



## Perris Press Release

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### Perris Family Selected for Habitat for Humanity Home

A Perris family of four has been selected to take possession of a Habitat for Humanity home that volunteers will begin building Saturday at the start of the annual Southern California Fair at the Lake Perris Fairgrounds.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch and City Manager Richard Belmudez introduced the family of Yolanda Arenas during a Chamber of Commerce mixer Thursday.

City officials held the mixer, which drew more than 200 people, to bring attention to Habitat for Humanity's work throughout Riverside County and to unveil an exhibit celebrating 100 years of Perris Cityhood. Members of the City Council joined City Administrators and City Clerk Judy Haughney in a ceremonial kickoff of the home's construction.

Volunteers from the Perris Rotary Club, the Optimists and other civic-minded groups will begin construction of the 1,088-square foot, three-bedroom home this weekend. After the fair ends Oct. 16, the residence will be moved to its permanent location on East Second Street for final completion.

Arenas, 37, said her family expects to move into its first home right around Christmas.

"What a beautiful Christmas gift," she said. "We are very excited at this opportunity to enrich our lives, a chance to own a home of our own. We can't wait."

Arenas was joined by her children, Jessica Samano, 17; Raymond Samano, 16, and David Samano, 10.

Arenas said the family moved to Perris about seven years ago and loves the City. Her two eldest children attend Perris High School. The youngest attends Palms Elementary School. She is employed at a Riverside medical office and has a steady job that is expected to provide the family with more income in the future.

The family learned they had been selected to receive the home this week. Representatives of Habitat for Humanity Inland Valley visited their rental home in September and wrote a very positive review of their encounter.

"Yolanda is a dedicated mother, raising three children. She received a very positive reference from her employer... She presently lives in the City of Perris and would like to continue to live there," the review stated.

Arenas said the family wants to plant deep roots in the City. As part of the arrangement with Habitat for Humanity, the family must put in 300 hours of "sweat equity" into their home and other Habitat projects.

"Without the assistance of the City of Perris and Habitat for Humanity, this would have been impossible," Arenas said. "We have worked hard for this. We are happy that the City is allowing us to become homeowners. We're not planning on going anywhere."

Mayor Busch said he was pleased to welcome the Arenas family into "the fabric of Perris." The upcoming project marks the first time that the City of Perris has used federal funds from the Neighborhood Stabilization Program to complete a Habitat for Humanity home.

"Habitat for Humanity is an excellent program," the Mayor said. "People who come to the Southern California Fair actually have an opportunity to make family's dream come true. It makes the community a better place and the people who live in the community better."

Belmudez said that the City of Perris employs a number of programs that have enabled more than 300 families to become homeowners in the last three years.

"This is not about numbers," he said. "To this family, this project is a very big deal"

Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers said families like that of Arenas are the future "doctors, lawyers, coaches and maybe even the future City Council members of Perris."

"I am delighted that the City is helping to make possible this lifelong dream of owning their own home," Rogers said.

Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough said he plans on coming to the Fair to "swing a hammer" in support of the project. He and other members of the Optimist Club will be among the volunteers.

"It's not always easy to own a home, especially right now," he said. "This is a great project for a deserving family." The Southern California Fair begins at 11 a.m. on Saturday at the Fairgrounds, 18700 Lake Perris Drive.



The family of Yolanda Arenas will receive a new home built by Habitat for Humanity volunteers at the Southern California Fair. The family includes David Samano, Yolanda Arenas, Jessica Samano and Raymond Samano.



Perris City officials joined representatives of Habitat for Humanity Inland Valley at the job site for a ceremonial ribbon-cutting of the new home.



Perris City Manager Richard Belmudez and Deputy City Manager Darren Madkin chat with Yolanda Arenas during Thursday's Chamber of Commerce mixer.