

A single mom finds a place to call home

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Kelly Rountree had a lot to be thankful for last Thanksgiving. She fried a turkey for about 40 friends and relatives, and smiled with pride as she watched her two children, Latrell and Kayla, run in the backyard with the younger guests. It was Rountree's first holiday in her new house, where she paints the walls any color she likes and doesn't worry about noise levels and the other tenants.

Rountree, an administrative assistant for occupational health services at YNHH, was a single mother when she signed up for the H.O.M.E. (home ownership made easier) program, which helped 32 YNHH employees purchase 30 homes last year.

Working in partnership with NewAlliance Bank, YNHH launched the program to offer eligible employees up to \$10,000 toward the down payment and closing costs on their first home, as long as they purchase in New Haven, and stay in the house and remain an employee for five years. Those who buy in one of the four neighborhoods adjacent to the hospital – the Hill, Dwight, West River and City Point – are eligible for an additional monthly mortgage subsidy for the first two years of their ownership. Hill Development Corporation and Neighborhood Housing Services help employees navigate their way through the buying process.

Rountree has been in her new home just a year, and has been delighted with her son's experience at Wexler Grant Elementary School, where her daughter is also starting kindergarten.

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After years of renting, Rountree purchased her first home last year, with assistance from Yale-New Haven Hospital.