



## Oh, What a Night! Block Party-themed Gala a Record-Breaking Success

On a balmy mid-April evening, hundreds of Atlanta Habitat's best-dressed supporters stepped out to join in the second "Welcome to Our Neighborhood" gala and were serenaded by a capella singers as they entered Flourish Atlanta. That was only the beginning.

The entire evening was an homage to the neighborhood block parties of the '60s and '70s, complete with Motown-inspired music, singing, old-school dancing and a drumline to lead attendees to dinner. The "Build-the-Block Party" vibe inspired guests to start the evening singing and end it dancing at the after-party. In between, they did some serious giving and, in the end, raised more than \$700,000 to accelerate Atlanta Habitat's mission.

Thanks to the generosity of nearly 500 guests, including honorary chairs Liz Blake and Dan T. Cathy, and presenting sponsors Chick-fil-A and The Home Depot Foundation, Atlanta Habitat will help more families to afford a decent, safe place to live in thriving Atlanta neighborhoods.

"Atlanta Habitat is doing fantastic work to support families in an empowering, sustainable way that will span generations," Blake told the audience. "The gala's success is a testament to their impact on families and Atlanta."

Joining Blake onstage, Cathy shared the duo's dedication to affordable housing and saluted Atlanta Habitat's work in Westside neighborhoods. "Atlanta Habitat gives hope, dignity and restored life to some wonderful people through homeownership."

Event hosts John Laughter, senior vice president at Delta Air Lines, and his wife, Angela, proudly welcomed Atlanta Mayor Keisha

*Continued on Page 3*

### IN THIS ISSUE

BLOCK-PARTY GALA | 2018 VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR  
MARIST SCHOOL WOMEN BUILD | RESTORE VOLUNTEER GIVES BACK



I am in awe. Just when I think we have stretched and gone the extra mile, Atlanta Habitat's team of donors, volunteers and staff always exceeds my expectations!

The team's excitement, excellence and generosity were on full display at our Welcome to Our Neighborhood/Build-the-Block party. Part gala, part street festival, with lots of fun mixed in, the event was phenomenal, and we set a new fundraising record! That support will accelerate Atlanta Habitat's mission for the rest of the year. We're deeply grateful and humbled by the amazing support of our honorary chairs, Liz Blake and Dan T. Cathy; presenting sponsors, Chick-fil-A and Home Depot; along with event hosts, sponsors and everyone who filled the ballroom on that magical evening. On behalf of our families, our gratitude runs deep, warm and wide. I can't thank you enough.

The excitement continued when, two weeks after the gala, we celebrated our volunteers. We are Atlanta's leading nonprofit affordable homebuilder, in large part because of the volunteers who come out week after week to build alongside Atlanta Habitat homebuyers. Each year, some 12,000 volunteers save our organization more than \$3 million in labor costs, allowing us to pass that savings to homeowners. More than that, Atlanta Habitat volunteers directly empower families by teaching critical skills that enhance their personal and professional lives. Their investment in helping us advance our mission is invaluable.

We also celebrate one of our most dedicated faith partners, Peachtree Presbyterian. More than 150 families are thriving because of their 33-year commitment. In addition to having built more houses than any other sponsor, the congregation makes a concerted effort to stay in touch with families with whom they've built.

Our work impacts not only families and houses, but generations and neighborhoods. It all begins with a comprehensive approach to the need for housing affordability as the foundation of the promise of homeownership, as highlighted by Habitat for Humanity International's "Home is the Key" campaign. As part of that campaign, we had the pleasure of building with the "Property Brothers"!

We hope you enjoy this issue of Homefront, as it is filled with great news on our programs and the impact of your support. It is with great joy and gratitude that we share the stories of families that you help to Build, Thrive and Grow.

Lisa Y. Gordon, CPA  
President and CEO



#### CONTACT INFORMATION

824 Memorial Drive SE  
Atlanta, Georgia 30316  
404.223.5180  
[www.atlantahabitat.org](http://www.atlantahabitat.org)

**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.

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cindy Ethridge, Chair  
Danielle Cheung, Vice Chair  
Gary Price, Treasurer  
Kristina Kopf Thomas, Secretary  
Phil Bradley, General Counsel  
Darryl A. Hicks, Chair Emeritus  
Susan Bixler, Susan Boyd, Sloane Evans,  
Brent Gilfedder, Wendy Henderson, Jerrold  
R. Hill, H. Eric Hilton, Andy Kantor, Bryson  
Koehler, John Laughter, Darryl E. Lesure,  
Racy Morgan, Jeff Pierce, Kevin Ruhl, Caitlin  
Shetter, Fredrick Stanfield, Karen A. Tracy,  
Judy Train, Chris Waits

#### ADVISORY COUNCIL

Andy Kantor, Chair  
Alan Arnold, Chair Emeritus  
Tami Maxwell Barron, Brantley Barrow,  
Mary Benton, Dan Boone III, Matt Cartin,  
Jenny Cross, William M. Earnest, Adrienne  
Findley, Bill Godwin, John Goff, Dana H.  
Halberg, Melissa Hall, Kathy Harber, Bill  
Lawrence, Charlie McDonald, Lynn Merrill,  
Kara Miller, Linda A. Parrish, Dan Pattillo Jr.,  
Mark Pighini, Melanie Platt, Barbara Reid,  
Sabrina Scheving, Jeremy Silverman, Polly  
Simpson, Ameet Shetty, Karen Stickney,  
Kenneth Thrasher, Alison Drane Waterson,  
Sue Wieland

#### EDITORIAL TEAM

Jill Strickland Luse, Executive Editor  
K. Anoa Monsho, Editor  
Toshé Byrd, Cher Hains,  
Kayla Ford

#### PHOTOGRAPHY

All photos are property of Atlanta Habitat.  
Toshé Byrd, Kayla Ford, Perrin Williams  
Cher Hains, Andrew Phillips

#### 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.



Continued from Page 1

## Oh, What a Night!

Lance Bottoms, who acknowledged Atlanta Habitat's powerful work in providing affordable homeownership and critical repair programs for low-income families. "The City of Atlanta has made a \$1 billion commitment to affordable housing in Atlanta, and we thank Atlanta Habitat for making sure that those who need it most are able to call our great city home," Mayor Bottoms said.

HGTV's Chip Wade kept the energy flowing through the mission moment, which raised some \$210,000 in less than a half-hour. His dynamic, entertaining and often hilarious banter inspired guests to give beyond the goal of \$150,000, more than enough to fund construction of an Atlanta Habitat house and support our programs.

"Atlanta Habitat is on a mission to transform neighborhoods and

families who thought they could only dream of owning a home," says Atlanta Habitat President/CEO Lisa Y. Gordon. "Enjoying an evening like this, with people who believe in creating thriving, diverse neighborhoods, helping seniors to age safely in their homes, and creating generational change, is so amazing. We are proud to have so many generous, thoughtful people partnering with us to make all this happen."

Other sponsors for the evening were Liz and Frank Blake, Delta Air Lines, All Saints Catholic Church, Georgia-Pacific, Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, Novelis, Habitat for Humanity International, The Abney Family Foundation, Georgia Power and TaSa Consulting and Steelbridge. Heartfelt thanks to sponsors, donors and friends who made the evening a scintillating success!

## Congratulations to Atlanta Habitat's 2018 Volunteers of the Year

Every year, Atlanta Habitat celebrates volunteers at an annual spring appreciation reception. Recently, the 20th annual event brought together volunteers, their families and staff to toast to a successful year of family empowerment through giving of that most precious resource: time. As always, selecting winners was difficult because of an abundance of great candidates; however, three rose to the top.

Since 2013, Denise Bier, known as the "Everywhere Volunteer," has volunteered in five different capacities: warehouse, ReStore, the Family Selection Committee, as an intake counselor, and as a general construction volunteer on build sites. "I love the work and learning new things," Denise says. "But I especially love all of the people I meet out here." In total, Denise has contributed more than 2,000 hours of volunteer service to Atlanta Habitat over the past six years.



Known for his upbeat attitude and ever-present grin, Larry McDonald has volunteered as a skilled supervisor since 2014—consistently serving over 200 hours each year. "We are blessed to be a blessing," he says. "Atlanta Habitat just happens to be a way to give of myself in away that fits me perfectly." Larry's hard work and positive attitude inspire other volunteers to give their best every weekend.

Skilled Supervisor Keith Wahlig has been a constant warehouse volunteer since 2008—helping pre-build house components and preparing materials that will become part of Atlanta Habitat homes. "Most of it is just paying it forward," Keith says. "I watch the kids in their new rooms and the joy on the homeowners' faces, it just gives me an overall good feeling!" In total, Keith has contributed over 3,000 volunteer hours with Atlanta Habitat since 2008.



# Home Is the Key

“The day that we get ready to move into our home, I can tell you right now, I’m going to jump up and down and say, ‘I did it! This belongs to us,’” says new homeowner Krushetta.

And that’s just what she did. Habitat for Humanity International selected Krushetta, a mother of three boys, to highlight the importance of homeownership during its annual Home Is the Key campaign in Atlanta this year. The campaign raises awareness about the critical need for affordable housing in the U.S., where one in six families pays half or more of their income on rent or mortgage.

Krushetta, an avid HGTV fan, was ecstatic when she learned that Drew and Jonathan Scott of HGTV’s Property Brothers would be

building with her. “It’s one of my favorite shows. I love the big reveal!” she says. They love it too. But they know that there is so much more at stake here.

“A lot of these families that Habitat works with, they never thought they would have a house that they could call their own,” Drew Scott said. “And so, for them to be able to see this path to achieving that goal, that means so much to us, because you’re changing people’s lives.”

Jonathan agrees. “We’ve seen firsthand how affordable homeownership changes lives,” he says. “Owning your own home—it’s not even just the American dream, it’s a human dream, it’s a family dream. It’s something that we think everybody should have the right to and access to, and Habitat for Humanity does it the best.”

“It’s adrenaline that’s inside my soul,” Krushetta says. “Being a homeowner is going to be joy. It’s going to be peace. It’s going to be love. It’s going to be happiness.”

Joy and happiness were in plentiful supply on the build when Jonathan and Drew revealed a special surprise. Habitat flew in Krushetta’s oldest son, Marquel, who serves in the army, based in Hawaii, for a month-long visit to help on her build. It was the first time she has seen him in more than a year. “I’m so numb. I don’t even know what to say!” Krushetta said. After all, it’s family that makes a house a home.

## Chico’s FAS Renews National Partnership with Habitat for Humanity



Nearly 70 percent of Atlanta Habitat homebuyers are women. Chico’s FAS, Inc., and its family of brands—Chico’s, White House Black Market and Soma—are committed to empowering women to build strength, stability and independence through housing. In 2018, the fashion brands invested nearly \$1.3 million for Habitat for Humanity’s Home Is the Key campaign and Women Build program.

“Homeownership provides transformational change to a woman and her family, and helps to empower her, which, in turn, positively impacts her family and the community for generations,” says Lori Shaffer, senior vice president of outlets for Chico’s FAS, Inc., and chair of the company’s Corporate Giving Board. “At Chico’s FAS we want to help more women turn the key that unlocks opportunity.”



# Marist School Women Build Is a Family Experience



For the parents and students at Marist School, building with Atlanta Habitat is a tradition and family experience. This year marks the 19th year of the Marist School Women Build (MWB) and the 19th home built with an Atlanta Habitat family. Senait and her daughter, a student at the University of Southern California, will move into their new home in early summer.

Bayh Mraz is one of the co-chairs of the Marist Women Build Steering Committee. “This committee consists of dedicated parents who want to serve,” Bayh explained. In her sixth year volunteering with MWB, she has made lifelong friends and plans to keep working on builds.

There are several Marist families who share Bayh’s commitment. Parents, grandparents and Marist alumni look forward to building with Atlanta Habitat each year. “This project is so important,” Leslie Starkey remarked. “It’s a good learning experience, teaching our children to share and empowering our daughters to learn new skills.” Marist sons also participate on a build day each year, turning out in numbers that make it the most successful volunteer day of the build.

“Affordable housing is an issue in Atlanta, and I love how we can come together to make a difference,” Bayh commented. She admires the courage of the Habitat homeowners. “They work hard and want to give their children a safe and nurturing place to live and grow. That’s what we all want for our families!”

## Peachtree Presbyterian Celebrates 155<sup>th</sup> Atlanta Habitat Build

Atlanta Habitat’s strong partnership with the faith community reaches its apex with the organization’s most prolific house sponsor, Peachtree Presbyterian.

“The congregation began building with us in 1986 and in some years was building six and seven houses or more,” says Jon Jones, Atlanta Habitat’s sponsorship director. “This year, they are completing their 155th house. To date, Peachtree Presbyterian has built about 10 percent of Atlanta Habitat’s homes. That’s more than a \$5.5 million investment in helping families.”

“Our relationship with Atlanta Habitat is a longstanding tradition and an important way that our congregation can serve our community, not just through our financial commitment but also through hands-on volunteerism and prayer,” says Ginny Nickles,

director of Mission Mobilization and Innovation at Peachtree Presbyterian. Each year, the church donates the entire Christmas Eve service offering toward sponsoring a home, and invites all the homeowners they have worked with to join the congregation in that celebratory service. “Each of the homeowners we’ve worked with has inspired us,” she says. “We’re so grateful to Atlanta Habitat for everything it does to improve our community.”





# Have More Fun ...Done!

## ReStore volunteer ups the fun factor by giving back

“In 2019, I’m going to volunteer with the Atlanta Habitat ReStore one day a month.” At the end of 2018, Mike Neugent committed to this New Year’s resolution. He wanted to give back to the community in a unique way—greeting ReStore customers and sharing ideas for their home improvement projects.

Volunteer teams deliver large furniture and appliance donations, showcase merchandise, process donations, assist customers and much more. Not only do the teams share their skills, it’s a fun way to meet new people. “After two shifts, I decided to up my commitment,” Mike said. “I now volunteer eight times a month! The staff, the volunteers and the customers make the experience so much fun.”

ReStore operations are possible because of generous donors and volunteers. Atlanta Habitat invests 100 percent of net proceeds from ReStore sales to help fund our mission. Learn more about the fun and unique ways to volunteer at [www.atlantahabitat.org/volunteer](http://www.atlantahabitat.org/volunteer). To support sales goals, the ReStore accepts furniture, appliances, lighting or other household donations. To schedule a donation pickup, call 404-465-1010.

## Proposed Law Helps Habitat Families

House Bill 344, known as the Sales Tax and Use Tax Bill, will make it easier for Habitat for Humanity and other nonprofits to be exempted from some property taxes. Properties that would be tax exempt include lots slated to have houses built on them. HB 344 was passed unanimously by the State Senate and by a strong majority in the House and signed by Georgia Governor Brian Kemp.

“Wesley Brooks, VP of Housing and Neighborhood Engagement, and I were part of the Habitat Georgia delegation who lobbied to get the bill passed. Our collective efforts led to statewide support,” said Atlanta Habitat President/CEO Lisa Y. Gordon. “Ultimately, that means more affordable housing in Georgia

as we build and sell homes to families who will contribute to expanding the state’s tax base.”

The bill does not automatically become state law, even after Gov. Kemp’s signature. Instead, the proposal will be included as a statewide election ballot item in 2020. If approved by Georgia voters, the law would take effect on Jan. 1, 2021.



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

