

Cooking up Success

Twenty-five years ago, Deloris, unexpectedly became a single mother to four children and sole provider for her family. Deloris worked at a local restaurant, but her earnings did not cover rent, utilities, and food. Some months she could only serve her family grits. Their first neighborhood was so dangerous, she would not let her children play outside. They moved but that unit had no heat or air conditioning, and it contained mold. Multiple times a week, her youngest son suffered from asthma attacks. Deloris dreamed of a safe environment for her family.



Deloris applied to Habitat for Humanity and was accepted. She enjoyed doing the sweat equity, working alongside the volunteers. It amazed her that so many people wanted to help her family. The home dedication was one of the best days of Deloris' life. She felt like the biggest weight had been lifted off her shoulders as she cut the ribbon and entered the completed home. She finally felt she and her family were safe. Habitat provided her family a house that would be the family's home for generations. Now she was a part of a community. Her neighbors

helped with childcare so she could work two jobs, until she was able to find a job at the Colleton River Club that paid enough so she could just work one job and spend more time with her children.

Deloris' children are all grown now, having gone to college as first-generation college students. But they know that if something comes up, they can always come home. She credits Habitat for making it where they had a place to grow up safely and focus on their schoolwork.

Deloris also has much to be proud of in her career. Working her way up the restaurant ladder, including several years in the kitchen at the Colleton River Club. There she was spotted by the future owners of Lowcountry Fresh and was hired to be the opening chef at Lowcountry Fresh where she still works today; a dream she says was not possible before her involvement with Habitat for Humanity.



She is also well known in the neighborhood. Annually, on the first day of school she prepares muffins and juice for the neighborhood kids as they wait on the bus. During Covid-19, she took her little red wagon around the neighborhood, distributing her baked goods to the home-bound students. She remarks that she started that when she first moved into her house, and now there are kids whose parents, were the original recipients of Deloris' baking.



Deloris was one of our early homebuyers. She is one of 179 families Habitat for Humanity of the Lowcountry has served since 1990 and each family has a story that inspires. Everyone should have a decent, safe, affordable place to call home. However, with all the growth into our region, affordable housing is becoming elusive - forcing families to make difficult decisions like whether to pay their rent or buy groceries. The task of fixing the affordable housing crisis is

daunting, but Habitat for Humanity of the Lowcountry is working to improve the lives of local families one house at a time.