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## Collegiate Challenge

Lee County, FL; March 12, 2008 – College kids from around the country are giving up their Spring Break on the beach for hammers and hard hats at Habitat for Humanity of Lee County. Nearly a dozen schools plan to make the trek to Fort Myers, Florida this month to build safe and decent homes for those in need. It's part of a nationwide Collegiate Challenge effort that includes more than 12,000 high school and college students and 210 Habitat affiliates. 19-year old Courtney Sheldon from High Point University in North Carolina says there was incentive for his Spring Break decision. "I'm in Alpha Phi Omega so I need service points. I figured this was a good way to get my points and enjoy the beach at the same time," he says. 18-year old Cory Vance agrees. "I'm leaving here with a great tan, but also this was something new and different for all of us. I have learned so much about myself and the teamwork it takes to get a job done. I'm the kind of guy who would hire a contractor to fix a hole in the wall. Today, I raised an entire house. I didn't even know I could do that," says Vance. The students will spend about a week with Habitat for Humanity. Once they're finished, another school will pick up where these students left off.

Throughout its 19-year history, more than 155,000 Collegiate Challenge volunteers have raised more than \$14 million to build Habitat houses. This year, Collegiate Challenge students will contribute \$1.5 million to help build Habitat homes.

Habitat for Humanity of Lee County is a non-profit organization dedicated to eliminating substandard housing in Lee County. So far, Habitat has built more than 900 homes in Lee County since 1982. Through the use of volunteer labor and donations of money and materials, Habitat builds simple, decent housing for families who otherwise could not afford it. **Homes are sold to the homeowners at no profit on an interest-free mortgage**, making homeownership an affordable reality.