



Bryan/College Station

Habitat
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Meet the Curtis Family

Velma Curtis grew up in Bryan with her 11 brothers and sisters. Her father passed away when she was young and life was always difficult for the family.

“Childhood was horrible,” Velma said as she described growing up in a home with the gas often cut off, rats, roaches, drugs and teenage pregnancies.

“I learned early on this is not how I’m going to live my life,” she said.

But she had her first child at age 15 and was pregnant again by her senior year at Bryan High School. Velma considered quitting school and could have easily given in to the negative influences around her. But, as she explained, “Education is something that’s important for me.” She earned her diploma and determined to give herself and her children a better life.

In addition to education, she found stability in the church. “God is always first,” Velma declared, explaining how important the positive influence of the church has been throughout her life.

Today Velma is a CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) – she earned her license from Blinn College in 2010 – at Scott and White Hospital and Daybreak nursing home. Her goal is to eventually become an LVN or RN.


Velma points out that her job is just on weekdays. “The weekends are for me and my children,” she said.

Her five children are clearly her priority. The oldest two, Ja’Corey (25) and Ja’Lisa (22), are grown and live on their own. The others are Ja’Zaya (11), Ja’Niyah (9) and Ja’Darion (5). “They’re all good kids. They’re all sweet and helpful,” Velma proudly said.

It’s the kids that motivated Velma to apply for Habitat, even after she’d applied and been denied twice before. The second denial came because she had too much debt. So Velma paid off all her debt and re-applied. “I wasn’t going to give up. I was going to keep trying, even if it took 10 times.”

Velma and her three youngest kids currently live in the “projects.” She’s had her apartment and car broken into and her kids have had many bikes and toys stolen out of the yard. She can’t wait to move into her Habitat home in a new neighborhood, where her kids can get a fresh start.

In their current neighborhood and schools, Velma worries her kids are exposed to only negative influences. She’s thrilled that her kids will get to go to better schools and be exposed to more diversity. Her kids are mostly excited about having more space in their future Habitat house. They’ll have somewhere safe to put their things, Velma explained.

Velma often looks back on her life and the challenges she and her siblings have faced. She hopes to spare her own kids many of those and believes her future home will give them the stability and opportunity they need to thrive. “We’re blessed to have something the kids can have in the future,” she said. 



Top: Velma Curtis. Bottom, from left to right: Ja’Lisa (22), Ja’Corey (25), Ja’Zaya (11), Ja’Niyah (9) and Ja’Darion (5).

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 **Habitat for Humanity®**

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Habitat for Humanity brings people together
to build homes, communities and hope.*

development@habitatbcs.org
www.habitatbcs.org

P: 979.823.7200
F: 979.775.7412

119 Lake Street
Bryan, TX 77801