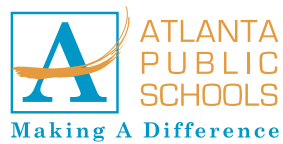


SCHOOL EMPLOYEES EXPLORE
HOMEOWNERSHIP IN SOUTH ATLANTA



On Oct. 29, Atlanta Habitat and several community partners hosted an *open house and property tour for teachers and staff of Atlanta Public Schools and Fulton County Schools*. Beginning at Community Grounds Café in historic South Atlanta, guests mingled with their local school board representatives and received information on the many new and exciting opportunities for homeownership on the Southside, specifically in the BeltLine neighborhoods of Pittsburgh and South Atlanta.

While several guests chose to go on self-guided tours with maps provided, the more popular choice that evening was to ride through these neighborhoods on APS school buses! In addition to touring the eight open houses available through our community partners, guests learned about the properties Atlanta Habitat owns in these neighborhoods as well as the process for qualifying for our program.

We are so grateful for the opportunity to work with The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Charis Community Housing, the Real Estate Alliance Partners Group, and the Pittsburgh Community Improvement Association and look forward to continued partnerships with these and other organizations throughout Atlanta.

DOWNLOAD THE NEW RESTORE APP

View the newest arrivals, receive app-only coupons and discounts, join the loyalty program, and be one of the first to know about our special sales! Would you like to donate items or volunteer at the ReStore? The app makes this process as simple as a few clicks. And yes, this app is free and available on all smartphones and tablets! Download the app and spread the word to your networks.



The ReStore is open Monday – Saturday, 10:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. 271 Chester Avenue SE, Atlanta 30316.

MAKE A GIFT—MAKE AN IMPACT

As the year draws to a close and you plan your charitable giving, we invite you to consider including Atlanta Habitat in your contributions. Your gift will help fulfill our mission of partnering with working families to help them achieve the dream of homeownership.

As well, your gifts will support our premier homeowner education program that empowers families by teaching them how to take care of their homes, manage finances, and be leaders in their neighborhoods and communities.

Our families work hard to qualify for our affordable home-buying program by showing steady employment and good credit as well as completing 250 hours of sweat equity helping to build their own homes and the homes of other

homebuyers, or by working in our offices, ReStore, or warehouse. Atlanta Habitat provides the mortgage – 30 years at 0 percent interest – and our homeowners have a 96 percent success rate in repaying these loans.

We are proud to have had a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator for sound fiscal management for seven consecutive years and to hold a Gold Level rating with Guidestar, the leading symbol of transparency and accountability. You can be assured your gift is being used wisely.

For ways to give, please visit our website at www.atlantahabitat.org. Thanks in advance for your generosity!



ANHEUSER-BUSCH AND ATLANTA BEVERAGE KICK
OFF MEETING BY BUILDING WITH ATLANTA HABITAT



It was an overcast but exciting morning on the first Monday in October when a group of nearly 100 volunteers from Anheuser-Busch and Atlanta Beverage Company gathered at the Georgia World Congress Center’s East Plaza to take part in a special wall-building event. The occasion commemorated two firsts – the beginning of an *Continued on page 5*

We were thrilled to have the Clydesdales join us at the World Congress Center. Teams of these “gentle giants” have been delighting fans since 1933.

CREATING A CITY THAT HONORS US ALL

Atlanta Habitat homeowners make good neighbors. They’ve started community gardens, worked for better schools, actively participated in neighborhood associations, and networked informally to bring about positive change in our city. They have made a difference – one family at a time – for 32 years. But how can we as an organization do more?

We’re broadening our vision for neighborhood transformation by connecting more closely with people, partnerships, and resources to build strong communities in metropolitan Atlanta.

PEOPLE. Our relationship with our homeowners is in-depth – often beginning with information from our receptionist and continuing through Family Services, Development, Construction, and every department in our building. We’ve extended these relationships over time with our *Brush With Kindness* program for our own homeowners, providing home updates when needed.

Now we’re reaching out to our homeowners’ neighbors with *Repair With Kindness*, a program we’re piloting this year in Dixie Hills near our Verbena community to assist other homeowners in communities in which we’ve built. If we accept a home for critical repair, we can help with needs such as paint, ramps, and roofs so participants will have safe, dry, accessible homes. We are helping community members invest in their own neighborhoods.

PARTNERSHIPS. We look forward to combining resources with organizations that are also investing in neighborhoods in which Atlanta Habitat homeowners live. Neighborhoods in our city that are most challenged lack safety, good schools, local jobs, and a sense of community. Other organizations, such as Atlanta BeltLine and the Atlanta Police Foundation, are also investing in neighborhoods, and Atlanta Habitat will be a true partner with organizations that provide a community approach to services.

RESOURCES. Many groups have great missions. Each, including Atlanta Habitat, is making incremental investments that bring about change. Collaboratively, all of us can bring resources to the table. Neighborhood revitalization means that our communities are safe; that you see people on the streets and feel a sense of community; that you can sense the history and character of the area; that people are actively involved in making the neighborhood thrive. Together, we’ll make a difference in the Vine City/English Avenue area – where Atlanta Habitat already has 52 homes – and in neighborhoods throughout our city.

Atlanta’s communities will honor all our citizens when all places are safe and secure, offer access to good education, and include green space. Partnering with organizations that share our values provides multiple returns for Atlanta Habitat homeowners and others. No one homeowner or organization can revitalize our city’s neighborhoods, but together we will create great communities.





It's amazing to know that we will build 46 homes this year with an estimated 13,000 volunteers who will impact our homeowners and invest in our communities. As we embrace ways to extend our reach to serve more families and join our partners to revitalize neighborhoods, I feel it is very important to understand the work we do today. As a result, I had my own "Undercover Boss" experience here at Atlanta Habitat, and it was very rewarding. I worked on the Atlanta Women's Build. Being a volunteer on Day 1 in 90+ degree weather was a labor of love. Learning that I did not know how to hammer properly was also a new concept. I observed, listened, took instruction, made mistakes, corrected my mistakes, and learned a host of new skills. I also felt a sense of camaraderie with my fellow volunteers and a tremendous amount of respect and admiration for my team. We had a master House Leader who made teaching safety, new skills, and using power tools something that could be learned and mastered each day of the build. It was a very humbling experience to work alongside the homeowner, volunteers, and our team to make the dream of homeownership a reality. Many of the lessons for me that I will take forward are to be engaged in the work, listen, learn, and be open to new experiences. As we move forward to develop our Strategic Plan, I look forward to sharing new insights with you.

Lisa Y. Gordon, CPA
President and CEO





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for Humanity®
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Atlanta Habitat for Humanity
Mission Statement
Atlanta Habitat for Humanity partners
with working families, sponsors, and
communities to build affordable,
green, quality homes and to provide
support services that promote successful
home purchase and ownership.

Photography this issue:
Jeani Elbaum; James Duckworth,
page 2, top. All photos property of
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THE HOME DEPOT BUILDS WITH FOUR FAMILIES

In September, The Home Depot kicked off its fifth annual Celebration of Service campaign, a nationwide effort led by company associates to volunteer in 30 cities across the country. Congratulations to the Favors, Baker, McDowell, and Wilson families, who were honored with Team Depot funding and volunteers for their new homes in our Verbena development in southwest Atlanta. Over the seven days of our build, Team Depot provided 900 volunteers.

This year's Celebration of Service aimed to complete projects for veterans in every community The Home Depot

serves, and Atlanta Habitat homebuyer Ms. Wilson is a U.S. Army veteran. She was stationed at Ft. Leonard Wood in Missouri, at Ft. Lee in Virginia, and in Korea.

Ms. Wilson is thrilled about the advantages her new home will bring to her family. Homeownership was one of her goals when she returned from service, and she's reaching that goal. "If you work hard and keep it up, it will all be worth it in the end," she said.

Our summer Communications intern, Natasha Serrano, contributed to this article. Natasha is a recent graduate of Georgia State University, with a B.A. in journalism.



Craig Menear, President and CEO of The Home Depot, greets Team Depot.



FRAMING THE FUTURE CELEBRATES OUR GENEROUS DONORS

Atlanta Habitat’s annual Framing the Future event brings together individual, corporate, and foundation donors, as well as house sponsors and in-kind donors, to celebrate their commitment to our work and to thank them for their continued gifts. We could not fulfill our mission without the generous support of our many donors. This year’s event was held on Oct. 1 at the Foundry at Puritan Mill.



Adrienne Findley, the 2015 Golden Hammer winner, is a longtime supporter of our organization who serves in many ways.

quiz at the end, and throwing out prizes to people who get the answers right!

Not only does Adrienne show her appreciation of our families, she also values and appreciates our staff. This is evident in her leading of our employee appreciation events and making them incredibly special. Her thoughtful and creative planning humbles the staff each year.

Highlights included a keynote address from our new President and CEO, Lisa Y. Gordon, who shared her vision for Atlanta Habitat’s future – building on the strong foundation that we have created over the past 32 years. She shared the story of one of our youngest donors ever – 6-year-old C.K., who recently donated the savings from his piggy bank to Atlanta Habitat. C.K.’s generosity will surely serve as an inspiration to others.

We also celebrated our 2015 Golden Hammer award winner, Adrienne Findley. This most prestigious Atlanta Habitat award honors outstanding dedication to affordable homeownership and enduring commitment to our organization’s mission. Adrienne has long been involved with Atlanta Habitat, serving on both the Board of Directors and the Advisory Council, and she played a significant role in the 100th home build in 1996, our 500th house, and other milestones. Adrienne has been a loyal donor, supporting annual and capital campaigns and providing special support to the Atlanta Women’s Build. She is one of our best house dedication leaders, delivering Atlanta Habitat facts, concluding with a



Adrienne’s infectious sense of humor, her enthusiasm for life and for the work of Atlanta Habitat, and her gift for making everyone feel special are just some of the traits that make the folks who know her and work with her feel very blessed. We honor her and thank her for almost 30 years of dedication to our mission.

Many thanks also to our event sponsors, without whom this event would not be possible: AGL Resources, Best Bank, The Home Depot, BNY Mellon, Oldcastle, and The Weather Company. Our in-kind donors included Zest Atlanta Catering, PPI, and Kroger.



ANHEUSER-BUSCH AND ATLANTA BEVERAGE KICK OFF MEETING BY BUILDING WITH ATLANTA HABITAT

Continued from page 1

Atlanta Habitat partnership with these organizations and the start of their Southeastern Region conference. And the event fell on the 30th anniversary of World Habitat Day!



Anheuser-Busch and Atlanta Beverage Company, both first-time house sponsors, are building for and with the White family. Ms. White (above) worked with her sponsors and was treated to a ride on the Clydesdales’ wagon alongside her new friend, Barley the Dalmatian.



GOOD WORK. GOOD FRIENDS.

It’s an honor to recognize ReStore Volunteers of the Month, Jesse Pettite (May 2015) and Mike Thomas (February 2015). Now they’ve discovered another connection.

Jesse began volunteering in 2014 and helped in the monumental move of the ReStore from 819 Memorial Drive to our current location. One day this year he finished his work in the ReStore’s storage area and asked a fellow volunteer if he needed help. The two men chatted about where they lived, and Mike asked Jesse where he’d grown up. That’s when the two volunteers realized they had attended school together for five years – grades 6-7 at Maple Street Elementary and grades 8-10 at North Clayton High. It had been 48 years since they had seen each other.



Jesse Pettite



Mike Thomas

We salute all our 2015 Restore Volunteers of the Month to date: Scott Miller, Mike Thomas, Jennifer Cooper, Denita Shaw, Jesse Pettite, Edith Waller, Chris Williams, Larry Little, John Kranjc.

“Mike and I think a lot alike and resolve things the same way,” said Jesse. And both love their work at the ReStore. “I always knew that when I retired I’d work with Atlanta Habitat,” Jesse continued. “I’ve volunteered on build sites and at the ReStore, and it’s a unique experience. I enjoy being there.” Mike enjoys meeting customers and letting them know how the proceeds from ReStore sales help pay for building Atlanta Habitat houses.

“Mike is a really nice person – outgoing,” said Jesse. “It was just luck that we found each other again, and I’m glad we did.” Said Mike, “It’s a small world, and being in the right place at the right time makes it smaller and closer.”

When you’re in the ReStore on Tuesdays and Thursdays, please say “hello” to Jesse and Mike. You’ll enjoy meeting them.

WOMEN EMPOWERING WOMEN

Oct. 3 was a special day for the 2015 Atlanta Women’s Build – dedication day for the Sistrunk family. More than 300 women participated in the construction of this 8th Atlanta Women’s Build home. Construction began in August, and the 2015 project, “Building A Legacy,” was dedicated to honorary chair and recently retired President and CEO of Atlanta Habitat, Larrie Del Martin.

Since its inception in 2003, the Atlanta Women’s Build has brought together women from all across the city to participate in one empowering and remarkable effort – building a home for a woman by women. Each year, the Steering Committee of 25 exceptional women come together and spend many months planning every facet of the build, from its fundraising activities to volunteer recruitment and all details in between.

This year’s build also featured the 4th Executive Women’s Build Day, a special event in which 28 women CEOs and top execs from Atlanta area businesses, nonprofits, and city government participated in a day of building and networking while making a hands-on, life-changing difference for the Sistrunk family.

Lisa Gordon, Atlanta Habitat President and CEO, joined the build and also participated on Executive Women’s Build Day. “It was an honor to build with so many top women executives in Atlanta, and it was wonderful to see how the team worked to build for a deserving homebuyer,” said Gordon.



From Ms. Sistrunk

My experience with Atlanta Habitat started when I spent weekends (fulfilling required sweat-equity hours) with dedicated volunteers who laughed, supported, and helped create a home from building materials. Fast forward a few months, and it was my turn! I was so excited to spend weekends with another group of very dedicated volunteers who helped build a home not just for me, but for my one-and-a-half-year-old daughter. I can’t begin to put into words how this entire experience has made me feel, but I will try. When I found out that I was having my daughter, I knew at that moment that I wanted to give her the luxuries others took for granted. I wanted to give her the ability to play in a back yard that was completely her own, without fear of violence or bullying. I wanted to give her the ability to decorate her own room based on her favorite Disney character. I wanted to give her the ability to come home to a safe, secure home – a home that belonged to both her and me.”

CLOSING DAY—THE CULMINATION OF A LONG JOURNEY

The typical “closing” is merely the final step in a real estate transaction where ownership of property is transferred. For Atlanta Habitat families, closing day is much more significant. It is the special day where each of our families becomes a first-time homebuyer, which is the accomplishment of what many of them believed was an unattainable goal.

The journey begins with an Information Session where our future families learn about our program, the qualifications, and the requirements. When we first meet them, we frequently encounter the hope that they will qualify but the expectation that they will never qualify for a home of their own. At that time, many of them are not ready to purchase a home. To have a successful application, our families are most commonly working to increase income or to decrease debt in order to meet our qualifications. We do not let them get discouraged; instead, we counsel them until they are ready. Depending on the situation, it can be months or years before a family is ready to complete



Ms. Billie Astin closed on Sept. 30. “It was a new experience for me and a good one,” Ms. Astin said. “My children and grandchildren can now look forward and say they have a home of their own.” Ms. Astin, who built at Howard Point, couldn’t say enough about the support she received from both Atlanta Habitat staff and Clark Howard. “It was wonderful to see all the faces at closing, and it was so exciting to see Clark working – even on the roof! Everyone supported us from day one to closing.”

an application, and up to one-third of our approved families applied more than once.

Atlanta Habitat has celebrated with 25 families who closed on their homes this year!

Having a successful application, however, is not the end of the journey. Once they get approved, they have to complete the following requirements: (i) help build their own home, (ii) complete 250 sweat-equity hours, (iii) complete 12 education classes that are focused on financial literacy and home maintenance, and (iv) practice successful homeownership for one year by living in the house, making timely payments, and

maintaining their home. After they satisfy these requirements, they earn the right to purchase their own home.

Simply stated, closing day is the culmination of a long journey and a celebration of our families’ accomplishment of homeownership or, as they frequently say, the American dream.

HOME BUILD HONORS POPE FRANCIS

Thanks to a generous supporter, Atlanta Habitat is building a home in honor of Pope Francis. This unique build began Saturday, Nov. 14, and will run through Jan. 30, 2016. The Pope’s commitment to social justice aligns with our mission to build for and with working families, and this build is a unifying and celebratory opportunity for both Catholic and non-Catholic volunteers to work toward a common goal. In Pope Francis’ words: “Work confers dignity.”

