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Welcome home, Marrero family.

Victor Marrero and his five sons moved into a brand new home in Pennsauken last week, courtesy of the popular ABC-TV show *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*. This gift of a new life for the family could not have been accomplished without an outpouring of generosity from local residents and businesses.

The Marreros formerly lived in a decrepit house in Camden, the city that has been slapped with the unhappy distinction of "most dangerous" in America. Journalist Diane Sawyer profiled Billy Joe Marrero, then 17, for a show depicting the effects of poverty on children in Camden. The Marreros often couldn't afford to heat or light their home. Billy Joe rode a bus to a fast-food job, returning late at night to finish his homework so he could graduate from high school.

That *20/20* program was broadcast in January. The story prompted donations from all over the country. And it resulted in the *Makeover* team coming to Camden County to build a new home for the Marreros in neighboring Pennsauken.

The list of local companies that pitched in is long. Hovnanian & Sons, the principal builder, completed the home in six days. Rutgers University agreed to free tuition for all five Marrero boys, if they can earn acceptance to the school. Acme Markets filled the family's new pantry. Commerce Bank provided hundreds of volunteers for the project and set up a fund for the family, which stands at more than \$60,000. Burlington Coat Factory donated hundreds of items of clothing. Comcast, Saladworks and other companies donated free services.

It's heartwarming to see such an effort to turn life around for a deserving family. Problem is, the region has not just hundreds, but thousands of families as strapped and as deserving as the Marreros. ABC could never possibly do enough *Makeover* episodes to reach them all. So the obligation to help them is up to the rest of us, through charitable efforts and support for well-conceived government programs.

The TV show about the Marreros will air on ABC on Nov. 4. We wish them continued good fortune.