



Name: Ben

Services Received: State College Land Trust Home

In the summer of 2014, as our family was planning our move to State College, we discovered how expensive it was going to be for us to live in State College. We knew that rentals were expensive because of the growing student population, and that many smaller family homes were out of our price range. Our initial impression was that we would have to settle for a small and overpriced rental unit, or perhaps a more affordable home some distance away from town. Fortunately a friend pointed us toward the State College Land Trust, a

program designed to offer potential first-time home buyers an opportunity to enter the housing market with assistance.

We found the perfect home for our transition - one that gave us just enough room for our growing family, as well as a yard and neighborhood that suited our lifestyle. Our home is located just a mile away from campus and my job, meaning that we were also able to downsize to just one car as walking or cycling would now be my primary way to commute to work. We've also been able to maintain a small garden, put in some fruit vines and trees, and add a "Little Free Library" to our corner of State College.

The staff of the Land Trust were helpful and responsive every step of the way, and we've benefited from the educational initiatives they have put in place to help us navigate the challenges of home ownership. We are also grateful for the previous owner, who understood the challenges of moving to State College and allowed us to move into the home before our process was finalized so that we didn't have to move twice in our first few months. We don't know where we would be if not for the Land Trust, but we are certain we wouldn't feel as strongly about making State College our long-term home moving forward. Our only lament is that this program is not available to more people who would also benefit from affordable home ownership.