**Mega ONEtime event: Olympians/celebrity athletes joining 500 volunteers to build 25 homes for poor families in ONE weekend**

Issue date: 4/28/2015

***Celebrating 25th anniversary of “Homes of Hope”-- the UNTOLD story of 100,000 global volunteer homebuilders including numerous VIP’s***

San Diego, CA – Over the upcoming Memorial Day weekend, another type of commemoration will be taking place. In typifying their core mission, 25 homes will be built and donated to poor families in Mexico by 500 volunteers over the course of just two days, May 22 & 23 – each home symbolizing one year of the program's 25 years of operation. Fifteen homes will be built in Tijuana and 10 in Ensenada by a volunteer population which will include 17 Olympians – most of whom are medalists – along with Connor and David O’Leary, the father/son cancer survivors who won last year’s The Amazing Race (CBS). Homes of Hope’s ([www.ywamhomesofhope.org](http://www.ywamhomesofhope.org)) global movement has been steadily gaining life-changing traction in transforming the lives of families in poverty via the gift of a new home since 1990. **To date, over 100,000 individuals have volunteered to construct over 5000 homes for the needy in 19 countries.**

The volunteers themselves include a who’s who of notables: past CEO’s from Disney and PepsiCo, bestselling business authors, Ken Blanchard and Patrick Lencioni, high-profile athletes including celebrity Olympian Shawn Johnson, Major League Baseball’s Garret Anderson and Jose Vizcaino, and the NFL’s Hunter Smith among others. Founded by Sean Lambert and his wife, Janet, he reports that nearly 500 corporate CEO’s along with numerous other pro athletes, philanthropists, politicians – including U.S. Secretary of Commerce, Penny Pritzker – are among the prominent leaders who have led teams of volunteer builders on these weekend-long missions. Referred by (then) Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures Group President Mark Zoradi as “the greatest team-building thing ever known to man,” volunteer builders have included a broad diversity of populations: employees and their managers, schools/colleges, churches, clubs/organizations, plus families of all ages from 5 – 90. Many return repeatedly to build: Disney has brought teams a dozen times, Boardwalk Rental Communities (Canada) has built 40 times, and Indianapolis-based Defender Direct has built 215 homes to date via the volunteer efforts of their employees, spouses, and children. Many families have embraced ongoing Homes of Hope trips together as a unifying tradition for years -- one which consistently provides a unique bonding experience, is deeply enriching, and imparts memorable life lessons for all.

Led by Sean Lambert, the very first house was constructed by a team from the Los Angeles chapter of Youth With A Mission (YWAM) in the poor community of El Florido, a suburb of Tijuana, Mexico. Upon gifting this initial new home to an impoverished family, Lambert’s young daughter, Andrea, just three years old at the time, pointed to another family living nearby in a rusty, dilapidated bus and asked, “Daddy, are you going to build a house for the bus people too?” Moved by his daughter’s plea, the ministry to which he and Janet would subsequently dedicate their lives was born. Shortly thereafter, the young Lambert family relocated south, launching the San Diego/Baja Mexico chapter of YWAM and its primary focus, Homes of Hope. Although originally inspired as “an offering to Jesus” by Lambert, the 2-3 daylong home builds themselves are open to all — anyone who has a heart to help the poor is welcome. Visiting teams raise the needed construction funds and also work side-by-side with the family receiving the home.

YWAM San Diego/Baja is an independent 501-c3 nonprofit. Youth With A Mission (YWAM) is an international, interdenominational Christian missions movement launched in 1960 by Loren Cunningham. To learn more about Homes of Hope’s housing mission to impoverished families and details about the upcoming 25th anniversary celebration, please visit [www.YWAMHomesOfHope.org](http://www.YWAMHomesOfHope.org).

# # #

**Media Relations contact -** (Ms.) “Sam” Jernigan, publicist, Renaissance Consultations, sam@MarketingAndPR.com, 530.362.1339 (PST)