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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity Celebrates the Completion of Community Mural on WestSide in Pittsfield

This Friday, August 12th at 10 am, Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity (CBHFH) will spend a few moments celebrating the completion of a mural on Columbus Ave, dedicated to the Westside Neighborhood and greater Pittsfield community. CBHFH will be joined by the artist, Hope Aguilera, team members, and community partners to celebrate the completion of the mural entitled "I wish...for a greener future."

A description of the mural from the artist:

When Habitat asked me to create a mural of a green community, I envisioned green energy, a thriving garden and landscape, and a diverse community coming together to make that happen. And I imagined a young child making a wish, using a dandelion which we are very familiar with in New England. Scientists have warned that we are running low on time to make a shift and avoid irreversible climate change consequences. Our children and the next generation are the ones that will have to grow up and protect their children from climate effects. Marginalized communities and the vulnerable will be the most affected. Environmental racism is a term that encompasses the intersections of race and environmental and climate justice. Green communities and access to nature are a privilege that poor and marginalized people have less of. As a brown-skinned person, and a daughter of an immigrant family, it was very important to me to have representation of brown skin people that live in the community. All the people in this mural are from the local community. The young boy goes to elementary school here and his mom is an administrator at the high school. In the garden, one harvester works at Panchos, the local Mexican restaurant, and is the owner's son. That

family is from Zacatecas, Mexico where my family also happens to be from. Another harvester lives across the street from the mural and has lived in Pittsfield since the 80s. Finally, the scooter-rider works at the barbershop down the road. This mural is both a wish and a prayer, and I hope it beckons viewers to think about our future and our children's future.

Thank you,

Hope

The Mural is made possible by financial support from Berkshire Bank as part of the larger Xtraordinary Day activities this summer, which focused resources and volunteers on revitalization projects in the WestSide Neighborhood. The wall on which the mural was painted was provided by B&P Auto Body Supply; we are grateful for their support and assistance. In addition to Hope Aguilera, painting services were provided by Richard Silvano Painting, Inc. Additional funds and resources were provided by the General Motors Corp, H&R Block, and John's (Ace) Hardware and Building Supply.

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