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2023 – 2024 GRANT CYCLE  
SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT No. 1

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JANUARY 1, 2023 – JUNE 30, 2023



# Mortgage Grant Fund

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## Mortgage Grant Advisory Committee

Ann Baddour, Consumer Advocate and Presiding Officer (6 Year Term)  
Martin Green, Banking and Financial Services Attorney (6 Year Term)  
Molly Curl, Financial Industry Advisor (4 Year Term)  
Patricia Hord, OCCC Representative and Grant Administrator (2 Year Term)

## Grant Coordinator

Andrea Herrera, Department of Savings and Mortgage Lending

## 2023 – 2024 MGF Grant Recipients

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)</b>
Brazos Valley Affordable Housing	College Station-Bryan, TX
Credit Coalition	Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX
Foundation Communities	Austin-Round Rock-Georgetown, TX
Galilee Community Development	San Angelo, TX
Grassroots Community Development	Waco, TX
Habitat for Humanity Abilene	Abilene, TX
Habitat for Humanity Camp County	Longview, TX
Houston Habitat for Humanity	Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX
Habitat for Humanity of Jefferson County	Beaumont-Port Arthur, TX
Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio	San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX
Fort Worth Area Habitat for Humanity	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX

## Summary

The Mortgage Grant Fund awarded 11 organizations an aggregate amount of \$645,278.00 in funds for program activities related to the 2023 – 2024 grant cycle.

During the first reporting period (January 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023), the Grantees met and/or exceeded their original objective goals to support mortgage financial literacy and financial counseling.

### Funds Disbursed to Date:

<b>Amount Awarded for the 2023-2024 Grant Cycle:</b>	\$645,278.00
<b>Reimbursement Requests (January 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023)</b>	
Brazos Valley Affordable Housing	\$ 16,523.68
Credit Coalition	\$ 24,207.63
Foundation Communities	\$ 14,955.20
Galilee Community Development	\$ 2,167.64
Grassroots Community Development	\$ 10,448.61
Habitat for Humanity Abilene	\$ 0.00
Habitat for Humanity Camp County	\$ 1,554.86
Houston Habitat for Humanity	\$ 17,910.00
Habitat for Humanity of Jefferson County	\$ 7,200.00
Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio	\$ 22,063.00
Fort Worth Area Habitat for Humanity	\$ 5,156.00
<b>Total Requested for Reimbursement:</b>	\$122,186.62
<b>Total Requested Amount to Date:</b>	\$122,186.62
<b>% of Funds Expended to Date:</b>	19%
<b>Amount of Funds Remaining:</b>	\$523,091.38

# Brazos Valley Affordable Housing Corporation (BVAHC)

BVAHC serves Brazos, Leon, Burleson, Robertson, Madison, Grimes and Washington counties. Since 2017, their Financial Fitness Center program has helped clients gain financial stability by developing healthy habits. Within five years, clients build financial stability and have savings to purchase their first home. The journey begins with \$25 — a savings account to establish a foundation for financial self-sufficiency.

Program Name: \$25 Solution  
Amount Awarded: \$80,000.00  
Grant Term: 2 Years

### Program Activities:

One on One Financial Counseling	Number of individuals directly served	210
	Number of direct contact hours with participants	315
	Number of participants who established or raised credit score	51
	Average credit score increases (%)	15%
	Number of participants who established or increased savings	183
	Average increase in savings (\$)	\$ 300.00

### Achievements:

- 42 Clients opened an account at a bank
- 5 Clients purchased a home

### Challenges:

BVAHC has many families that have the savings to afford a down payment and closing costs. However, in the current economy, they are unable to find a home within their budget. With this challenge, BVAHC is moving, networking, and connecting with organizations to help find or build or sell affordable housing.

Most of their clients are from Child Care Management Services (CCMS) through Workforce Solutions and HUD. These clients' families have experienced generational poverty; most have received governmental assistance without an understanding of how to save or budget. As a result, a majority of the clients start the program with limited income, and others are searching for work. BVAHC customizes the program to start with a budget that works for each client.

### Success Story:

A client was at the stage of the program to purchase their first home. The client's goal was to help other veterans in need of housing. As a result, the client considered homes with additional space, but the larger homes were above the budget. With encouragement from BVHAC, the client sent a letter with the offer explaining the intentions and goals of the home. Based on the client's straightforward explanation and goal, the property owners not only selected the client but also knocked off \$100K of the sale price. The client was able to purchase the home and fulfill the dream of assisting other homeless veterans.

## Credit Coalition

Credit Coalition has served Harris County, Jefferson County, and surrounding areas for more than 30 years. Their purpose is to empower consumers through financial and homebuyer counseling and education to make informed, reasonable, and responsible decisions regarding their financial and housing goals.

They offer pre- and post-homeowner education: Fundamentals of Good Credit (FOGC), and Life as a Homeowner, respectively. Some of their other services include Foreclosure Intervention Counseling and Reverse Mortgage Counseling.

Program Name: Fundamentals of Good Credit  
Amount Awarded: \$50,000.00  
Grant Term: 2 Years

### Program Activities:

Online Class	Number of online classes hosted	30
	Number of individuals in attendance with online classes	295
In- Person Class	Number of in-person classes given	25
	Number of individuals in attendance for in-person classes	55
One on One	Number of individuals directly served	6
	Number of direct contact hours with participants	35

### Achievements:

- 10 FOGC class series (a total of 15 hours)
- 1 class of Life as a Homeowner (4 hours)
- 303 Participants completed FOGC

### Challenge:

Post pandemic, their in-class participant numbers are still low. To raise the in-class participant numbers, they have increased their social media presence and outreach within the community.

### Success Story:

The unique part of the FOGC program is that if a participant misses a class, they can make it up the next time classes are held (usually within several weeks). As a result, the participant completion rate is high: of 350 participants, 303 completed the FOGC classes.

## Foundation Communities

Foundation Communities (FC) has served Austin and North Texas communities for over 30 years. They also create housing where individuals and families succeed by utilizing a housing-plus services model that empowers low-income residents and neighbors with the tools and support they need to stabilize and increase their economic standing.

Recently, an FC survey found that a majority of residents showed interest in purchasing a home. Catering to the residents' needs, FC started their Pre-Mortgage Financial Wellness Program. Through rent reporting, 1:1 financial coaching, and affordable homeownership workshops, they are providing the community with tools to achieve the goal of homeownership.

Program Name: Pre-Mortgage Financial Wellness Program  
 Amount Awarded: \$48,690.00  
 Grant Term: 2 Years

### Program Activities:

Online Class	Number of online classes hosted	2
	Number of individuals in attendance with online classes	50
One on One Financial Counseling	Number of individuals directly served	398
	Number of direct contact hours with participants	615
	Number of participants who established or raised credit score	4
	Average credit score increases (%)	9%
	Number of participants who established or increased savings	5
	Average increase in savings (\$)	\$ 2,915.00

### Achievements:

On average, 66 new clients participated in financial coaching each month. For the first semi-annual period, FC coached 398 clients; and 70% of the participants have made progress toward their goals. On average, ten additional clients enroll monthly in credit reporting.

### Challenge:

FC provided rent reporting services to build residents' credit history. The rent credit reporting software had glitches in report accuracy at first. They worked with the credit bureaus and vendor to fix the glitches.

### Success Story:

FC partners with other organizations, such as Lifeworks, Caritas, and Family Eldercare, to reach more residents.

# Galilee Community Development Corporation

Galilee Community Development Corporation (Galilee CDC) serves the Concho Valley area. Galilee CDC's mission is to create decent, affordable housing for low- and moderate-income families by:

- Revitalizing blighted neighborhoods
- Producing single-family and multi-family housing
- Engaging in new construction
- Rehabilitating and repairing homes
- Removing artificial barriers and prejudices in housing opportunities
- Preparing households for the transition from renters to buyers to owners
- Supporting economic and community development

In 2021, Galilee CDC expanded their services to include mortgage financial literacy. They provide pre-purchase and post-purchase homeownership education to the community. With this new program, they continue to build their financial education program.

Program Name: Financial Literacy  
Amount Awarded: \$51,903.00  
Grant Term: 2 Years

## Program Activities:

Online Class	Number of online classes hosted	2
	Number of individuals in attendance with online classes	13
In-Person Class	Number of in-person classes given	11
	Number of individuals in attendance for in-person classes	60

## Achievements:

In this reporting period, Galilee CDC had a total of 65 participants. Of those participants, eight attended two or more classes, and two proceeded with 1:1 counseling. These achievements show that people return for additional financial counseling.

## Challenge:

Some participants have requested evening financial education classes to better fit their schedules, and Galilee CDC is working to increase the number of virtual classes in hopes to increase participation.

## Success Story:

Galilee CDC partnered with Housing Authority of San Angelo (HASA) and local sober living facilities. In June, Galilee CDC participated in HASA's Family Fund Day event where they passed out CFPB Money Monsters literature.



## Grassroots Community Development

Grassroots Community Development (Grassroots) serves Waco and surrounding communities. Grassroots utilizes an asset-based community development approach to serve neighbors, children, and communities.

Grassroots points to a 2019 study conducted by the Swiss Journal of Economics and Statistics, which indicates most people severely lack financial literacy. Grassroots' goal is to confront the lack of literacy by offering free financial literacy classes, homebuyer education, and an Individual Development Account (savings program).

Program Name: Homebuyer/Financial Literacy Education/Counseling  
Amount Awarded: \$40,000.00  
Grant Term: 2 Years

### Program Activities:

Online Class	Number of online classes hosted	7
	Number of individuals in attendance with online classes	107
One on One	Number of individuals directly served	198
	Number of direct contact hours with participants	271

### Achievements:

Grassroots was able to provide more 1:1 counseling to families with a focus in north and east Waco.

They hosted seven online classes with an attendance of 107 people. Of the class, 79 graduated — more than Grassroots' stated goal of 60 families.

### Challenges:

Due to the unexpected medical leave of a staff member, Grassroots had to reschedule their 1:1 counseling sessions. As a result, they were able to complete only 432 counseling sessions during the first semi-annual period. Even so, their goal of 600 was 72% fulfilled.

Currently, they are working to attain their first goal of 600 as well as meeting their next goal of 600.

### Success Story:

By taking classes, many participants gain the confidence to navigate the mortgage process without Grassroots' guidance. As a result, they cannot actively track whether all participants reached their goal of homeownership. However, nine families have contacted Grassroots to let them know of their home purchase.

Their housing counseling program recently passed a HUD audit with a clean bill of health. The audit ensures that the organization operates economically, efficiently, and effectively.

## Habitat for Humanity Abilene, Inc.

Habitat for Humanity Abilene, Inc. (Habitat Abilene) is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International and serves the Abilene area.

Their financial program, Habitat College, began at the end of 2021. Participants receive basic home maintenance training, financial classes, and 1:1 counseling. Habitat Abilene is expanding the program to include both public participants as well as future Habitat families.

Program Name:	Habitat College
Amount Awarded:	\$71,000.00
Grant Term:	2 Years

### Program Activities:

A ten-week class began in September for their Habitat families. Beginning in 2024, the program will also be open to public participants.

### Challenges:

The family services coordinator needed additional program training, and Habitat is updating the financial education curriculum.

### Success Story:

A cohort of six Habitat families will move into their homes by the end of 2023. A second cohort of six families will be in their homes by the end of 2024. All 12 families will complete Habitat College by the end of 2023.

# Habitat for Humanity of Camp County

Habitat for Humanity of Camp County (Habitat Camp County) creates a better human habitat in which to live and work by making safe, modest, adequate housing for the community that has needs but are limited in resources.

In 2009, this branch of Habitat for Humanity was closing. However, several individuals were determined to keep it running. They rebuilt the organization in Pittsburg, Texas with such success that it outgrew its limited office space. Habitat Camp County recently purchased a building, intending to remodel it to a bigger office as well as classrooms.

Program Name: Home Dreamers Financial Literacy Program  
Amount Awarded: \$50,000.00  
Grant Term: 2 Year

### Program Activities:

One on One	Number of individuals directly served	11
	Number of direct contact hours with participants	8

### Achievements and Challenges:

While continuing to support the community, Habitat Camp County began remodeling the building and furnishing classrooms.

Then they experienced two setbacks: 1) termite damage to the building they purchased and 2) two major storms that badly damaged the area.

After the second storm, so many community members needed assistance that Habitat Camp County set aside the remodel to help rebuild the communities.

### Success Story:

By the end of June, Habitat Camp County completed remodeling as they continued community outreach events. Inquiries increased about the new program, which begins later this year — in the new classrooms.

## Houston Habitat for Humanity

Houston Habitat for Humanity (Houston Habitat) serves the counties of Houston and Harris. Through providing shelter, they empower people to build a better future.

Their Affordable Homeownership Program started in 1987 and continues to grow. A part of this program teaches the clients to save over a period of six to twelve months in an Individual Development Account (IDA) savings account. Clients may receive up to a \$2,000.00 match on their savings.

Program Name: Affordable Homeownership Program  
 Amount Awarded: \$66,900.00  
 Grant Term: 3 Years

### Program Activities:

Train the Trainer New Curriculum	Number of individuals directly trained through program	3
	Number of participants reached through trained individuals	30
	Number of direct contact hours with the participants	42
One on One Financial Counseling	Number of individuals directly served	61
	Number of direct contact hours with participants	720
	Number of participants who established or raised credit score	15
	Average credit score increases (%)	4%
	Number of participants who established or increased savings	61
	Average increase in savings (\$)	\$ 1,900.00

### Achievements:

Three employees are currently completing their coursework to be certified as Credit Counselors. As they continue to learn about credit counseling, they have been able to assist applicants to clear negative items on their credit reports. And once they have been certified, they will be able to prepare applicants for homeownership through credit knowledge, tools, and techniques to clean up their credit.

### Challenge:

With outreach studies, Habitat Houston determined that some applicants do not understand a credit report — which prevents them from qualifying for a mortgage. Currently, they are considering new programs to help the wider community attain credit knowledge.

### Success Story:

Habitat partners with Covenant Community Capital to assist Habitat families to open a savings account. Through budgeting course work and 1:1 counseling, Habitat families learn to stay on target and achieve their goal to become new homeowners.

In this reporting period, marketing efforts reached Spanish-speaking communities, which resulted in Hispanic applications increasing by 7%.

## Habitat for Humanity of Jefferson County

Habitat for Humanity of Jefferson County serves the Golden Triangle community. Their program educates in the home-buying process as well as financial literacy.

A majority of their non-profit assistance helps elderly residents and their families restore older homes, rebuild homes damaged from hurricanes, and work with other organizations by providing free financial literacy services.

Program Name:	Financial Literacy Program
Amount Awarded:	\$33,585.00
Grant Term:	2 Years

### Achievements:

This semi-annual period, Habitat Humanity of Jefferson County's grant administrator created and updated six modules of their Financial Literacy Program. This program will ultimately consist of 12 modules. The remaining six modules will be finalized by January 2024.

Starting August 2023, the updated Financial Literacy Program will commence and will conclude in November 2023.

### Challenges:

Habitat for Humanity of Jefferson County has been challenged with creating modules for their target audience while keeping the information simple and easy for anyone of any education background to understand.

### Success Story:

They have partnered with City of Beaumont to provide classes to the clients that apply to their Home Restoration program. Just recently, they have also helped Catholic Charities by providing financial literacy classes to their clients.

## Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio, Inc.

Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio, Inc. (Habitat San Antonio) services Bexar and Guadalupe counties. They are an organization that builds modest, decent, and affordable homes without interest or profit.

The organization provides free credit reports and roadmaps to families that want to become Habitat families but need to improve credit reports to qualify. These roadmaps guide families to break financial barriers with the goal of enabling them to eventually qualify for an affordable home.

Program Name:	Habitat's Family Services
Amount Awarded:	\$75,000.00
Grant Term:	1 Year

### Achievements:

Habitat 101's curriculum, currently in development, will educate the public about mortgage basics. Families that do not qualify for Habitat homes will be guided to online videos and workshops.

### Challenge:

Due to staff turnover, the project got off to a late start. They have since hired new staff and are making strides with weekly meetings.

### Success Story:

Not only is Habitat San Antonio finalizing the English curriculum, but they are also working with their bilingual employees to assist in the Spanish translation of Habitat 101.

# Fort Worth Area Habitat for Humanity, Inc. DBA Trinity Habitat for Humanity

Fort Worth Area Habitat for Humanity, Inc. DBA Trinity Habitat for Humanity, (Trinity Habitat) serves the Arlington, and Fort Worth areas. They also serve families in Tarrant, Parker, Wise, Johnson, and Palo Pinto counties.

Their program consists of six areas of financial literacy/counseling: 1) financial behaviors; 2) borrowing, credit, and debt; 3) investing; 4) spending, savings, and budget; 5) community engagement; and 6) Habitat U (which wraps up with a class on home maintenance training).

Program Name: Habitat U  
Amount Awarded: \$78,200.00  
Grant Term: 2 Years

## Program Activities:

Online Class	Number of online classes hosted	7
	Number of individuals in attendance with online classes	54
In-Person Class	Number of in-person classes given	2
	Number of individuals in attendance for in-person classes	70
One on One	Number of individuals directly served	47
	Number of direct contact hours with participants	28

## Achievements:

Currently, Trinity Habitat has 55 families in counseling. They are working to expand their financial literacy programs to all their Habitat families and the public.

## Challenge:

During this reporting period, Trinity Habitat lost a primary financial counselor. They began searching to fill that position as well as a bilingual staff member to help with the program.

## Success Story:

In May, Trinity hired a bilingual staff member to assist with Habitat U and prospective families. Within one month, they went from five to ten monthly classes.