

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ANTI-POVERTY NONPROFIT TRANSFORMS A FAMILY'S HOME WITH \$20,000 KITCHEN REMODEL

*Remodel from Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County, in partnership with
Renewal Experts Construction, revealed during Poverty Awareness Month*

HENNEPIN COUNTY, MINNESOTA, January 30, 2025—In recognition of Poverty Awareness Month, Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County (CAP-HC) is thrilled to reveal the kitchen remodel completed with its partner, Renewal Experts Construction, in December 2024. The Kitchen Remodel Giveaway was envisioned as a way to bring awareness to the struggles families with low income face every day through one family's story. This kitchen remodel, coupled with CAP-HC's breadth of programming, underscores the organization's commitment to helping families stabilize and pave their path to prosperity.

The Kitchen Remodel Giveaway

The Kitchen Remodel Giveaway "came up at the thirteenth hole of the Be the Change golf tournament," said Renewal Experts Construction owner Sergio Peña. The Be the Change MN golf tournament focuses on bringing together community, nonprofit, and business leaders from diverse backgrounds to foster relationship building. The pairing of Peña and CAP-HC executive director, Dr. Clarence Hightower, did just that. "Sergio was explaining to me what he does, and I was explaining to him what CAP-HC does," Hightower recalled. "And Sergio says to me, 'what would be really nice is if we could go into one of [CAP-HC's] client's homes and renovate their kitchen.' The generosity of his idea just blew me away."

From this first conversation, the Kitchen Remodel Giveaway was born. CAP-HC promoted the giveaway in October so that Peña's team could begin renovations in November. Peña shared, "I'm really motivated to give back to a family. With the holidays coming and food and cooking and laughs, it's going to be a great project." Peña determined the remodel would be valued up to \$20,000, an in-kind donation from Renewal Experts Construction.

To enter the giveaway, families had to meet certain eligibility requirements, including being a recent CAP-HC client, owning their home, and having income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level Income Guidelines. Pamela* found out about the giveaway from her cousin. When she was selected as the giveaway winner, she called her cousin and said, "cuz, guess what! I won! I've never won anything like this before, and because of you, I won!"

Peña met with Pamela at her home on November 8 to discuss her vision for the new kitchen. Pamela said that lack of space was the biggest issue, adding that family members frequently bump into each other when preparing meals. Peña responded that his team would improve the flow of the kitchen, add all new appliances, and "brighten it up to really make it feel warm and inviting."

The remodel was finished on December 17. At a walkthrough on January 1 Pamela exclaimed, "my cheeks haven't stopped hurting from smiling so much. The timing couldn't be any better for this blessing to come for me and my family." CAP-HC created [a heartwarming video](#) about the giveaway and the family's reaction to their new kitchen.

Energy Assistance Program: A Lifeline During Winter Months

Winter in Minnesota brings harsh temperatures and high heating costs that disproportionately impact households with low income. CAP-HC's Energy Assistance Program (EAP) offers critical support to help families pay heating bills, avoid utility disconnections, and weatherize their homes for greater energy efficiency. In 2024, the program served over 21,000 households, preventing energy insecurity and alleviating financial stress.

"Stable housing and access to utilities are essential building blocks for economic stability, and that's especially true when temperatures drop to dangerous levels," said Hightower. "Our Energy Assistance Program not only helps families stay warm during the winter but also helps them direct resources toward other essential needs, such as food, education, and healthcare." Pamela, an EAP client herself, echoed Hightower's comment, saying that the program helps her "focus on other needs like food and clothing for the children."

Poverty Awareness Month: Providing Resources, Inspiring Change

Ten percent of Hennepin County residents live below poverty level according to 2023 U.S. Census data. Supported by the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Community Action Network, Poverty Awareness Month each January serves as a vital reminder of the systemic challenges faced by people experiencing economic insecurity. CAP-HC's programs, including EAP, housing stability services, employment readiness, and more, are tailored to address these challenges head-on. With this broad range of support, CAP-HC meets families with low income where they are—whether navigating crisis situations or ready to move beyond surviving to thriving.

Through initiatives like the Kitchen Remodel Giveaway, programs like EAP, and campaigns like Poverty Awareness Month, CAP-HC aims to spark dialogue about poverty's root causes and develop community-informed solutions.

How Community Members Can Help

Bringing awareness to the causes and conditions of poverty and advocating for systemic change is important work year-round. As Poverty Awareness Month draws to a close, CAP-HC invites community members to join in making its vision—Hennepin County without poverty—a reality:

- **Donate:** Contributions to CAP-HC have a positive impact on families in need and strengthen the community as a whole.
- **Volunteer:** Distribute program information at community events or help staff with program delivery.
- **Advocate:** Share local poverty statistics and information about CAP-HC's programs with your networks and public officials to raise awareness.

ADDITIONAL ASSETS FOR THIS STORY

Kitchen remodel photos, video, and more are available here: [2024 Kitchen Remodel Media Kit](#)

ABOUT CAP-HC

Established in 1986, Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County (CAP-HC) is an independent nonprofit that helps people with low income navigate crisis situations, build stability, and lift themselves out of poverty. CAP-HC's mission is to partner with the community to provide effective and responsive services to reduce the impact of poverty in Hennepin County.

caphennepin.org

ABOUT RENEWAL EXPERTS CONSTRUCTION

Established in 2021, Renewal Experts Construction is a minority-owned business based in Hennepin County that specializes in both interior and exterior remodels. Each project is tailored to the homeowner's unique needs and with

emphasis on making homeowners feel at ease throughout the process. Renewal Experts Construction is a Certified Environmentally Responsible Contractor.

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**Client's first name used with permission. Last name redacted for client privacy.*

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