

The future is brighter...



Not long ago, the idea of owning a home of their own seemed out of reach for James and Maya. They yearned for the security a home would provide for themselves and their daughter, but prices kept climbing higher and higher.

Today, James and Maya are one of five hardworking Greater Boston families whose dream of affordable homeownership is becoming a reality, thanks to generous supporters like you.

“A home gives our family stability and joy,” James said. “It means the future is brighter.”

The five families cannot wait to get started partnering with Habitat Greater Boston’s staff and volunteers to build their future homes in Malden.

In the coming weeks, these families will wrap up the orientation process and get to work on contributing between 250 and 300 hours of sweat equity. They will also start classes to prepare them for all the responsibilities and opportunities that come with homeownership.

While we could not be happier to welcome these incredible families into the homeownership program, the selection process offered a stark reminder of the enormous toll that the housing crisis is having on our region. More than 80 families throughout Greater Boston applied for these five homes.

With your continued support, we are planning to welcome 7 more families into our homeownership program this year. Together, we can do even more to confront the housing crisis and help as many families as possible to access affordable homeownership right here in Greater Boston.



Future homeowners Getachew and Tsega with their boys.

Here is a little bit about three of our new families:

Getachew and Tsega are eager to learn everything that goes into building and maintaining a home. They are also looking forward to having their own space for watching movies as a family and for their two boys to draw, ride their bikes outside, and play with friends in the neighborhood.

Larbi, Fatima, and their three children have long hoped to buy a home of their own but could not find an affordable option. They are excited to finally have a permanent home and the convenience of living in an area they love without having to worry about future rent hikes.

“Being a homeowner means stability and ownership for my family – a place my family can call home for generations,” Larbi said.

For **James and Maya**, the dream of owning a home for themselves and their daughter felt unattainable – until they learned about Habitat Greater Boston’s homeownership program online. They are looking forward to baking goodies in their new kitchen and taking long walks in the neighborhood as a family. “We will accomplish something that was unattainable for our family,” James said.

We are excited to introduce you to our two other partner families soon!



Message from the President



Dear Friends,

I have been thinking a lot about President Jimmy Carter these days. Looking back and learning more, I came across this quote of his, **“We have become not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic. Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings, different hopes, different dreams.”**

I realized that this quote directly reflects what Habitat Greater Boston represents and celebrates. But there is also one dream that we all share – and that is the dream of homeownership.

Like so many others, I first learned of Habitat for Humanity when I saw President Carter and his wife Rosalynn with their helmets on and hammers in hand, serving as volunteer builders. The pair demonstrated their commitment to Habitat’s mission through action – continuing to volunteer on build sites well into their nineties. With the latest news that President Carter has entered hospice care at his home in Georgia, many are reflecting on his achievements throughout a long life spent dedicated to public service and volunteerism. He was instrumental in efforts to protect our environment, secure equity for the poor, the middle-class, for women and people of color, and to improve the health and quality of life for all people around the world.



President, Jimmy Carter volunteering in Leogane, Haiti in 2011.

With so many challenges facing us all today, it is easy to fall into cynicism and despair. But Jimmy Carter has led by example and has shown us how possible it is to be inspired by hope and positivity and know that we can make our world a better place - starting right here at home in our own community.

I thank you for your continued support of Habitat Greater Boston’s work, carrying forward the Carters’ example to improve our little corner of the world - with 12 new families joining our homeownership program in 2023!

With gratitude, and in partnership,



James Kostaras, AIA
President & CEO



Can you help local families become homeowners?

Visit our website at habitatboston.org to make a donation or send a check in the enclosed envelope.



Partner family shares their experience in new video

Nearly seven years after moving into the home they helped build alongside Habitat Greater Boston staff and volunteers, Stephen and Arlene are still amazed to be homeowners.

“We’re so happy,” Stephen says in a new video about their experience with affordable homeownership. “Me and my wife, we always say, ‘Thank God for Habitat. Thank God for all the people who make it possible for us to own a house.’”



Happy homeowners since 2015 - Stephen and Arlene

Before partnering with Habitat Greater Boston, Stephen and Arlene were living in a cramped, two-bedroom attic apartment and unable to find affordable options for a home of their own. Today, they live in a townhouse with plenty of space for their family. They have a permanent home among a close-knit community of neighbors.

“It means so much to us, owning our own home, and it’s really affordable,” Arlene says. “Habitat made it possible for us. We’re extremely happy for that.”

Smiling on the couch in their sunny living room, Stephen agrees.

“This program is real,” he says. “It’s helped a lot of people that I know, my neighbors and me.”

Scan the code to watch the video and hear directly from Stephen and Arlene:



Bargain hunters, home redecorators, and do-it-yourselfers rejoice – finding deals at Habitat Greater Boston’s ReStore just got easier than ever!

The West Roxbury retail outlet is wrapping up a full-scale reorganization, transforming the formerly cramped and maze-like space with open sight lines and wide aisles. This will allow customers to easily peruse the constantly changing inventory of everything that ReStore has to offer, from home appliances to lighting fixtures to china sets and more.

The effort will result in about 4,000 additional square feet of retail space, a dramatically improved experience for shoppers and staff alike. The new layout has already boosted sales significantly.

“There’s so much more inventory on the floor,” said Mark Auterio, Director of Business Strategy at the ReStore. “I have

people coming in saying, ‘This is a completely different store.’ They are loving it.”

Since opening in 2010, the ReStore has become a valuable community resource, offering a wide selection of donated gently used home goods at discounted prices.

Allen Yuen, a regular ReStore customer, praised the staff for rearranging the store and making it easier to navigate.

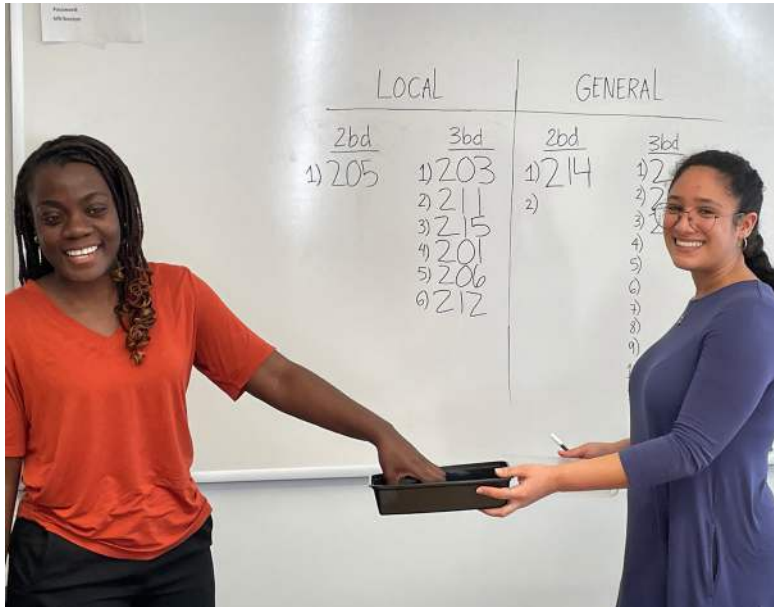
“I love coming in here – you can’t beat it,” he said. **“You’re buying stuff you need, and at the same time you’re helping people accomplish the American dream.”** *continued on page 4*



James exploring selection of lighting



Ashley from Nashville, a huge fan of ReStores.



Homeowner Services Coordinators, Abi and Chloe, facilitating Lottery for Malden homes!

Everything you always wanted to know about our family selection process:

Applications: When Habitat Greater Boston begins building new homes, our Homeowner Services staff members promote new homeownership opportunities in local communities. Families interested in participating in the program are encouraged to formally apply to be a partner with us. Our staff reviews the applications to see if families are eligible based on their work income, need for stable housing, and willingness to participate in first-time homeownership classes and complete 250 to 300 hours volunteering on the build site of their own home or that of other families.

Virtual interviews: Our staff and volunteer Homeowner Selection Committee members schedule virtual interviews with families eligible to participate to get to know them and explain the homeownership program further.

Home visits: Staff and Homeowner Selection Committee members visit with families at their homes to meet them in person, discuss the program requirements in more detail, and answer any remaining questions.

Lottery: All families are entered into a lottery in which names are chosen at random for each of the units that will be built. Eligible families who are not selected are encouraged to reapply for a future opening.

Board approval: Following the lottery, Habitat Greater Boston's Board of Directors meets to give final approval of the selection of families.

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ReStore ReNewed



Gloria, ReStore's loyal and happy shopper.

continued from page 3

Mark and his staff began working on the reimagined layout late last year. Over several months, they gradually shifted taller items to the back and cleared away shelves to let in more light and make it easier to see the whole sales floor. They also added clearer and wider aisles to make items more accessible, particularly for people who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices.

As much as customers thrill in getting a bargain, it's a desire to support Habitat Greater Boston's work that draws most people in, Mark said.

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1580 VFW Parkway, West Roxbury, MA 02132

Tuesday to Saturday,

9:30 am to 5:00 pm

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