

Our families

MEET THE MATSICKS AND OUR YOUNGEST SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEE TO DATE

Our youngest Promise scholarship candidate just turned one year old in May. It's hard to believe that the beautiful room where he sleeps now was a junky pile of decaying wood, charred debris, and trash just one year ago. The property was condemned and build-dozed in June 2017. People were wondering about the lot size. Can a house valued at \$150,000 be built here? Six months later, little Leo and his parents, Justin and Bethany, moved into a stunning new ranch home with 3 bedrooms and 2 baths. They even have a nice-size yard for their two dogs and, unheard of in Powell-Poage-Hamilton Neighborhood, an attached garage.

Bethany Matsick heard about the Promise program when she visited an open house in another part of the city, hosted by Spies Construction. "The home I was looking at didn't qualify but Delores Spies told me about the Promise program and she let me know when another Promise lot would be available that she could build on."

A La Crosse native, Bethany graduated from Central High School and attended Viterbo University. She currently works for the county. Her husband Justin is from Phillips, Wi. He attended Lakeland University and now works for Eastbay and also coaches basketball in the summer at Central. After college, Bethany moved away for a bit but then moved back to La Crosse. "I am so excited to be back here and to see this neighborhood change this year and watch the great changes for years to come!"



Once they were approved for Leo's scholarship, the process went quickly. "It was really easier than we thought," Bethany said. "The actual process with La Crosse Promise was so simple and they were extremely helpful. Spies Construction was great to work with, and they made sure we were happy throughout the entire process. We could not be more excited about our new home. La Crosse Promise is amazing and this has allowed us to set up an awesome foundation for our son's college fund. To us, it was a no-brainer to get involved with the program. We are so grateful to not only live in La Crosse but to be a part of this groundbreaking program."



The Matsicks were pleased that they could design a home that met all of their needs and also save for Leo's education, which means a lot to them. "Education is a priority and this helps," said Bethany. "We wanted to establish a fund for Leo so we can put aside for our own retirement, and for other things we need to support our family

Justin and Bethany said they weren't sure if they would have looked at a property in this neighborhood when they were shopping for their second home. "It's because of the Promise program we got to know how the revitalization

program is working collaboratively in the city in these particular neighborhoods," said Justin. "We're both happy and proud to be part of the new beginning for this neighborhood. And I love the people who have been here for a long time. They have great stories to tell us – like our neighbor across the street. He's a great guy."



Bethany loves the kids on her block, to hear them laughing and talking. "We really didn't have that in our previous neighborhood. The kids are very respectful." She also said it's nice to be able to walk to their church and to downtown. "We love shopping at the People's Food Coop – it's really a lot closer than I thought."

Both Justin and Bethany feel personal pride when they talk about the neighborhood where their son will grow up and also about being part of movement for community betterment. "For me it's personal because this is where I grew up and it's where I serve the citizens here through my work at the county," Bethany said.

Justin said it's their mutual quest to contribute that makes this so special for them as a couple and a family. "One thing that attracted me to my wife is that we both want to help make this world a better place," he said. "By building a Promise home and being a strong part of the neighborhood, this will make our little part of the world look good. One day I may just be that old neighbor across the street welcoming the new friends to this great place."

