

# A Trip For Pizza, and A Lot of Hard Work, Lead to Home Ownership For This Family of Four

Beverly Robinson and two of her children were driving to a pizza place one evening for dinner when one of her children spotted a vacant lot.

At the time, Ms. Robinson had already been approved for a Habitat house, and had already done her 300 volunteer “sweat equity” hours for her down payment. She had even picked out her lot, but truth be told it was not her dream home. The Habitat home, nice as it was, was still close to neighborhoods she wanted to get away from.

Then her children saw this vacant lot in a neighborhood she thought was perfect for her family.

So, let’s back up and tell the story of how she got there.

Ms. Robinson was a teenage mother who worked hard and was able to graduate from high school on time. She grew up living at Boulevard Homes (public housing). In 2010, she moved to Southside Homes.

Two years later she got a Housing Choice Voucher and moved into a house. By this time she had three children, her daughter and a set of 10-year-old twins, Kimari and Kimora (photographed above). Ms. Robinson’s oldest child, Romaya, is a junior at North Carolina A & T, and is the first in the family to attend college.

Ms. Robinson worked part-time for 16 years as a bus driver for the Bethlehem Center. They paid for her training to get her special Commercial Drivers License to drive their bus.

She says she got comfortable living in public housing and working part-time. But as she approached 40 she realized this was not the life she wanted for her children.

She promised them more. Their own room. Their own TV. Their own home.

Afraid to leave the security of what she had, she took the risk and ventured out. She applied for a bus driver job with Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS). She got a part-time job, but was able to get full-time hours by working extra shifts. She was eventually given a full-time job, with benefits, in September of 2016.

She said the motivation to change was her children. “I wanted to show my children that I’ve done something,” she said. “I was determined not to let my kids grow up in public housing.”

After finding the vacant lot in a new development Ms. Robinson went into action and took a homeownership class at Community Link. She talked to one lender, but she did not believe she was getting good advice. While running errands one day, Ms. Robinson had an issue with her debit card and had to go inside the bank. Since she was there, she decided to meet with a loan officer and found out that she was eligible for two different down payment assistance programs

She is now the recipient of a \$20,000 forgivable third mortgage from the City's House Charlotte program. Because of her commitment to give her children a better life, Ms. Robinson got out of her comfort zone and took risks that have paid off for her and her family.

Ms. Robinson is the first in her family, including her parents and her five siblings, to become a home owner. She believes it is possible for others who also work hard and follow their dreams.

If you are interested in finding out more about House Charlotte, contact the Charlotte Mecklenburg Housing Partnership at 704-342-0933. To contact Community Link, call 704-943-9490.