

Escambia County Resident Gets New Home through County Assistance Programs

Escambia County resident Estella Marshall has lived in the same house since 1959, doing her best over the years to maintain her home with help from her family.

Even with help, 84-year-old Marshall struggled to keep up with repairs to her home, and it eventually fell into a condemnable state.

“It was an extremely old home and it just got to be where she could not maintain it without the help of what we were able to do,” said Marshall’s daughter, Stella Marie Williams. “But as fast as we’d fix something, something else would tear up.”

That burden has now been lifted thanks to a brand-new home constructed through Escambia County assistance programs, which demolished Marshall’s old house and built a new one in its place.

Speaking on her mother’s behalf, Williams said it is difficult to put into words how life-changing this new home is for the entire family.

“There is no scale that can describe how grateful my mom and my family are,” Williams said. “She’s ecstatic. I think it’s going to give her a lot more comfort, not just physically, but comfort emotionally in her heart.”

The home was constructed through the county’s Housing Demo and Replacement Programs, funded through grants from the HOME Investment Partnerships Program and the State Housing Initiatives Partnership, or SHIP, program.

“I’m absolutely ecstatic to be able to provide this brand-new home to Ms. Marshall and give some much-needed relief to her and her family,” District 3 Commissioner Lumon May said. “Programs like this are so incredibly important, not only to help our most vulnerable residents

enhance their quality of life, but also to improve our neighborhoods and our community as a whole.”

Over the years, Williams said they have dealt with practically every issue possible with her mother’s old house – plumbing, electrical, termites, windows, and more. Her mother lives alone and does not have any income, which made the issues especially challenging for Williams and her two sisters to address.

“If she didn’t have us, she virtually would have been homeless,” Williams said.

Without the county’s assistance, Williams said there is no way she and her family would have been able to repair or replace the home, which she believes will also help her mom regain her independence, reduce her stress, and live an overall happier, healthier life.

“I believe it’s not only going to help her live in better conditions, but I think it’s going to motivate her to hang out with us a while longer,” Williams said.

Marshall’s new home was constructed with stringent insurance and wind mitigation standards in mind, with features including impact-rated windows and doors, along with strengthened shingles and siding to ensure maximum strength in the event of an extreme weather event. These features should also help with eligibility for more competitive insurance policies.

Williams said she can’t say enough good things about the house and the entire experience with the program, thanking county staff in the Neighborhood Enterprise Division, District 3 Commissioner Lumon May, the construction contractor, and everyone involved with making the project a success.

“Not only is it worthwhile for the seniors, but I think it benefits the whole community, because it certainly makes the neighborhood look a little bit

nicer,” Williams said. “So I think the whole neighborhood benefits from it.”

Additional assistance may be available for income-eligible homeowners in Escambia County. Limited funding is available, but eligible residents in need of assistance are encouraged to reach out for more details. For information about eligibility requirements and assistance programs for Escambia County homeowners, please contact the Neighborhood Enterprise Division at ned@myescambia.com or 850-595-1642.





Escambia County resident Estella Marshall, center, celebrates her new home with District 3 Commissioner Lumon May, county staff, and family.



Escambia County resident Estella Marshall and District 3 Commissioner Lumon May.



Escambia County resident Estella Marshall, center, celebrates her new home with family.



Escambia County resident Estella Marshall shows off the keys to her new home, which was constructed through the county's Housing Demo and Replacement Programs.



Escambia County resident Estella Marshall signs paperwork for her new home.





Escambia County resident Estella Marshall tours her new home with her daughter, Stella Marie Williams.





Escambia County resident Estella Marshall's new home, which was constructed through the county's Housing Demo and Replacement Programs.



Escambia County resident Estella Marshall at her new home with family, friends, and county staff.

