



## Upahar: The Gift of a New Faith-Based Build

Atlanta Habitat, an organization with Christian roots, has a long history of working with other religious groups on Interfaith home builds. For the first time in the organization's history, Atlanta Habitat partnered with six Hindu groups for a home build called "Upahar," a Hindi word meaning "the gift." Orchestrated by Seshu Sarma, MD, the Upahar home build in southwest Atlanta is believed to be the first all-Hindu faith build for any Habitat for Humanity affiliate.

"I felt that our community of Indian individuals and organizations, both faith-based and cultural, could do something substantial in our neighborhoods to make a difference," says Sarma, who leads the community services committee at Hindu Temple of Atlanta. "We wanted to more actively participate in philanthropic projects, that is the purpose of Upahar." Upahar united several members of Atlanta's Indian community in a common cause, to bring the gift of homeownership to a qualified, first-time homebuyer.

That homebuyer, Shay M., says the Upahar truly was a gift. "When I was younger, my family and I moved from apartment to apartment. Now that I will have my own home, I can provide stability for my child," she says. "Atlanta Habitat reminded me of how important it is to work hard and chase my dreams." While participating in the build of her new home, Shay was eager to experience a taste of Indian culture by trying unfamiliar foods and making new friends.

Atlanta Habitat is honored to work along with the volunteers from Hanuman Mandir of Atlanta, Hindu Temple of Atlanta, North American Shirdi Sai Temple of Atlanta, Sanatan Mandir, Shree Shakti Mandir of Atlanta and the Telugu Association of Metro Atlanta to bring the gift of a new home to Shay and her family. The Hindu community plans to come together again to build a new home next year. "This was a gift to us as well," says Sarma.

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## Letter From the President

This time of the year is special. We have the opportunity to look back on the successes of the past 12 months and experience true gratitude for the people who have empowered Atlanta Habitat families and Atlanta neighborhoods to build, thrive and grow. At the same time, we know that it is becoming more challenging to build affordable housing in Atlanta with rapidly rising land costs and the immense demand for safe, decent housing. We are committed to being a part of the solution and, thanks to you, we can continue this vital work.

In 2017, we made real strides in implementing key portions of our expanded mission to catalyze neighborhood revitalization. Our home renovation programs, Repair with Kindness and Brush with Kindness—as well as our ReHab and Hab II homes—are in high demand. These programs offer innovative ways to help longtime community residents, many of them veterans, age in place in homes that are safe, dry, accessible and attractive. ReHabs and Hab II homes allow us to offer homebuyers affordable, like-new homes that meet our rigorous quality standards and utilize the existing housing stock.

We were able to deepen our essential commitment to positively impacting homeowners' lives and livelihoods with our expanded educational programs. In the spirit of going “beyond the build,” our homeowner education classes encompass so much more than home maintenance. This is the second year of our Vision. Goals. Action! scholarship program. As part of this initiative, we created the Launch! Speaker Series and Business Competition. These programs provide valuable insights into successful entrepreneurship and empower homeowners to take the next step in achieving their personal goals.

Looking ahead, we plan to commemorate our milestone 35th anniversary in February, with the Welcome to Our Neighborhood gala. For the first time, Atlanta Habitat will celebrate with a night out on the town! In the spring, we're headed to the Dominican Republic on our second sponsored trip to help build and repair homes.

As we embark on exciting new initiatives for 2018, we look forward to celebrating our anniversary and many more successes with you!

For now, enjoy the special moments of the holiday season, and please know that our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Happy Holidays!

Lisa Y. Gordon, CPA  
President and CEO



*Build. Thrive. Grow.*

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**Homefront** is produced for donors, sponsors, volunteers, and friends of Atlanta Habitat for Humanity — one of the largest nonprofit builders of affordable single-family homes in Atlanta.

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### OUR MISSION

Atlanta Habitat for Humanity transforms communities by acting as a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization through education, innovative development, partnerships and long-term relationships with families.



# Vision. Goals. Action!

## Launch! Business Competition

*Imagine the VISION. Write down the GOAL. Add some ACTION! And make your dreams come true! Atlanta Habitat for Humanity first launched its Vision. Goals. Action! (VGA) initiative in 2016 with a scholarship that was awarded to two happy Atlanta Habitat homeowners to support their educational goals. The VGA programs are designed to help build a foundation of knowledge and provide encouragement for personal and professional growth and development.*

In Fall 2017, Atlanta Habitat began its Launch! Business Competition, as part of the VGA initiative. Five Atlanta Habitat homeowners pitched their business start-up ideas to a panel of judges who chose a first-place winner to receive \$2,500 along with other valuable prizes, and a second-place winner to receive \$1,500 and prizes towards their businesses. The event was sponsored by the Atlanta Women's Foundation.

Launch! began with a leadership and entrepreneurship speaker series featuring six accomplished business owners to give advice and guidance to the competitors and other budding entrepreneurs.

"The things we know, have experienced and learned need to be passed on," says Charlotte King, president and creative director at Snowden and King Marketing Communications. She joined other speakers, sharing their experiences and encouraging entrepreneurs. "Make a contract with yourself

to do your best even when no one is looking!" Gail Evans, bestselling author of "Play Like a Man, Win Like a Woman," agrees wholeheartedly and adds, "Women and people of color in the workplace need to work together and we need to be there to support each other to ensure that all of us get ahead."

Antoinetta McKay, Atlanta Habitat's education manager explained that the VGA program will continue to expand. "Our education program helps build competence, self-confidence, independence, and community in our homeowners."

Classes like Resume Writing, Personal Finance, Leadership, and the Entrepreneurship Speaker Series prepare Atlanta Habitat homeowners to maximize their earning potential. Congratulations to 1st Place winner Jameka Holmes for NailCloud, a mobile nail service, and to Dollethea Chandler, who won second place in the hotly contested competition for her business idea, Humble Beginnings, a home-based childcare and learning center.

*"We are helping families grow beyond the build," says Lisa Gordon, Atlanta Habitat president and CEO. "Once you've gained the stability of living in a safe home in a thriving neighborhood, the next step is to dream big. Atlanta Habitat is here to help those dreams come true!"*



# All Ways Giving



This is the time of year to look back and see how we've made the world a better place, how we've been a part of the solution. If you're looking to make a positive, lasting difference in the world, Atlanta Habitat affords you the opportunity to give in ways that change lives, as well as the look and feel of our city. From sponsoring a new home or rehab, to helping longtime residents repair their homes to make them safe, dry and accessible, your giving makes a direct and life enhancing impact on Atlanta families and neighborhoods.

This is the giving season, but how many of your gifts will last a lifetime and provide a strong foundation for generations? If you have the slightest doubt, consider that any amount you give to Atlanta Habitat goes to support working families who might not otherwise have the opportunity to buy a home. Our homeowners are teachers, police officers,

medical assistants and government, nonprofit, service and social workers. They come from a range of backgrounds but they have one thing in common: They are determined to work hard and make a better life for themselves and their families, and they know homeownership is the first step on the journey.

Your generosity doesn't just build houses, it builds communities and revitalizes neighborhoods. It funds vital family education services that help our homeowners take the next steps to achieve their well-planned goals. It supports teamwork and helps volunteers of all ages learn new skills and experience the lasting and profound joy of giving back. Your giving supports the future, now.

Atlanta Habitat is a highly rated investment. We've earned the highest ratings on Charity Navigator and Guidestar for several consecutive years, demonstrating our deep commitment to transparency and accountability. In fact, Atlanta Habitat outperforms 98 percent of charities in America! For 34 years, we've helped our city grow, currently contributing more than \$6 million annually to the local economy. All these are great reasons to give, but the best reason is because it is deeply satisfying to know that your dollars are making a family's life better...for years to come.

There are many ways to give. During this holiday season, consider supporting Atlanta Habitat by giving in honor of your friends and relatives. Acknowledge someone's memory with a gift or include the organization in your planned giving portfolio. It's easy. Visit [atlantahabitat.org](http://atlantahabitat.org) and donate now.

## Atlanta Habitat ReStore: Shopping Destination and More

Atlanta Habitat's ReStore is more than a destination spot for design and DIY mavens. Through the unique and everyday items that donors generously gift to the ReStore, our volunteers and our shoppers have generated enough funds to build 25 homes since 2014. Sales of distinctive items this year—including hand-knotted Moroccan rugs, Sub Zero refrigerators, Viking appliances and Pottery Barn furniture—helped to push us beyond our goals as of October; and in 2017, we are projected to earn enough revenue to fund 10 new homes!

This holiday season, consider the ReStore as your source for great gifts. We've got you covered, from the White Elephant office party to an elegant gift for a loved one!



# Building the Block, Catalyzing Communities

It's a perfect confluence of innovation, circumstance and common sense. Atlanta Habitat's Five-Year Strategic Plan calls for robust initiatives that will help us serve more families. With land prices rising and the demand for affordable housing in Atlanta growing, the organization's leaders are inspired by out-of-the-box ideas to address a complex situation with new approaches.

"We'd be out on a build and neighbors would come by and ask if we could help them fix up their homes," says Dan Maddox, Atlanta Habitat's chief operating officer. "Our old model called for us to only build new homes and paint exteriors for longtime Atlanta Habitat homeowners." The new strategic plan—driven by the mission to focus on innovative development, partnerships, expanded education and long-term relationships with families—opened new avenues of addressing the challenge. Atlanta Habitat, the largest nonprofit builder of affordable housing in the city, now has new tools to help build long-term, sustainable neighborhood vitality.

Repair with Kindness, now in its second program year, works with established homeowners to help make their homes safe, dry, accessible and more attractive. Brush with Kindness, a program once reserved for Atlanta Habitat homeowners, is being expanded to include painting the exteriors of other homes in neighborhoods where we build. The new ReHab program renovates abandoned homes to like-new condition and offers them as an attractive option for first-time homebuyers. "Now we are able to keep housing assets in the neighborhood instead of tearing them down and starting from scratch," Maddox says. "We're able to reduce blight and get more families into homes."

Atlanta Habitat's expanded education programs teach families more than home maintenance. They now have access to more than 100 classes and workshops on everything—from health and fitness, financial planning and starting a business—to personal leadership and chess, a game that teaches responsible decision-making to children. "Add to that our robust neighborhood cleanup projects, and it's easy to see the big picture of how Atlanta Habitat acts as a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization," Maddox adds.



Atlanta Habitat leaders are at the forefront in local and national conversations about affordability, which has emerged as one of the defining challenges for the Atlanta region. As property taxes, home values and housing prices around the city rapidly rise, there is a very real danger that the homebuyers that Atlanta Habitat serves—school teachers, maintenance and service workers, police, firefighters and veterans—may be priced out of the home buying market. But the organization is committed to innovative development. And that now includes a planned community of 175 affordable housing units representing a mix of one-story and two-story single-family homes and townhouses with quality of life amenities located in Brown's Mill, just south of downtown.

"We have every expectation that Lisa Gordon and the leadership team, along with our involved and active board of directors, will stay one step ahead of a rapidly evolving situation and continue to serve more families and have more of an impact," Maddox says. "That's our commitment."

## Neighborhood Revitalization by the Numbers

	2015	2016	2017	2018 (projected)
<b>New Builds</b>	46	50	44	45
<b>ReHabs</b>	2	2	10	8
<b>RWK</b>	1	13	36	50
<b>BWK</b>	14	16	33	75
<b>Cleanups</b>	0	3	3	2
<b>Total</b>	63	84	126	180



# Build with Us!



## Join Atlanta Habitat on our 2nd Global Village build trip to the Dominican Republic!

Atlanta Habitat President and CEO Lisa Y. Gordon, along with fellow Habitat for Humanity leaders, took a trip to the Dominican Republic in 2015 that helped expand her view of the impact Atlanta Habitat could make on families and neighborhoods in that country. Along with the Atlanta Habitat board of directors, Gordon made the momentous decision to sponsor the affiliate's first Global Village build trip in April 2017. By all accounts, that trip was life changing for all who participated.

Once again, Atlanta Habitat is asking volunteers and supporters to help Habitat Dominican Republic as part of our international stewardship.

This is an exciting opportunity for our donors, volunteers and supporters – perhaps with family, friends or colleagues – to create immediate change while experiencing a unique culture. Everyone is invited to volunteer, but hurry, the number of volunteer slots is limited and the deadline to register and pay a deposit is rapidly approaching!



## Global Village 2018 Quick Facts:

**When:**  
**March 10 - 17, 2018**

**Program Cost:**  
**\$1,700**

Every Global Village build trip is a profoundly moving and life changing experience that you will never forget. Here's what some participants from the 2017 build had to say...

*"I would recommend this trip to everyone, especially young adults. I believe it could potentially change the trajectory of their lives in terms of how they spend their time, what career they choose, and how they might spend their money for the betterment of others." - Andrew McConaghie*

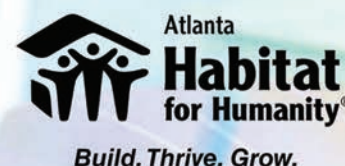
*"Never in my wildest dreams did I think it would have impacted me in the way that it has. I hope that what I gained during the trip will continue with me as part of my everyday life." - Sarah Richardson*

Join Atlanta Habitat on our second Global Village build trip to the Dominican Republic and see for yourself how a few days of hard work and meaningful interaction can change lives for generations!

**For more information and to register,**  
visit [atlantahabitat.org/gvdr2018/](http://atlantahabitat.org/gvdr2018/).







**Welcome to Our Neighborhood**

**Signature Gala**

**02•24•2018 | 6:00pm-10:00pm**

To find out more about Sponsorship and Table sales,  
please contact Melinda Kelleher, Chief Development Officer, at 404.223.5180 ext. 115

## How Much Would You Like to Donate Today?

In 2018, Atlanta Habitat will build, thrive and grow by increasing our building, renovating, critical repair and neighborhood cleanups projects by more than 42%! With your end of the year, tax deductible donation, we will make a more than \$6 million investment in transforming communities and empowering families in Atlanta. Please continue to support our mission.

<b>\$25</b>	<b>=</b>	Light Fixture
<b>\$75</b>	<b>=</b>	Hammer & Large Box of Nails
<b>\$100</b>	<b>=</b>	Attic Stairs
<b>\$250</b>	<b>=</b>	Alarm System
<b>\$500</b>	<b>=</b>	Paint for an Entire Home

For more information on Atlanta Habitat, visit [atlantahabitat.org](http://atlantahabitat.org) or follow us on

