



Elva's Family

Elva with her children Emiliano (13) and Adela (11).

February 4, 2001 Elva's life changed forever. She was vacationing in the United States to visit her brothers on her birthday and to see the snow, when unexpectedly she also met the man who would become her husband. Elva recalls, "it was incredible to meet the man I would marry at the age of 37, but I was kind of sad because this meant leaving my parents and my home in Mexico." That same year, Elva moved to the United States and started her new life with Emiliano. They had two children together, Emiliano who is 13 and Adela who is 11.

In November of 2008, tragedy struck when fire destroyed their family home and took the life of Emiliano; he perished in the heroic act of saving their children from the fire. Elva spent three weeks in the hospital recovering from her physical wounds. The hardest thing she has ever done is start from the beginning, without her husband by her side. Despite these hardships, Elva's friends all describe her as someone who "has a lot of fun and smiles all the time." Her family is most important to her and she strives to be a good example for her family, through all of life's ups and downs.

Elva thought that owning a home on her own was an impossibility, until her friend Julie recommended her to Habitat Omaha. "In spring 2013, I wrote my dream (to have a new house) and every night I pray for my dream, and now that is happening. I am excited, I can't believe it," Elva shared.

For Elva, homeownership is truly a dream come true. She grew up on a farm in Guanajuato, Mexico with nine siblings. Now at 52, with a desire to work and set a good example for her own children, she will have her very own home. The family cannot wait to move in and invite family and friends from church to celebrate. Elva plans to build a fence, plant a garden, and grow a peach tree once they move in.

Habitat Omaha Homeownership

Families purchase homes through affordable Habitat for Humanity of Omaha loans, making monthly mortgage payments for 20-30 years. Before closing, they contribute up to 350 hours of sweat equity working on Habitat Omaha construction sites. Soon-to-be homeowners also attend a variety of workshops to help prepare them for successful homeownership. At closing they make a modest \$500 down payment.

Photo by Anna Finocchiaro

Faith House

This home is being built in partnership with 20 faith congregations in Omaha.