealth of tools, resources, and guidance designed to support these efforts. This session will also showcase innovative and effective advocacy tactics, from community mobilization to policymaker engagement and beyond. Attendees will leave with the knowledge and strategies to build and embed a robust advocacy plan within their affiliate.

Homeowner Selection and Mortgage Origination (Part One)

Led by Sonia Lee, Director of Homeowner and Mortgage Services, HFHI

This two-part series provides an overview of the multistep homeowner selection process that is regulated by federal and state laws. The steps are divided into two phases to meet the programmatic work and regulations: 1) Initial Assessment phase or the Equal Opportunity Credit Act phase; and 2) Final assessment, or the Real Estate Settlement Procedure Act phase.

Peer Exchange: Innovating How we Engage Volunteers

Led by Josh Rodgers, Manager of Community and Mission Engagement, HFHI

Join this session for an engaging exchange of ideas focused on key questions related to volunteer engagement in the Habitat network. Participants will engage in facilitated small-group discussions; share their insights and experiences; learn innovative strategies; and gather valuable knowledge from peers.

Construction Innovation for the Future

Led by Terry Schulz, Executive Director, HfH of Knox County, Matt Gutridge, Construction Manager, HfH of Knox County, Stephen Oleszkowicz, Sales Manager, Ritz-Craft, and John Litten, President and CEO, Greater Cleveland HfH

This is an affiliate peer-sharing session to discuss current implementation of and future opportunities for construction innovations intended to improve home quality and/or increase production rates. Attendees will hear from experts that will share information on the use of modular homes and ICF (Insulated Concrete Forms) poured walls. Come learn how to streamline building efficiencies and ultimately serve more families.

Ohio ReStore Council Annual Meeting

Led by Josh Cobbs, VP of Retail, Habitat for Humanity-MidOhio

The Ohio ReStore Council, formed in 2010, provides an effective forum to communicate and network with ReStores in Ohio. Membership of the council is open to any ReStore in Ohio, and the annual meeting is open to the public. This is a great opportunity for ReStore leaders to share best practices and elect their leadership team for the coming year.

Workshop Sessions (2) Two | Thursday November 6 | 3:30 P.M.

Humanity Land

Led by Alex Seidenberg, Senior Specialist, HFHI

Humanity Land is an original interactive game where participants (in groups of four to eight) explore decisions related to affordable housing development. The game guides participants in exploring the trade-offs between different development/financing strategies and the impact the decisions make on their finances and the potential households they will serve. During the game, groups will make decisions on their mission priorities, where to build, what type of housing to develop, financial approaches, area median income of the households they will serve and more!

Creating a Diversified Fundraising Plan for Affiliates with Limited Staff

Led by Tami Page, Organizational Development Consultant, HFHI and Sandy Smith, Vice President of Resource Development, HFHI

A multi-faceted fundraising plan lays out a path to achieve your goals. Together we will use a variety of tools and resources to begin developing your affiliate's fundraising plan. * Bring a copy of your revenue totals by category from the last fiscal year. Review metrics to help your affiliate evaluate the return on investment and hear success stories from others in the network.

Embracing a Change Mindset

Led by Brandi AL-Issa, President and CEO, Habitat for Humanity-MidOhio

Change is ever-present and an important part of leading and managing. Learn about how to navigate, embrace, and lead change with your head and heart including researched-supported theories and frameworks. Brandi teaches professional development workshops and serves as a lecturer at The Ohio State University. Don't miss this opportunity to learn new strategies that will help you become a more effective leader.

Homeowner Selection and Mortgage Origination (Part Two)

Led by Sonia Lee, Director of Homeowner and Mortgage Services, HFHI

This two-part series provides an overview of the multistep homeowner selection process that is regulated by federal and state laws. The steps are divided into two phases to meet the programmatic work and regulations: 1) Initial Assessment phase or the Equal Opportunity Credit Act phase; and 2) Final assessment, or the Real Estate Settlement Procedure Act phase.

Volunteer Management with Habitat's Expertise Hub

Led by Josh Rodgers, Manager of Community and Mission Engagement, HFHI

Managing volunteers is a deeply rewarding and often challenging responsibility for any affiliate. If you are new to volunteer management, you may have questions on where to start. Join this session to learn the seven important areas of the volunteer engagement cycle; volunteer management competencies; and promising practices to incorporate in volunteer planning.

Best Practices for Construction Leaders

Led by Kenneth Oehlers, Cody Rutter & Bryan Darst, HfH of Southeast Ohio

Learn and share best practices in construction program and project management in this facilitated discussion. Operational topics include build scheduling/efficiencies, on-site volunteer management, quality control practices, and project close out. Come prepared with your questions as well as your own ideas and success stories to share.

Driving Habitat ReStore Business Decisions with Data

Led by Jeremy Keen, Director of ReStore Services, HFHI

Store and affiliate leadership are invited to join this session for an overview of national Habitat ReStore performance and thrift industry trends to help in making data-driven decisions. From the data and information presented, attendees will begin to develop strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, or SWOT, analysis specific to their Habitat ReStore and join in focused discussions with peer affiliates on leveraging emerging Habitat ReStore and thrift trends. This is a great opportunity for executive directors and store managers and directors to strengthen the budget process.

Building a Financial Foundation: Strategies for Maximizing your Impact

Led by Janey Cahill, Thrivent Engagement Leader

As Habitat affiliates, you're not just helping families build homes, you're helping them build lasting financial stability. In this session, discover how Thrivent's programs and resources can enhance your homeowner support programs by equipping families to build healthy budgeting, saving, and spending habits. We'll explore Thrivent's free Money Canvas™ coaching program, financial education resources, and best practices for leveraging Thrivent's generosity-driven programs. Whether you're looking to strengthen your financial education offerings, or leverage Thrivent's resources to amplify giving and generosity within your organization, this session will provide actionable tools, resources, and strategies for maximizing your impact.

Plenary Sessions | Friday November 7 | 8:30 A.M.

8:30 A.M. Fireside Chat

With Carmen D. Smith, Vice President of Affiliate Services, HFHI

9:30 A.M. Stronger Together...Affiliate Relations Presentation

Led by Dave Ramey, President, Strategic Leadership Associates

Workshop Sessions (3) Three | Friday November 7 | 10:30 A.M.

Fundraising & Your Board: Practical Ways to Build Confidence and Commitment

Sandy Smith, Vice President of Resource Development, HFHI

This session is designed to equip participants with practical approaches and actionable strategies for effectively engaging their board members in their organization's fundraising efforts. Participants will learn how to foster board buy-in and establish or re-establish board fundraising expectations.

Utilizing Community Land Trusts for Habitat

Led by Hope Paxson, President, Ohio Community Land Trust (CLT) Network

A Community Land Trust, or CLT, can serve as an economic mechanism when housing prices are rising at a greater rate than people's incomes. Every year, more future homebuyers are priced out of the housing market. The CLT model provides a way to set aside some homes that will remain affordable forever. Habitat affiliates are utilizing CLTs in other parts of the country, and it has led to long-term security of homeownership. Join in the discussion and learn more about this opportunity.

The Future of AI: Real-World Impact and Practical Insights

Led by Eric Seller, VP of Transformation of Innovation, Upic Solutions

Artificial Intelligence is everywhere, praised for its potential and speculated about for what it might one day achieve. But what can it actually do well today? This session explores real-world use cases where AI has made a measurable impact at Upic Solutions and among our partners. We'll share how AI is being applied, what's next on the horizon, and the key lessons learned along the way.

Small Budget, Big Impact: Marketing Strategies that Work for Every Affiliate

Led by Amber Barga, Marketing and Communications Director, HfH of Greater Dayton

Marketing doesn't have to break the bank to make a difference. This session will showcase low-cost, high-impact strategies that affiliates of any size can put into action. From authentic storytelling to smart social media tactics and beyond, participants will walk away with practical ideas to expand their reach, engage supporters, and maximize limited resources.

Rural Roundtable: Shared Challenges, Shared Solutions

Led by Tami Page, Organizational Development Consultant, HFHI and Carmen D. Smith, Vice President of Affiliate Services, HFHI

Strong partnerships and shared knowledge are key to Habitat's work in rural communities. This interactive roundtable will bring together Habitat staff serving rural areas to connect, exchange insights, and highlight successful strategies for overcoming common challenges and strengthening organizational sustainability. Facilitated peer-to-peer discussions will help participants tap into the collective experience of their rural colleagues, build relationships for long-term support, and explore promising practices from across the Habitat network. HFHI staff will also share national insights and resources to further support affiliates working in rural communities

Unlock your Affiliate's Impact: New Reporting & Analytic Tools for Outcomes & Impact Measurement
Led by Juliane Ding, Outcome Measurement Analyst, HFHI

Want to make smarter decisions, tell a more compelling story, or strengthen your affiliate's performance? This session is your gateway to powerful new tools that help you do just that. Habitat for Humanity International's new Habitat Network Portal (HNP) gives affiliates direct access to dynamic reporting and analytics features that make your data work for you. You'll walk away with practical skills and insights to elevate your work and influence.

Safeguarding Training Compliance

Led by Dawn Daniels-McNear, US/Canada Safeguarding Advisor, HFHI

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility — and this interactive, in-person workshop is your opportunity to build the knowledge and confidence to lead that effort at your affiliate. Designed for staff, board members, and volunteers in leadership roles, this session delivers the essential content of the online safeguarding training in a dynamic, collaborative format. Together, we'll explore what safeguarding means in the context of Habitat's mission, why it matters, and how to recognize and respond to potential misconduct. Through real-world scenarios and group discussions, you'll learn how power dynamics can influence behavior, how to identify risks, and what your responsibilities are under Policy 34 and other key guidelines.

12:00 P.M. Awards Luncheon

2:00 P.M. Safe Travels Home!