

HWR Homeowners' Stories to Celebrate: Homeownership

Since 2002, WHAHLT -- HWR has used the Community Land Trust practice to assist over 158 work-force families become homeowners in communities where they work and live.

Recently, several HWR homeowners – old and new – shared their stories of how they were able to purchase their homes and the impact that owning their own home has on their lives.

In 2008, Kissy was in the process of trying to buy her first home when a friend told her about Homes Within Reach. "I bought the very first house I saw," said Kissy. "I believe if you think long, you think wrong. I knew it was for me and my children – a clean four bedroom home. I was excited to move in and being able to paint the colors of my rooms - until then I never could pick out my own colors." Since 2011 Kissy and her husband Corey make their home in Minnetonka with their blended family.

In 2010, six months after arriving in Minnesota for work prospects, Chris and Angie found HWR through their landlord and purchased their first home where they settled in with their young family in Edina. The couple agree, "As homeowners, there is a compounding rippling effect in our stability and confidence that continues to ground and grow relationships in almost every aspect of our lives. We plan to retire here and pass our land trust home on to our children." Chris has been serving as a member of the HWR Board since 2012.

For nine years Thomas and Angela were happy Twin City renters but a changing life style and a growing family motivated the couple to explore homeownership opportunities. Their three year search led them to HWR's door in 2017 after an opportune meeting with a HWR homeowner. "Until I heard about HWR I didn't know a land trust existed. Initially my husband and even my family thought it all sounded too good to be true," said Angela. "But then we sat down with the HWR staff and two months later they showed us our home in Minnetonka – It fits us great!"

In 2017, Chris and Sara found their HWR home in Maple Grove where they could easily commute between home and work. "It's a very good space for us –especially to grow into as we wait for the arrival of our second child," said Chris. "When we rented, we lived on a very busy street and couldn't enjoy the backyard. Now we live on a quiet street and our child can go outside and play."

Ashley and Danny both grew up in Bloomington and wanted to raise their children in the community they've always called home. In 2017, the couple started looking at homes in Bloomington and found a house listed by HWR on the MLS. Growing up, Danny lived in apartments his entire life and Ashley's family home foreclosed in 2007. Today they are homeowners in Bloomington and their children will soon be attending the same elementary school where their mother once was a student. "We want our kids to grow up here. This neighborhood is peaceful and our neighbors are amazing and very giving to our family. Owning our home is a complete dream come true. It's our new beginning."

These homeowner stories inspires HWR to continue carrying out its mission of creating affordable homeownership for work-force families living and working in the suburban communities of Hennepin County.