

Rural Development State Director Higgins Launches National Homeownership Month in Biola, Fresno County



USDA Rural Development State Director Ben Higgins (far left) and Single Family Housing Program Director Bob Anderson (center in blue shirt) help raise a wall of a new home being constructed by SHE participants in Biola, Fresno County.

To kick off National Homeownership Month for June 2007, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development State Director Ben Higgins and staff visited Self-Help Enterprises' (SHE) single-family and multifamily subdivision under construction in Biola, Fresno County on Thursday, May 31st. Fifty-eight families will build their own homes in Biola, working 40 hours per week for 10 months. In addition, SHE has just completed a rental housing community of 44 units called Biola Village right next door to the new self-help homes.

State Director Higgins noted

that California's self-help housing program is the largest in the nation and praised the work of SHE.

“Homeownership is the first big step to financial security for millions of Americans. Our Mutual Self-Help Housing Program helps bridge the affordability gap in California and provides an opportunity for families to build personal equity that transforms the options they and their children have in the future.”

“Through self-help housing, families are doing more than just building affordable homes; they are developing skills that can lead to new opportunities, and strengthening families and communities,” said Higgins. 🏠



ABOVE: Paul McLain (right) with the Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission speaks with SHE Construction Superintendent Joel Garcia. Fresno EOC and SHE partner to bring local youth onto construction sites for hands-on training helping build homes alongside participant families.

LEFT: Gigi Gibbs speaks about the financial commitment the County of Fresno has made to help provide affordable workforce housing in partnership with SHE.