

# opening doors to homeownership



**P**urchasing a home is one of the most powerful investments a family can make in its future. Yet, in many parts of the country, the cost of homeownership is increasingly out of reach. Manufactured housing has opened the door to homeownership for millions of families, but only part of the way. Through the Innovations in Manufactured Homes (I'M HOME) initiative, the Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED) and its partners are working to enable owners of manufactured homes to enjoy benefits from homeownership, including asset appreciation, comparable to those enjoyed by owners of site-built homes.



Launched in January 2005 with major funding from the Ford Foundation, I'M HOME seeks to safeguard the wealth-building promise of homeownership for the approximately 10 million American families living in manufactured housing. The multi-year program will address market gaps and policy issues related to the ways the homes are sold, financed and treated under the law.

## I'M HOME in North Carolina

**T**he nonprofit Center for Community Self-Help and its financing affiliates, Self-Help Credit Union and Self-Help Ventures Fund, provide financing, technical support and advocacy for those left out of the economic mainstream. Over time, Self-Help has learned, and demonstrated, that low-income borrowers pose no greater credit risk than others.

Since its founding in 1980, Self-Help has reached out to female, rural and minority borrowers across North Carolina and in Washington, D.C., California and many other states. Its mission is to create and protect ownership and economic opportunity for people of color, women, rural residents and low-wealth families and communities.

Developing a well-functioning and responsible mortgage market for manufactured housing has been a long-standing challenge for the MH industry. Self-Help already offers an innovative and successful secondary market for site-built home loans made to low- and moderate-income borrowers. I'M HOME is supporting Self-Help to expand its manufactured housing mortgage offerings and to

test a secondary market program to purchase manufactured housing loans from select financial institutions. Self-Help is also tracking and analyzing the manufactured housing mortgage loans it has made through its credit union branches in an effort to better understand the factors related to loan performance.





## The Ochoas: A Place to Call Their Own

After several years of living on and making improvements to a lot they would never own, Juan Torres and Tyrese Ochoa wanted a place they would own outright, from the grass to the roof—a place they could truly call home for themselves and their two daughters, Joanna and Virginia. With assistance from Self-Help Credit Union, the couple did just that: Juan and Tyrese's new home is located in a rural portion of Wake County, North Carolina, within an hour's drive of Raleigh.

The couple purchased their manufactured home in the summer of 2006 through Self-Help's Affordable Alternative Housing Product. Self-Help launched this product in response to the rising demand for affordable manufactured home (MH) loans, and to evaluate whether the loans would actually help borrowers to build wealth. In addition to the standard guidelines used by Fannie Mae for MH lending – the home must be at least as big as a doublewide, titled as real

estate, sited on land owned as fee simple, and attached to a permanent foundation – Self-Help requires homes to have been built after 1994, be at least one year old, and be accessible by a state maintained road.

When friends and loved ones come to visit the family in their new home – technically a triple-wide, thanks to the addition of a bright sunroom – it's clear that they have settled in quite nicely. Joanna, age 7, and Virginia, age 5, share a sunny, pink room with colorful posters, stuffed animals and matching bedspreads. The interior of the house features a huge aquarium, a fireplace and the sunroom where Tyrese loves to read in the early morning light and work on the computer with the girls after school. An enthusiastic builder, Juan has already added a deck, a house for the family dog, Lady, and a shelter for the riding mower. The yard itself is still a work in progress, but as Tyrese is happy to point out, "Even though the grass isn't growing perfect yet, who cares? It's our grass!"



Self-Help  
301 W Main St  
Durham, NC 27701  
ph: 919.956.4400  
ph: 800.476.7428  
fx: 919-956-4604  
neill.goslin@self.help.org  
www.self-help.org



I'M HOME  
1200 G Street, NW  
Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20005  
ph: 202.408.9788  
fx: 202.408.9793  
imhome@cfed.org  
www.cfed.org



CFED expands economic opportunity by helping Americans start and grow businesses, go to college, own a home, and save for their children's and own economic futures. We identify promising ideas, test and refine them in communities to find out what works, craft policies and products to help good ideas reach scale, and develop partnerships to promote lasting change. We bring together community practice, public policy and private markets in new and effective ways to achieve greater economic impact. Established in 1979 as the Corporation for Enterprise Development, CFED is a nonprofit organization that works nationally and internationally through its offices in Washington, DC; Durham, North Carolina; and San Francisco, California. [www.cfed.org](http://www.cfed.org)