



U-londa • Denori (16)

## Family and Current Housing

As a single mom, U-londa Hicks knows her kids are watching, so she makes sure she leads by example. That means paying her bills. Getting up in the morning and going to work. Taking care of what she has.

The next thing she hopes her children see her doing is building her Habitat home – and then paying off her mortgage.

“I didn’t just walk into it and it was given to me,” U-londa said. “I worked my way up, and those are the values that I want my kids to know. This is what it takes to get to where we are today.”

In 2018, U-londa and her children were able to move into a three-bedroom house after years of living in public housing. At first, it was exciting to be out of an apartment and in a home

with an upstairs and downstairs. But lately, they’ve noticed some troubling activity next door, with people coming and going all the time and lots of noise. The rental house also has some structural problems. It’s not insulated, so the monthly bills are high, and the carpet is hiding holes in the floor.

U-londa works for Refuge of Hope in downtown Canton and knew about Habitat for Humanity through her job. But for a while, she wasn’t ready to own her own home yet – she needed to get some things squared away.

Now, she’s prepared to move on from renting and work toward something she and her family can call their own. 🏠

## A Bright Future

Since joining the Habitat partnership, U-londa has completed her homeowner maintenance education classes to learn how to take care of the home she will build with Habitat.

She plans to embrace the new-home feel by purchasing new furniture and hanging her favorite pictures on the walls. Owning will be different from renting, she said, because when you own something, you appreciate and respect it more because you know it’s where you’ll probably spend the rest of your life.

For her son Denori, 16, the home will be a safe place where he can feel secure. If he wants to go to college, he’ll have a home to come back to. If he wants to work, he can do that without worrying about where the family will live or whether they’re going to move again.

“He will know that everything is OK and that we’re stable,” U-londa said. 🏠