

Published June 18, 2011

## Opinion: Thumbs Up for Habitat for Humanity

THE OLYMPIAN

**Thumbs Up:** South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity dedicated its final four homes a week ago at its Fairview Cottages project, a 15-unit development not far from Bigelow Park. This is a remarkable achievement and testimony to community support and people willing to invest sweat equity into a permanent home for themselves and their family members. At the ceremony last Saturday, Mike McGowan, the chairman of the Thurston County Home Consortium, presented keys to Erica Cronin and her daughter, Freijda. The consortium and others, including Olympia Federal Savings, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and the City of Olympia, helped to fund the \$1.7 million Fairview project. "My daughter can now walk out the front door and be OK," Cronin said. After accepting her keys, Tonya Maiava, a single parent of five children, said her new home will offer security and stability. She expects her children soon will want to paint their rooms and get a pet, she said. Maiava expects to move into her new home in November, after she has contributed enough work time to the project, one of the requirements to qualify for a Habitat for Humanity home. Other requirements: The homeowner must live or work in Thurston County and earn 35 percent to 60 percent of the typical median family income as determined by federal guidelines. Habitat for Humanity builds housing for low-income families nationwide. But in the process, Habitat also rebuilds lives. What a terrific program.