



Included below is a press release regarding Ferris State University's partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Kent County. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

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### **Ferris Partners with Habitat Kent for 'Green' Neighborhood Revitalization Project**

BIG RAPIDS – Ferris State University is partnering with Habitat for Humanity of Kent County, which is kicking off one its most extensive partnership projects to date.

Habitat Kent will gut rehab four homes and build seven new homes to continue the revitalization of one of Grand Rapids' most diverse areas – the Wealthy Heights neighborhood in Eastown. Dwelling Place also will build three new homes in the same three-street area of the city of Grand Rapids.

The centerpiece of this development will be Michigan's first Habitat Net-Zero Energy Home. Since 2006, when Habitat built the first affordable LEED certified home in the nation, Habitat has concentrated on building homes needing less energy. Habitat is convinced that getting to Net -Zero energy in a home does not require magic, just practical products, materials and systems, such as passive solar to capture heat during the day that will release at night, natural ventilation, and solar hot water providing radiant heat and hot water, among others.

Ferris' role in the project includes engaging faculty and students from the university's Energy Center to ensure energy data is captured, analyzed and shared with the Grand Rapids community.

“One of our goals at the Energy Center is to partner with communities outside of Ferris, with business and industry, and to make connections with organizations across the state of Michigan,” Energy Center Coordinator Arn McIntyre said. “Ferris' Energy Center is focused on educating the public on issues related to energy initiatives and energy performance improvements.”

Constructing Habitat's first Net-Zero Energy Home will offer a glimpse into the future of its homebuilding, paving the way for future Habitat homes to be as close to Net-Zero Energy as possible, Mary Buikema, Habitat Kent's executive director, said.

“The Wealthy Heights Partnership Project is a collaboration that shows the way Grand Rapids

works and why it is known as the cradle of green building,” Buikema added. “We applaud and thank our dynamic partners who have shown that they have hearts for affordable housing and minds in the future. Together we will further enhance a vibrant community for families, the environment and new green jobs.”

Other project partners include city of Grand Rapids, Dwelling Place, East Hills Council of Neighbors, Goodwill Industries of West Michigan, Grand Rapids Area Coalition to End Homelessness, Grand Rapids Community College Tassell M-TEC, Grand Rapids Community Foundation, Grand Rapids Public Schools Academy of Design & Construction, Hispanic Center of West Michigan, Historic Preservation Commission of Grand Rapids, Michigan State Housing Development Authority.

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