



Habitat For Humanity Greater Orlando & Osceola County

Thought Leadership Positioning & Media Relations

Driven by a belief that everyone deserves a safe place to live, Habitat for Humanity Greater Orlando & Osceola County builds affordable housing, revitalizes neighborhoods, and strengthens communities. The nonprofit organization is committed to providing new homeownership, homeowner education, and home repair programs. &Barr's goal is to position Habitat Orlando & Osceola as a community convener that collaborates with different public and private entities toward a common goal of seeking solutions to Central Florida's affordable-housing crisis.

With this goal in mind, &Barr developed Habitat Orlando & Osceola's key messaging that is consistent, succinct, and impactful. Continuously researching and sourcing timely and relevant opportunities, &Barr works to elevate the organization's profile in the region. For every media interview sourced, &Barr develops a media brief, schedules a prep call, and staffs interviews when possible. After interviews, &Barr holds debriefs to discuss and learn from the opportunity. Furthermore, utilizing high-res images and b-roll, &Barr works with media post-events to secure additional coverage.

Leveraging Opportunities

When Habitat Orlando & Osceola received a multimillion-dollar donation from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, &Barr leveraged the donation to continue to solidify Habitat Orlando & Osceola as a highly respected nonprofit that is making a difference and achieving results.

Positioning the President & CEO

Catherine Steck McManus is an accomplished and award-winning executive and advocate for fair-housing policies. Utilizing her 25 years of Central Florida nonprofit experience, &Barr continues to successfully position Catherine as a thought leader who educates our region on the complexities of the affordable-housing crisis.

This year alone, &Barr has secured interviews for Catherine on all five local broadcast stations multiple times. Additionally, &Barr amplified Catherine's thought leadership through a guest column placement in the Orlando Sentinel.

&Barr's compelling nominations further elevated Catherine's achievements, earning her the distinction of Orlando Business Journal's 2022 Women Who Mean Business.

440M+ Media Impressions

78 Media Placements

Orlando Sentinel

GUEST COMMENTARY

Sustainable prosperity through affordable housing Commentary

By Catherine Steck McManus
Guest Columnist • Apr 26, 2022 at 5:30 am

When the Florida Legislature convenes in May for a special session, it is expected to address what has been appropriately called "a state of absolute crisis." Homeowners insurance rates are poised to continue escalating above rates already 36% more per year than other catastrophe-prone states. Policies are being canceled. Carriers are leaving the state altogether.

If there is a silver lining, the pain felt by runaway insurance costs should make clear the threat to regional economic stability reflected by the broader challenge of affordable housing.



Catherine Steck McManus is president and CEO of Habitat for Humanity Greater Orlando and Osceola County. - Original Credit: Courtesy photo (MACBETH STUDIO / Courtesy photo)

It is tempting to treat homeowners insurance and affordable housing as separate issues, but the two are intertwined in what policy experts call a "wicked problem" — where there is no isolated or straight-forward connection between cause and effect. Imagine adjusting one control in your car only to see the rest of the controls moving on their own as a result. Apply the brake and the air conditioning turns off but the radio gets louder. With wicked problems, too many variables are at play and interconnected such that every problem is a symptom of another.

Consider the dizzying relationships that illustrate the wicked problem at the center of the Florida housing market, which has seen the average sales price increase from \$178,000 to \$392,000 in nine years. That's more than double. The average sales price for first-time buyers increased from \$118,000 to \$260,000 between 2012 and 2021. The supply of houses for sale — at any price — decreased from 2.8 months in June of 2020 to 0.9 as of December 2021.

