

183rd Fighter Wing to build housing in Springfield with Habitat for Humanity

Written by National Guard PAO Illinois
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SPRINGFIELD, IL (10/13/2012)(readMedia)-- The U.S. Department of Defense has approved an Innovative Readiness Training project that will allow the Airmen of the 183rd Civil Engineer Squadron, 183rd Fighter Wing to build affordable, safe and decent housing with Habitat for Humanity of Sangamon County in local low-income neighborhoods.

183rd Fighter Wing Commander Col. Michael Meyer announced the partnership today with representatives from Habitat for Humanity and the Enos Park Neighborhood Improvement Association at the site of the first project, a two-story townhouse that will be built at 1137 North 5th Street, Springfield.

"This is a win-win for both the Illinois Air National Guard, Habitat for Humanity, and – most importantly - local low-income families," said Illinois National Guard Assistant Adjutant General – Air Brig. Gen. William Cobetto. "Our Airmen practice the skills they need to perform their military missions and, through Habitat for Humanity, local families get decent safe housing."

The project is scheduled for three years and the 183rd CES will help build as many as 12 homes in Sangamon County. Three of those homes are slated to be built in Springfield's Enos Park Neighborhood. Habitat for Humanity will provide the building materials and supplies as well as meals for the Airmen working on the project and the Airmen will provide the labor and tradesman skills they acquired from their military training.

"As the Commander-in-Chief of the Illinois National Guard, I am so proud that Illinois was one

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of a handful of states to administer an Innovative Readiness Training Project approved by the Department of Defense," Gov. Pat Quinn said. "This project will improve the training of our men and women in uniform and strengthen the communities where they live and work."

This isn't the first DoD-approved Innovative Readiness Training project for the 183rd CES. Last year, approximately 35 members of the squadron helped construct a 3,200-square-foot adult programs building for the St. Michaels Association for Special Education in the heart of Navajo Nation in Arizona.

"My Airmen really enjoyed helping the Navaho Nation, but this project is even better," Meyer said. "Now they are helping their own communities in their own state. This is very special to us."

To acquire DoD assistance through the Innovative Readiness Training program, Habitat for Humanity had to submit an approval packet that underwent legal, fiscal and operational scrutiny. The local nonprofit had to prove the IRT would not put the military in competition with local contractors, would be a fiscally responsible use of military training funds and the work performed would accurately exercise the military skills the Airmen would need to perform their military mission. The 183rd CES' wartime mission is to build structures in support of military operations.

Airmen with the 183rd Civil Engineer Squadron, 183rd Fighter Wing help construct a home with Habitat for Humanity through an Innovative Readiness Training project in Springfield, Oct. 13.