

WOMEN PROVIDE HOME, HOPE



LESLIE BARBARO/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Singer-songwriter Patti Scialfa, left, and daughter Jessica Springsteen helping to built a Habitat for Humanity home for Brenda Quinones on North Main Street in Paterson on Wednesday.

Habitat's glory days

By **BARBARA BOUCICAUT**
STAFF WRITER

PATERSON — In what used to be a vacant lot on North Main Street, a home that will provide space and comfort for a Paterson family is now being built.

"I made a promise to my babies that one day they would have a home of their own," said Brenda Quinones, her three daughters by her side during the Paterson Habitat for Humanity's wall-raising ceremony on Wednesday.

The house is being built by an all-women crew as part of Habitat's Women Build Project, which aims to empower women through construction.

Gina Damiano, Habitat's re-

source developer, said the project helps women become more self-sufficient. "This is not a hand out," Damiano said. "This is a hand up."

The home, which will be valued at about \$200,000, is set to be completed in the fall.

Singer-songwriter Patti Scialfa, wife of Bruce Springsteen, was there to help out. Scialfa has been an active member of the Women Build Project, and she and daughter Jessica Springsteen are co-chairs.

"Working together taps us into the higher angels in our souls," said Scialfa to a group of volunteers. Scialfa said she stopped by the home of the Douge family, whose home was built last year by Habitat, to drop off a pot of flowers and a note before arriving at the ceremony.

"It's nice to be back," Scialfa said. Quinones said her family is looking forward to having more space, an upgrade from their small two-bedroom apartment on the north side of Paterson. Her eldest, Kaylah, 13, said she felt happy and excited, and mom added that Kaylah was looking forward to having her own room. Kaylah, along with her sisters, Tayah, 11, and Aaliyah, 7, put on T-shirts that read "Women at Work" and grabbed a hammer to join in on the construction. "It's so surreal that we're getting a home," said Quinones, who also joined in.

Representatives from corporate sponsors Bank of America and Lowes were also in attendance.

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