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Green Leaf Construction begins work for marathon survivors

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A groundbreaking ceremony was held on September 12, to commemorate the start of construction for a new, fully accessible residence for the Corcoran family. Celeste and her daughter, Sydney Corcoran, were both severely injured in the Boston Marathon bombings on April 15, 2013. Sydney suffered leg injuries as a result of being hit with shrapnel and Celeste has lost both her legs; one above and one below the knee.

Supporters of the family and the project gathered to recognize the many who have contributed to the project.

The new home will include entries at grade, an accessible layout with wider doors and hallways, and an elevator to allow wheelchair access throughout. Tom Dube, COO of Green Leaf Construction (GLC), opened the ceremony by reviewing the significant accessibility limitations within the Corcoran's existing residence. "We have been programming, designing, and reviewing the project in painstaking detail to make sure that this new house will work for them for the rest of their lives." GLC is donating construction management fees for the project.

Many firms have come together to assist the family including Kevin Corcoran's employer, F.W. Webb Company, who worked with the family to connect them with partners including GLC. F.W. Webb also assisted in the process associated with the purchase of the land for the new home, and will be donating plumbing and heating materials to the project. Additional project partners include Allain Sitework, Concord & Littleton Lumber, DSF Construction, Interstate Electrical, Summit Engineering, Superior Mechanical and Wolfers Lighting.

Working in partnership with the BSAA, is Renovate for Recovery, a committee formed by members of the Boston Society of Architects (BSA) immediately after the bombings.

Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety, Thomas Gatzunis, spoke of teamwork and the creation of the Boston Survivor's Accessibility Alliance (BSAA): "The people of Mass. have come together to be Mass. Strong, Corcoran Strong, Family Strong, and Survivor Strong. This is a shining example of community coming together."

Gretchen Schneider Rabinkin AIA, executive director of the Community Design Resource Center and Civic Design Director at the BSA, another allied organization, says "For survivors still out there who are settling into recovery and now have a clearer picture of how their buildings get in the way, please give the Commissioner's office a call. We are still here to help."

Before breaking ground, Celeste Corcoran noted that "it would not have been possible to build our new, accessible home without the help of all the public agencies and diverse groups of professionals who have donated their time and skills to these agencies to help the survivors that were injured on April 15, 2013. Our hope is to let anyone hurt by the bombings know that these agencies are still there for you; you just need to contact them."

"The Corcorans have done more physical and emotional healing in the past 17 months than most of us will have done in a lifetime," Said Tom Dube. "While we recognize that it is concrete and lumber, bricks and mortar that make a house, it will be the living, the healing, and the surviving that the Corcorans do and will continue to do every day for the rest of their lives that will make this house a home."

If you or your firm is interested in donating building materials and/or services, please contact construction manager Green Leaf Construction at info@greenleafcm.com .

The ceremony itself was generously sponsored by New Balance with donations from Owen and Ollie's, Lenzi Catering, Add-A-Sign, Jennifer Hammond Photography and Perfecto's Caffe.

Survivors interested in learning more about the assistance available to them should contact the Boston Survivors Accessibility Alliance at <http://www.mass.gov/eopss/agencies/dps/the-boston-survivors-accessibility-alliance-bsaa.html> or by calling the Massachusetts Department of Public Safety at (617) 727-3200.

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