



Beyond Our Borders

Atlanta Habitat's first sponsored international build "transformative!"

Atlanta Habitat has a long history of partnering with Habitat International affiliates in 10 different countries to build homes for families living in substandard housing. This trip was different. For the first time, Atlanta Habitat—wholeheartedly supported by our board of directors—launched a program to build in the Dominican Republic. By all accounts, the experience was deeply meaningful.

"I have never been so close to this level of poverty and I will never forget it," said Atlanta Habitat donor and skilled supervisor, Andrew McConaghie. "This trip has inspired me to give more and appreciate my life more." Atlanta Habitat's first Global Village build was directly funded by the volunteer participants and is designed to be a self-sustaining program. Everyone who went on the trip—including five Atlanta Habitat employees and eight community volunteers—says they were moved beyond words to have had the opportunity to make such a profound difference. But it was hard work.

"For five days, we worked in partnership with Habitat Dominican Republic to build and repair homes with four families in San Juan de la Maguana, which is about three hours northwest of Santo Domingo," recalls Sarah Richardson, Atlanta Habitat sponsorship manager and one of the trip coordinators.

"Seeing the transformation of these families' livelihood opened my eyes to the impact that our partner affiliates are making. Never in my wildest dreams did I think it would have impacted me in the way that it has. I hope what I gained during the trip will continue with me as part of my everyday life." — Sarah Richardson

Susan McDonald, Atlanta Habitat's in-kind donations consultant, volunteered on the trip as a bonding experience along with her 22-year-old daughter, Jessica. She says the experience brought them much closer. "This was a life-changing, deeply touching experience for both of us," she says.

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Letter From the President

As I look back at how quickly the first quarter of the year has passed, I can't help but be amazed and thankful. Atlanta Habitat's first self-sponsored Global Village Trip to the Dominican Republic was a resounding success, and I'm so happy to be able to share some of the highlights here. We've also captured some of our memorable moments for you to enjoy on our website.

A total of 13 of us, including five staff members and eight community volunteers, worked so hard—leveling the site, mixing cement, laying foundation, installing doors and windows and painting—all with the well-used tools that were available on-site. And yet, we all had so much fun. It was hot and grueling, sweaty and exhausting and yet very fulfilling. It made us all realize what a difference a safe and decent home can make. The experience touched me deeply and strengthened my resolve to continue to push the boundaries of our expectations of what we can do at Atlanta Habitat by partnering with our International Habitat family.

We were more than pleased when we received notice that Atlanta Habitat had earned the coveted Affiliate of Distinction award from Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) for our work in empowering families, transforming neighborhoods, and for the more than \$6 million economic impact we make in Atlanta each year. Atlanta Habitat was one of 23 (out of a total of 1,360) HFHI affiliates to be selected for the recognition, which honors local Habitat organizations that meet or exceed best-practice standards across the entire operation. This award really belongs to our great staff, whose dedication and commitment to excellence shines, every day of the year!

As always, we could not do any of this work without you, our committed donors, sponsors, community partners and volunteers. Thank you for helping us to...

Build. Thrive. Grow.

Lisa Y. Gordon, CPA
President and CEO



Build. Thrive. Grow.

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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.

Georgia Tech Students Listen and Learn with Atlanta Habitat

Nearly 45 freshman students from a Georgia Tech English class worked with Atlanta Habitat as part of an end of semester community listening assignment. Divided into seven project groups, the students heard from staff, donors, sponsors, homebuyers, volunteers and many others who contribute to the Atlanta Habitat mission. This issue of Homefront was largely written by them. We are grateful to the students of Owen Cantrell's English 1102 Community Listening class for their work on behalf of Atlanta Habitat.

Regardless of the goals of our various projects, all of us returned from our assignments with a great deal of appreciation for what it takes to build a house, run a store, own a home and support an organization. We were so impressed by the sponsors, staff, donors and volunteers who make it possible for Atlanta Habitat to make such a significant impact in Atlanta. Unlike our other courses where we are taught to solve complex engineering and business problems, in this class we learned equally complex skills: how to listen, make connections and share stories.



"It's really about learning to empathize," said Hannah Pettit, whose group worked with the ReStore. "Talking with ReStore customers and volunteers allowed us to understand how they feel and how they each fit into the Atlanta Habitat mission. We came away with the understanding that it is very rewarding to be able to donate to, work and shop at a store whose mission is to help improve the community."

Mary Stephens summed up the core intention of the project, "We all learned that it's hard to make a connection with people if you don't really listen," she says. "What was special about this project was just hearing, and then sharing people's stories. I wouldn't be surprised if several of us came back to volunteer with Atlanta Habitat."

Beyond Our Borders *cont.*

"Our time in the Dominican Republic will forever be etched into our hearts ... from the hard work and compassion of our team to the humble, gentle appreciative families we met."

While Atlanta Habitat plans to continue supporting our long term international work in El Salvador, staff are already looking forward to next year's Dominican Republic Global Village build. Volunteer spots are expected to fill quickly and young people are



especially encouraged to apply. "I would recommend this trip to everyone, especially young adults," McConaghie says. "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."

Special Thanks to Douglass Irvine for documenting the build with more than four thousand images. To learn more about volunteering for our 2018 Dominican Republic Global Village build, email Haley Hart at haley.hart@atlantahabitat.org.



FEATURE

A Heisman Worthy Build



Atlanta Habitat homebuyer Ms. Shannon (with key) worked alongside Heisman Trophy winners George Rogers, Marcus Allen, Danny Wuerffel, Charlie Ward and Tony Dorsett, to kick off the construction of her new house in late April. The Heisman House build was part of Habitat for Humanity's first nationwide campaign, Home is the Key, which ran throughout April and included a football clinic for local youth. Volunteers from Nissan as well as the Heisman Trophy Trust also participated.

Neighborhood Cleanups Enhance Community Commitments

Several University of Rhode Island students decided to pack gloves instead of swimsuits and join Atlanta Habitat for Humanity and Atlanta Police Training Academy Recruits to clean up a northwest Atlanta neighborhood.

"We can go to the beach anytime," said URI student leader Madison Polecki. "Alternative Spring Break gives us a chance to have service experiences that make a difference." The student volunteers walked the English Avenue neighborhood collecting and hauling debris, filling a 30-cubic meter dumpster during the half-day cleanup.



Two weeks later, volunteers from North Point Ministries joined Habitat staffers to clean up around Verbena Place in the Dixie Hills neighborhood.

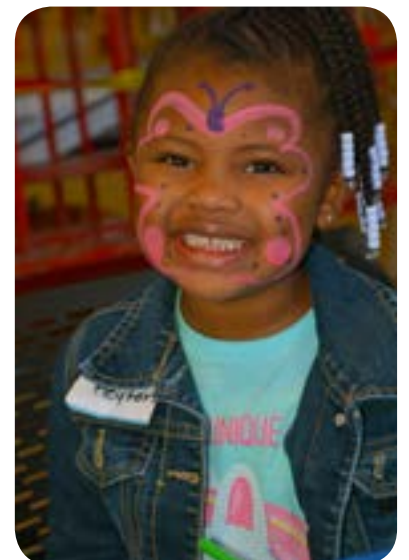


As a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization, Atlanta Habitat neighborhood cleanups are part of our larger commitment to ensuring that entire neighborhoods benefit as we build new—and repair existing—homes.

Northside UMC will partner with Atlanta Habitat for a June 29 cleanup. To partner with us on future campaigns, email Sarah Richardson at sarah.richardson@atlantahabitat.org

Homeowner Appreciation Carnival, a Special Day for Our Families

Atlanta Habitat's Homeowner Appreciation Carnival—like the blue moon—only happens every few years and is a treasured experience. This year's event featured carnival games, face painting, chess tournament and lessons, a food truck, a raffle of gifts donated by our sponsors, and music by Atlanta Habitat's own DJ Antonio Russell. The weather was perfectly sunny and warm and by the end of the day, everyone from board members to staff to homeowner parents were exhausted and elated (the kids were just elated). Atlanta Habitat truly appreciates our homeowners. As Atlanta Habitat Board Chair, Darryl A. Hicks said during the event, "You are an important part of the Atlanta Habitat family and our success." Heartfelt thanks to our homeowners!



Atlanta Habitat's Women in Construction: Unparalleled Passion and Purpose

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, women make up less than 10 percent of people who work in the construction industry. The women who do work in construction represent less than two percent of the entire U.S. workforce. But at Atlanta Habitat, women make up almost half of the construction staff. Many of them are house leaders, responsible for every aspect of the house build.

Volunteers and homebuyers rely on the direction and leadership of Atlanta Habitat house leaders to make the build safe, efficient and fun. Two house leaders, Denise Childs and Charlotte Cloyd, talked with Georgia Tech students about the responsibilities of being a house leader for Atlanta Habitat, as well as the challenges associated with the role.

Denise began her construction career as a volunteer for Atlanta Habitat almost 20 years ago, and she has been a house leader for 15 years. Charlotte also began as a volunteer. These women—as do all Atlanta Habitat construction staff—bring exemplary skill and knowledge to every build. Denise has built more than 75 homes during her tenure at Atlanta Habitat. Although Charlotte started leading house builds just last year, she too is proficient in all aspects of a house build.

Because construction is an industry where there are so few women, especially in leadership roles, there are bound to be a few misperceptions about their expertise. “We sometimes encounter



volunteers who might think we don't know what we're doing because we're women,” says Denise. Homes built under Denise's supervision are notable for the design details she incorporates. “Typically, they find out real soon that we do know what we are doing and that being a woman certainly is not an obstacle in building houses for families.”

Denise and Charlotte are just two of the many women who work on the construction side of Atlanta Habitat. “There's no other place where you can build homes alongside community volunteers and the homebuyers,” says Charlotte. “I wouldn't have it any other way!”

Lenten Build on time for Easter

Over eight weekends, volunteers from Cathedral of Christ the King, St. Benedict Catholic Church and The Sally and Peter Parsonson Foundation joined in Atlanta Habitat's annual Lenten Build. Days before Easter, homebuyers Sharonda Taylor and Ronnie Sullivan joined volunteers, house leaders and skilled supervisors to dedicate their new home in southeast Atlanta.

At the worksite, it was clear that the volunteers were enthusiastic about Atlanta Habitat and its mission. “It's really a great thing for people to come together and give back, really gratifying. No matter how low we think things are for us, helping someone else makes you feel good,” says Faith Wesdyke, a volunteer from St. Benedict Church.

It was not just volunteers who worked hard on this home. The homebuyers spent numerous hours attending classes, volunteering and working to qualify for their new home over the past several months. “Atlanta Habitat homebuyers work super hard. They

put in 250 hours of sweat equity and attend several homeowner education classes,” explained Alex Cook, Atlanta Habitat house leader for the build.

Despite the hard work, or maybe because of it, both Ronnie and Sharonda are very grateful for the opportunity to own a home. They say the highlight of the process is the people. “The volunteers are so great. We've never met people who are so nice as to take time out of their schedule to work so hard for someone they don't know.”





Peachtree Road United Methodist Church: 46 and Counting!

When a team builds a house together, it forges bonds that are never forgotten. That is the root of Atlanta Habitat's partnership with Peachtree Road United Methodist Church. The church has worked alongside Atlanta Habitat and homebuyers since 1989.

For eight weekends, starting in February, church volunteers built their 46th Atlanta Habitat house.

"I think Atlanta Habitat is amazing because of the way they get the homebuyers involved," says build volunteer Laura Davis. "They don't give away houses. The homebuyers put in a lot of time, energy and work to qualify to buy a house." As a sponsor, Peachtree Road UMC congregational donations fund the build and volunteers from the congregation construct the house alongside the homeowner.

"We very much believe in the Atlanta Habitat mission, which empowers families to achieve," says Beth Spencer, who directs the church's local outreach. "They are an absolute joy and it is our privilege to partner with them in this important work."

As for the new homeowner, Ms. Uriel Daniel, she is proud of her new home in historic Westside Atlanta and the volunteers who helped make it happen. "Peachtree Road UMC is great! Their volunteers worked so hard and did a really good job. I love my new house!"

Peachtree Road UMC is involved in the growing effort to revitalize Atlanta's Westside neighborhoods. In addition to building new homes with Atlanta Habitat—and sponsoring two Brush with Kindness projects this year—they are joining Atlanta Habitat and others to create safe and vibrant neighborhoods through their partnerships with Atlanta Public Schools and community groups.

The ReStore Life Cycle Fuels Revitalization

At the Atlanta Habitat for Humanity ReStore, furniture, appliances and other home goods find a new life while providing opportunities for everyone involved to create a fresh start of their own. From donors, volunteers and employees, to shoppers and homeowners, individuals and businesses make the ReStore possible.

"It is a unique business model," says Cathy Walls, Atlanta Habitat ReStore operations director. "We take items that someone else has outgrown, fix them up and sell them to people who really appreciate them. The money from the sale goes to building a new house for someone. Last year was our biggest sales year ever, but this March was the highest grossing month we've ever had!"



This productive life cycle of household items is fueled by individuals and companies who get involved with the ReStore. Volunteers are critical to everything the ReStore requires every day, from picking up donations to helping customers. Donations by members of the community and by in-kind corporate donors make possible the plentiful and ever changing stock.

"It is never the same place twice," says Tiffani Harris, who was recently in the store shopping for new rugs. "You can come in the morning, leave and come back that afternoon; and you will see completely different merchandise. I love that!"

Donations are key, says Julie Wells, Atlanta Habitat ReStore donations manager. "We have great relationships and partnerships with companies who support the ReStore as their number one donation destination." They provide a wide array of quality, affordable home goods for the store.

Through the collective efforts of the Atlanta Habitat ReStore team and volunteers, the store contributes enough to build about five to seven houses annually. In 2016, a record-breaking year, net proceeds from ReStore sales generated enough funds to fully sponsor nine Atlanta Habitat homes! The ReStore is proof that donating, shopping or volunteering make a huge difference in the community and in the environment.

Turf and Trees: Keys to a Cool, Green, Appealing Home

When it comes to curb appeal and home value, a healthy landscape of trees and turf makes a dramatic difference. Atlanta Habitat in-kind sponsors, Trees Atlanta and North Georgia Turf add to the beauty and value of homes and neighborhoods by donating trees, bushes and grass at no expense to Atlanta Habitat homeowners. The landscaping is designed and installed on the last day of the build with help from Atlanta Habitat's volunteer master gardeners.



Trees Atlanta is a nationally recognized nonprofit organization whose mission is to preserve Atlanta's urban forest by planting, conserving and educating the public about the importance of trees. Through its partnership, Trees Atlanta has planted hundreds of trees in Atlanta Habitat homeowners' front yards and surrounding areas.



"When people fly into the Atlanta airport, all they see is a forest with our city in the center, so we're trying to preserve that identity of Atlanta as a 'city in the forest,'" says Michael McCord from Trees Atlanta. The organization provides shade to Atlanta Habitat subdivisions, making "Hotlanta" a bit cooler and greener.

North Georgia Turf is a local company that provides services for sod installation and maintenance. NG Turf donates locally grown bermudagrass sod to Atlanta Habitat, which is used to create lush, green lawns for each home. "Since January 2014 until now, we have delivered sod to roughly 60 different sites for Atlanta Habitat," H.W. Keaton of NG Turf proudly claims. "That's more than 60,000 square feet of product! This is a very important partnership for us."

Atlanta Habitat homeowners take landscape maintenance classes to help sustain their lawns and beauty of their homes.

Cox and Clark Howard Keep on Building

Team Clark Howard, Cox Enterprises and close to 1,500 volunteers helped five new families achieve major milestones earlier this year. Clark Howard—who leads the Team Clark Howard build with major support from MailChimp, Coupon Mom, the Dan and Merrie Boone Foundation—and 1,059 volunteers, built the new homes in the Dixie Hills community in southwest Atlanta. Team Clark Howard has built a total to 61 houses with Atlanta Habitat since 1996.



Cox Enterprises and more than 400 volunteers helped two new homebuyers build and dedicate their homes just a few blocks from the Clark Howard houses in February. Cox has built 26 homes with Atlanta Habitat.



"We believe it is good business to be a good citizen of the communities where we live and work and that is why we support Atlanta Habitat and its wonderful mission," said Tyrene Hodge, corporate responsibility manager, Cox Enterprises, Inc.

18th Annual Volunteer Appreciation



Top Rated



For the ninth consecutive year, Atlanta Habitat has received the highest possible rating from Charity Navigator for our strong commitment to accountability and transparency. We are among only 1.53 percent of the rated organizations to receive nine or more consecutive 4-star ratings by Charity Navigator.



Atlanta Habitat President/CEO Lisa Gordon and Board member Bryson Koehler (center) congratulate Volunteers of the Year Will Klein – Warehouse and John Kranjc—ReStore & office.

2017 Volunteer of the Year Nominees:
Denise Bier, Jennifer Cooper, Amelia Godfrey, Will Klein, John Kranjc, Richard Marencin, Karen Shanahan and Rich Sussman

For more information on Atlanta Habitat, visit atlantahabitat.org or follow us on

