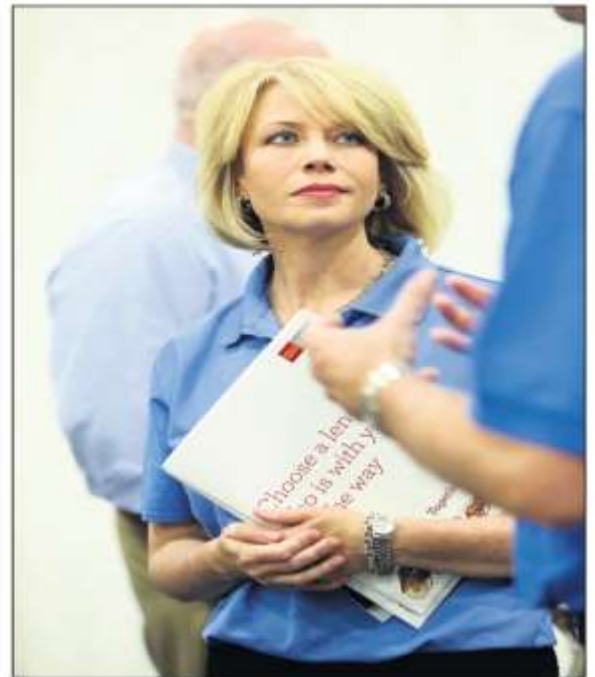


# Vida En El Valle



JUAN ESPARZA LOERA / Vida en el Valle

Rafael and Marina Vásquez of San José were approved for a \$15,000 down payment assistance last Saturday, which pleased their children Alex and Kimberly. Mayor Ashley Swearengin toured the event at the Fresno Convention Center.

## LOCAL

# \$15,000 help for home buy

By **JUAN ESPARZA LOERA**  
Vida en el Valle

**F**RESNO — It wasn't easy to tell who was more excited about getting the green light to buy a house: Parents Rafael and Marina Vásquez or their children, Alex, 10, and Kimberly, 7.

"We want a home with a swimming pool," the children chanted after getting the final approval that the family qualified for a \$15,000 down payment assistance grant funded by Wells Fargo and administered by Self-Help Enterprises.

For the parents, the most important thing was to complete the American dream and purchase a home. Even if it means they will have to leave San José and look for a house in the \$140,000 range in Fresno.

"We had to arrange his status first," said Marina, who was born in the U.S. but grew up in Tepatitlán, Jalisco, México.

Rafael —who grew up 45

minutes south of the capital city of Oaxaca, México —said becoming a homeowner has been his dream "all my life."

The couple was among 319 prospective homebuyers who registered for the down payment assistant program and scheduled an appointment to meet with officials for final approval at a homebuyer event last Saturday at the Fresno Convention Center.

Fresno Mayor Ashley Swearengin toured the event, which included an area where children could watch movies while their parents dealt with the paperwork required.

The Vásquez family showed up at 10 a.m., and by noon they were all done except for posing for photographs with officials.

Marina has family in Fresno, so the move won't be that difficult. The lower cost of housing in the area was another major draw.

"It's the main reason we chose Fresno," said Rafael. "I love the area in the 93722 zip

code."

The couple, who learned they might also qualify for a first-time homebuyer program, planned to celebrate by going to a restaurant.

"And let the banda or mariachi play," said Rafael.

## \$15,000 ayuda comprar casa

*No era fácil decir quien estaba más emocionado de recibir la luz verde para comprar una casa: Los padres Rafael y Marina Vásquez o sus hijos, Alex, 10, y Kimberly, 7.*

*"Queremos una casa con una piscina," los niños cantaron después de recibir la aprobación definitiva de que la familia se clasificó para un \$15,000 por donación de asistencia de pago financiado por Wells Fargo y administrado por Self-Help Enterprises.*

*Para los padres, lo más importante era completar el sueño americano y comprar una casa. Incluso si eso significa que tendrán que salir de San José y buscar una casa*

*en el rango de \$140,000 en Fresno.*

*"Teníamos que organizar sus documentos primero," dijo Marina, quien nació en los EE.UU., pero creció en Tepatitlán, Jalisco, México.*

*Rafael — quien creció 45 minutos al sur de la capital de Oaxaca, México — dijo convertirse en un dueño de una casa ha sido su sueño "toda mi vida."*

*La pareja estaba entre 319 compradores potenciales que se inscribieron para el programa de asistencia del pago inicial y programó una cita para reunirse con funcionarios para la aprobación final en un evento el sábado pasado en el Centro de Convenciones de Fresno.*

*La alcaldesa Ashley Swearengin recorrió el evento, que incluyó un área donde los niños pueden ver películas mientras sus padres tratan de la documentación requerida.*

■ Send e-mail to:  
[jeparza@vidaelvalle.com](mailto:jeparza@vidaelvalle.com).