

# KGET NEWS

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## Organization helps families build homes for themselves

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By: Amber Frias

Self-Help Enterprises is hoping to alleviate the lack of affordable housing in town by providing families with the opportunity to build their own homes.

The program will select 10 qualifying families to build homes in exchange for their home's down payment, reducing the costs of a home they may otherwise not afford.

But, the reward of owning their own home comes second to "the reward of building their home with their own hands," said Lupe Felix, loan processor at Self-Help Enterprise.

Selected families will work together to build homes for each other. No construction experience is required.

"They do their own electricity," said Felix. "If they they've never nailed, they learn how to nail, how to cut, how to measure, so, if anything break downs in their home, in the future, they don't have to call anyone and that in itself is a great saving."

A construction superintendent will lead and teach the group the tasks that need to be completed.

"It's hard work," said Felix. "It's not easy for them because they have their primary job and after their job they still have to come out here and put in their hours."

The families must put in a total of 40 hours a week for the construction of the home.

Self-Help Enterprises estimates the construction of the 10 homes to take between 10-12 months.

"At the end it's very rewarding and of course they're very thankful to the program and to those that got them to buy their own home," said Felix.

Self-help has helped 10 families in Kern County realize their dream of homeownership this year.

The program receives their funding from the federal government allowing them to complete more homes than other community housing projects like habitat for community whose funding comes mostly from donations and grants.

They have completed a total of two homes in Kern County this year. They are currently working on seven more.

Self-help enterprises will offer an orientation for interested families on August 4 at the corner of Mckee Road and Mountain Ridge Drive in Bakersfield.