

DAKOTABLUE HOMES PARTNERS WITH HOMEAID HOUSTON FOR 2007 PROJECT

HomeAid Houston and DakotaBlue Homes are teaming together to construct two 4,200 square foot homes for Boys and Girls Harbor, one of a number of homeless projects HomeAid Houston has slated for construction in 2007. These two houses will allow 16 additional youths to join the Boys and Girls Harbor program.

DakotaBlue Homes was formed in late 2005, and is headed by Lenny Dalton, CEO and founder of the company. DakotaBlue constructs homes in 10 communities throughout the Houston area, with prices ranging from the \$140s to the \$300s. The first homes the company introduced to the market were built in the successful community of Riata Ranch located on Houston's northwest side. The company also constructs townhomes and custom homes in the Tanglewood, Memorial and River Oaks areas under the Tuscany Estates name.

DakotaBlue Homes' mission is to provide – from day one – a level of service that turns one-time buyers into lifelong customers. The belief is that service can only be achieved through the creation of a “World Class” company with a superior team, products, operations and systems. “We want our culture to be the competitive edge that wins the hearts, minds and the loyalty of our team and customers alike,” said Lenny Dalton. “We want every person working at DakotaBlue Homes to work from a sense of ownership and stewardship, and to embrace a personal sense of the mission. We want our culture to embody a passion for learning, leadership at all levels, integrity, trust and a passion for achieving superior results.”

DakotaBlue Homes is also a diverse company offering DakotaBlue Mortgage services. Homebuyers receive a discounted price on their home when they use this option. Every home is also built under the highest standards set by the Environments for Living program making the homes energy efficient.

DakotaBlue customers are also treated to Houston's finest design center at the Design Gallery. Unlike other production builders, a DakotaBlue customer can choose from all of the selections offered at the gallery. Since the Design Gallery is owned by Flooring Services, the execution of many of these upgrades is simplified by this relationship.

“We look at every aspect of the new homebuilding process from construction through closing and then after the closing,” said Dalton. “That is what we will be bringing to the Boys and Girls Harbor project as well. We look forward to applying all of our operating principles to assisting in this worthwhile effort.”

Boys and Girls Harbor was founded 60 years ago. The organization has been committed to providing healthy, comprehensive care for children and families in crisis. For children who are experiencing family hardship, neglect, abandonment or abuse, the Harbor provides a family environment in a home setting. Through its programs, the Harbor strives to help children learn to overcome self-destructive patterns, break cycles of abuse, develop social skills, learn responsibility and work toward becoming healthy, happy and productive members of society.

The true essence of life at the Harbor is children living in a family environment with house parents. Up to eight boys or girls, ages five to 18 years, live in one of nine residential homes. Each home is staffed by trained houseparents, many of whom have children of their own. The program is designed to give each new arrival a feeling of security, because until that happens there cannot be any adjustment or growth. Each child learns what is expected in terms of rules, routines, limits and boundaries.

In 2006, the Harbor operated at or near the current capacity of 70 children, while there were a number of times when they could not accept new referrals due to a lack of beds. The figures from the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services showed more than 38,000 reported cases of child abuse/neglect in the Houston area during its 2005 fiscal year. This number has increased statewide over the last four years, with Houston being the second largest region for the number of reported cases of child abuse/neglect in Texas.

“Those figures are frightening,” concluded Dalton. “I have five children of my own. Knowing that I have the resources to assist in constructing a safe place for children less fortunate is so rewarding to me. We are looking forward to the groundbreaking.” “We are so blessed to be working with the DaokataBlue team,” said Bette Moser, executive director of HomeAid Houston. “Marcy Frank, purchasing manager, has done a wonderful job recruiting our vendors and suppliers to donate their labor and materials. Mike McDaniel, superintendent, has been moving the project forward swiftly and smoothly and Kayla Webb, marketing manager for DakotaBlue, has brought creativity and passion to our project.”

For more information on HomeAid Houston or to donate to the project, visit www.homeaidhouston.org.