



1220 W. State St.
P.O. Box 234
Hastings, MI 49058
(269) 948-9939
www.hfhbarrycounty.org

June 22, 2018

Dear Governor Snyder,

At Habitat for Humanity Barry County, we have a long standing partnership with our Hastings Michigan Works office; we have participated in its PATH program since well before it was called PATH. Our ReStore relies upon the help of volunteer workers who need training in retail operations. And in the past as paid staff positions have been created or vacated, we have often hired a worker who was volunteering here through MI Works.

In June of 2017 our ReStore Manager position became available and it was then that Craig Stolsonburg at our Local MI works office let us know about the on the job training program. We were thrilled to be able to train our prospective new store manager in partnership through that MiWorks program, as well as continuing to utilize PATH Volunteers.

Katie Bolthouse was hired as our ReStore Manager in July 2017 in partnership with MI Works. It was incredibly helpful to have the additional training funds while she was learning the job requirements, and I believe knowing she was accountable for the goals set out through the MIWorks program, and that she would be reviewed after 30 days etc., kept us on track with Katie's training. A year later the store is thriving under her excellent management. From an organizational standpoint, the opportunity to utilize the On the Job Training funds to upskill Katie into her ReStore Management requirements was very helpful. Certainly, it made it worth training someone into the position, as opposed to only considering those with current management experience and skills.

The opportunities that MI Works has provided Habitat for Humanity Barry County have led us to see that with the right attitude people of very diverse abilities can find a productive place to help our organization, on many levels. We have watched people with minimal skills and many barriers learn to be proud of the way they can help our Habitat Affiliate, and become a productive part of our team. It is always rewarding to go through a local store and see past MIWorks PATH volunteers working and doing a great job, knowing if they hadn't participated with the program they would not have had the confidence they needed to get and hold their job.

Pride in one's own abilities is one of the most important outcomes of this program, from my point of view. We will certainly continue to partner with MIWorks programs in the future.

Sincerely,

Cindy Preston

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cindy Preston".

Executive Director

Habitat for Humanity Barry County