



Media Contact:

Chimeka S. Foster, Director of Development
Interfaith Housing Coalition
Phone: (469) 828-1829
Email: cfoster@ihcdallas.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HOMELESS FAMILIES SEEKING WINTER SHELTER RECEIVE A HOLIDAY MIRACLE

DALLAS, TEXAS - Last week's arctic blast was a stark reminder to the community that thousands of homeless families are displaced in shelters, sleeping in their cars, or on a relative's or friend's couch. Last month alone, Interfaith Housing Coalition (Interfaith), a local transitional housing agency for homeless families, received nearly 200 calls from applicants vying for one of 10 available apartments. In order to provide as many warm homes for the holidays as possible, Interfaith is engaging individuals, groups, and companies to help working poor families in crisis through their Adopt-A-Family program. For one of Interfaith's newest residents, Carey, the housing she received was much more than she expected.

"Everything was going wrong for my daughter and me before I found Interfaith. I lost my job, my apartment, and my car was repossessed. I did eventually find a job, but when I showed up on my first day, I was told the position no longer needed to be filled. I literally felt like I couldn't move," said Carey. "My fears of being homeless this holiday subsided when I was accepted into Interfaith and moved in my apartment last week. I was overwhelmed to walk into such a beautiful apartment with a stocked pantry and a home cooked meal prepared by a volunteer for our first night. It seems like things will start to turn around now because I have a new home and new hope for the future."

The Adopt-A-Family program was launched during Interfaith's 30th Anniversary Kick-Off in November. The program pairs a sponsor with an incoming family to provide the family's new apartment and other vital self-sufficiency programming, such as financial education and career training, for an entire year. Interfaith is utilizing the donor initiative to give "Homes for the Holidays" to qualified families this season. Interfaith's housing blitz is off to a great start! By the end of next week, the agency will have moved in six homeless families since December 1st.

"When I think about a mother and her seven week old son moving from shelter to shelter over the last three years, I am grateful that she is joining our program to not only stabilize her family, but to also rebuild her life through one of the most effective self-sufficiency programs in Dallas," said Kimberly Williams, Interfaith's Chief Executive Officer. "Homelessness does not take a holiday. In fact, 50% of our new residents enter the program during October, November, and December. So our efforts to garner community support for the Adopt-A-Family program will be ongoing. Our goal is to help 1,000 individuals (400 families) move from homelessness to self-sufficiency by the end of 2015—the year of our 30th Anniversary. By moving people out of poverty, we will improve the local economy, increase quality of life for all, and save tax payers nearly \$1.6 million a year."

For more information on Interfaith Housing Coalition, the Adopt-A-Family program, or to discover other ways you can support Interfaith's work, please contact Chimeka S. Foster, Director of Development, at 469-828-1829 or visit www.ihcdallas.org.

###