



MEDIA ADVISORY

REBUILDING TOGETHER PHILADELPHIA REPAIRS 12 HOMES DURING BLOCK BUILD IN PARKSIDE

- WHAT:** **Rebuilding Together Philadelphia Block Build**
Rebuilding Together Philadelphia will repair 12 vulnerable, owner-occupied homes with 300 volunteers over two full days. Media are invited to the welcome celebration for a short tour of repairs and an opportunity to meet homeowners, which will begin on the street in front of one of the homes.
- WHO:** **Stefanie F. Seldin**, Rebuilding Together Philadelphia President and CEO
Jannie Blackwell, Philadelphia Councilwoman
Dwight Evans, United States Congressman
- WHEN:** Friday, April 5, 2019 – 12 pm
- WHERE:** 4052 Cambridge St, Philadelphia, Parkside Neighborhood
- DETAILS:** **Homeowner Sandra Jenkins, age 71**, is one resident who will see repairs to her home. Jenkins has lived in her home for 49 years; it is where she and her late husband Tyrone raised three sons. She loves her home and family-like community, but over the years, the house has experienced wear and tear. The Rebuilding Together Philadelphia Block Build volunteers will ensure her home will meet health and safety standards so Jenkins can continue to enjoy her home and age in place safely. Volunteers will add additional handrails, and existing handrails will be reinforced on the stairways. The old, uneven and dusty carpet in the front bedroom and living room will be replaced with vinyl flooring. A new clothes dryer vent that reaches the exterior will also be installed. Jenkins says, “I look forward to witnessing the togetherness that the Block Build will bring.”

Volunteers from the Wharton MBA Program, PennDesign, Drexel University, Campus Apartments, Driscoll Construction, Resource Real Estate, Well Fargo, and others are coming together to repair 12 homes in Parkside. These volunteers will complete a variety of projects including installing grab bars for elderly homeowners, installing solar-powered exterior lights, drywall and plaster repairs, and interior painting to benefit homeowners and make the homes on the block a healthier and safer place to call home.

RTP organizes three Block Builds per calendar year, including two in West Philadelphia and another in Kensington, renovating multiple houses over a two-day period. **For the first time, RTP is expanding its services into Parkside.** RTP is the only organization in Philadelphia that uses a Block Build approach for an immediate impact on the health and safety of eligible homeowners and their families. This strategy utilizes between 100 and 200 volunteers, neighbors, and homeowners per day to repair clustered homes in a targeted neighborhood over two days. At each Block Build, RTP assigns different teams for different tasks. One group, called the “energy efficiency team,” goes house to house to install insulation and change furnace filters, in addition to other energy saving applications.

With this energy efficiency team, feedback from homeowners showed that RTP's repairs reduced homeowners' utility bills and increased comfort, especially in winter. The positive health impact of improving the built environment through housing improvements is particularly evident when renovations focus on energy efficiency. To support these efforts, RTP contractors also replace windows when necessary. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, reducing drafts in a home can result in energy savings that range between 5 and 30 percent per year.

Rebuilding Together Philadelphia is a local, independent affiliate of a national network focused on preserving affordable homeownership and revitalizing neighborhoods using volunteer resources. Through its repair projects, RTP and its 36,000 volunteers have helped 1,611 low-income homeowners since our founding thirty-one years ago. Visit www.rebuildingphilly.org or 215-965-0777 for more information. #BlockBuild

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