

# Habitat Day

APRIL 21, 2010  
in the Capital Region



## Builders bring it home

On April 21, 2010, leaders in the capital region set aside time to celebrate Habitat for Humanity Edmonton's success in bringing their home ownership program to many capital region communities. Premier Ed Stelmach, along with many capital region mayors, business leaders and special guests, gathered at the Shaw Conference Centre to celebrate what Habitat for Humanity calls "the spirit of neighbours helping neighbours."

Just before guests enjoyed their lunch, the three lead sponsors of Habitat Day in the Capital Region made an amazing announcement: they will each partner with Habitat to provide one home to a well deserving family. Rohit Gupta, Vice President of Rohit Group of Companies has given a condo in the Ambleside Community in West Edmonton. Greg Christenson, President of Christenson Developments and Reza Nasser, President of Landmark Group of Companies, each supported one home in the Emerald Gardens development in Sherwood Park.

These homes will help three families escape the cycle of living from paycheck to paycheck by giving them a hand up into home ownership. The hard-working families who will receive a home will gain equity with every mortgage payment they make, and the homes will remain in the affordable housing market in perpetuity, serving more families for years to come.



Picture of three builders (Rohit, Greg and Reza) with Habitat Board Chair Susan Green.

## Newest Habitat Homeowner

Monique and her 10-year old son Noelan received the amazing news that they will be the proud new home owners of the condo unit donated by Rohit Group of Companies. New Habitat home owner Monique said,

*"Words can't describe how excited I am that my son and I will soon have a place to call home that is our home. I'm so thankful and grateful to everyone who has helped my dream of home ownership come true!"*

## What is Habitat Day?

In the spirit of celebration, Habitat for Humanity Edmonton held the first ever "Habitat Day in the Capital Region" to raise awareness of Habitat for Humanity's work in the capital region. Many people are aware of Habitat for Humanity's work across the world, but some are not aware that we have a strong affiliate in the capital region. Since HFHE's humble beginning in 1991, they have served 123 families in the capital region and have a goal to serve 100 families per year in the near future.

Over the years, Habitat for Humanity has built in Edmonton and beyond – helping families all over the capital region enjoy the benefits of home ownership. This past summer they finished duplexes in Sherwood Park and St. Albert, and they finished an 18 home build in Edmonton just in time for Christmas.

Since their inception, Habitat has also mobilized volunteers in Leduc, Stony Plain and Fort Saskatchewan to build homes in their community. Right now, they are putting the finishing touches on six homes in Spruce Grove and building two six-plexes in Stony Plain. Their sights are set on building more homes to address the affordable housing crisis in the capital region.

### Habitat for Humanity Edmonton

- Empowering families to break the cycle of poverty through affordable home ownership opportunities.
- Mobilizing volunteers and community partners to build vibrant neighbourhoods.
- Creating sustainable communities.

## Why Habitat for Humanity Edmonton Needs Partnerships

Now more than ever, charities have been tasked with making strategic partnerships to sustain their funding sources - Habitat for Humanity is no exception.

Forging partnerships is imperative to a successful program and Habitat for Humanity is excited to work closely with those who share their vision. They have partnered with provincial and municipal authorities, corporations and small businesses, services groups, churches and individuals. They are actively seeking innovative ways to raise funds, build homes and serve families; creative partnerships make their program possible.

For the first ever Habitat Day in the Capital Region celebration, Habitat partnered with all levels of media, a major bank and three major homebuilders to raise awareness for their cause. The day was met with tremendous enthusiasm! So much so that the three event day presenters, the Home Builders, stepped up and announced that they would each partner with Habitat for Humanity to provide a home to support Habitat's program in the capital region. It is this type of partnership that all charities rely on to be successful with fulfilling their mission.

Habitat for Humanity Edmonton will continually work within communities in the capital region to forge new partnerships. They are grateful for all the support they receive and they look forward to new strategic partnerships that will help give a hand up to more families in the capital region.

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## Rohit Communities...

Since 1991, Habitat for Humanity Edmonton has pulled together the four corners of the community at-large to build more than 120 houses to empower families to break the cycle of poverty through affordable home ownership.

Rohit Communities, Landmark Homes, and Christenson Developments have each donated a condominium unit from a project that is currently under construction.

Donating is nothing new for Rohit Communities. After working for years in support of the Stollery Children's Hospital, Rohit Gupta, vice president of Rohit Communities, says it was time to add a charitable venture that his company has expertise in.

*"We thought it was about time to get involved in something related to housing,"* said Gupta, who sits on Edmonton's Affordable Housing Committee. *"We thought this would be an appropriate way to assist different groups achieve home ownership."*



To help, Rohit donated one condo unit from its wildly popular Infusion development in the community of Ambleside in Windermere.

The 796 sq. ft. Tamarind features two bedrooms, two baths, a peninsula kitchen, and a lively

floorplan, all found in Edmonton's freshest new community.

*"Our family has been blessed and we've been treated well by the Edmonton community,"* said Gupta. *"We were fortunate to ride the wave of prosperity. What we want to do is give people the same opportunity so they too can ride that wave."*

A family owned and operated company, Rohit Communities has been a leading home builder in Capital Region since it was started in 1986. In March, Rohit Communities was awarded Edmonton's 2010 Home Builder of the Year Award. With that success has come a penchant for giving back.

Rohit Group of Companies has been a long time Sponsor of the Stollery Children's Hospital, Santa's Anonymous and the Christmas Bureau. Rohit Communities Callaghan Ravines was named after the Canadian inventor of the pacemaker and Rohit Communities often supports many heart/health organizations.

Involved in countless other charities at home and abroad, Gupta says their work in the community isn't about giving a handout but rather a hand up

*"We believe everyone should have an equal opportunity, and we feel fortunate that we can help the community that has been so good to us,"* he said. *"That equality starts with a place to live."*

## Habitat for Humanity: Building hope in the capital region

Habitat for Humanity's vision is to see a world where everyone has a safe and decent place to live. They accomplish this through a home ownership program that has proven successful year after year. Although Habitat for Humanity is world-renowned for their work overseas, many people do not realize that they build homes for families here in the capital region.

Habitat for Humanity gives families the opportunity to own their first home and build security for their future. Habitat does not give away homes. They provide affordable home ownership opportunities to families looking for a hand up, not a hand out. Eligible families must demonstrate their need, be willing to partner with Habitat by contributing 500 hours of sweat equity as their down payment, and be able to pay an interest-free mortgage that is never more than 25 per cent of their income.

The Habitat program is truly the opportunity of a lifetime for families who think home ownership is out of their reach. Habitat families are hard working families who need a helping hand in order to afford a home. Habitat families' sense of dignity and pride grow with home ownership. Their sense of safety and security improve and they see their children thrive in school.

Another unique feature of the Habitat program is that the families' mortgage payments are reinvested into

a revolving fund called The Fund for Humanity. As families pay their mortgage, the funds are reinvested into building more affordable homes in the capital region. This also means that as families pay their mortgages they are helping more families find affordable home ownership.

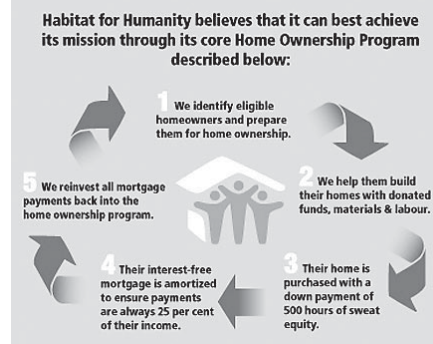
Since 1991, Habitat for Humanity has served 123 families in the capital region, but it would not have been possible without the support of community partners. It is through creative partnerships that Habitat brings families their own home. A home brings a family stability, and stability creates a greater potential to dream, plan, prosper and give back to the vitality of the community. With a home, families take root and hope grows. Habitat for Humanity is working hard to see a capital region where everyone has a safe and decent place to call home.

### Habitat for Humanity Volunteers

Habitat for Humanity Edmonton believes that one person can make a difference in the lives of many. It is this reason that volunteers are the heart of Habitat for Humanity. Habitat volunteers come from all walks of life. In 2009, over 3,000 volunteers contributed nearly 60,000 hours on build sites around the capital region. Some Habitat volunteers have never held a hammer prior to showing up on site, and yet others are professional trades-people. Skill level does not matter; volunteers are taught everything they need to know about the tasks they will perform. Here are some different volunteer opportunities at Habitat for Humanity Edmonton.

- Construction Volunteers
- Crew Leaders
- Build Site Hosts
- ReStore Volunteers

For more information about volunteering with Habitat for Humanity Edmonton, please visit [www.hfh.org](http://www.hfh.org)



everyone deserves to be happy at home.  
it's that simple.

[www.rohitcommunities.com](http://www.rohitcommunities.com)

