

Legacies

A newsletter by the Planned Giving department of Habitat for Humanity® International

A Message from Habitat's CEO

Dear Habitat Partner,

Mahatma Gandhi once said to "be the change you want to see in the world." I'm sometimes reminded of this quote when I meet volunteers on a Habitat build site or when I talk with Habitat homeowners who have worked night and day with those volunteers to help build their own modest homes.

Habitat build sites are the most visible evidence of the work we do. Volunteers with tool belts and hard hats scurry around dusty construction sites painting or sawing, laying block, hammering or climbing ladders.

What is not so evident, however, are the financial resources that have made all of that activity possible in the first place. Without contributions from generous partners around the world, the hammers would come to rest. The saws would fall silent, and the paint cans would grow rusty from no use. Weeds would overtake the cinder blocks stacked in the dirt, and ladders would stand idle. Most importantly, without monetary donations, hard-working families would continue living in the same deplorable conditions that create such burdens on children and their parents.

Habitat for Humanity is about

(Continued on page 2)



Trinidad Hidalgo (second from left) and the Ana Patricia Vicente Albano family celebrate the inauguration of their Habitat home June 19 at the Santa Cruz Balanya 20-house colony in Chimaltenango, Guatemala.

Building Community in Guatemala

By Kara Loftin

Trinidad Hidalgo has found the perfect way to honor and memorialize her father, José Hidalgo. In April 2007, Hidalgo set up a bequest to build homes in Guatemala, her father's native land. The proceeds from the sale of her family's estate in Shelter Island, New York, will build homes through Habitat for Humanity Guatemala.

José Hidalgo was born in 1883 in Malacacancito, Guatemala, and immigrated to the U.S. in the early 1900s. In Guatemala, Mr. Hidalgo trained as

a lawyer and learned seven languages. He also spent several years as the Consul General to Japan. After moving to the U.S., he taught language at the University of California.

He then moved to New York, where he married, had children and founded a real estate brokerage where Trinidad Hidalgo still serves as president today.

As teenagers, Trinidad Hidalgo and her brothers learned the real estate business from their father. At the young age of 20, she became New York's first

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 1)

transformation. But it's not only about transforming the lives of families in need of shelter. It's about transforming the hearts of those who help provide that shelter.

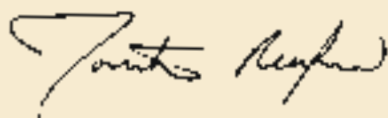
One of the beauties about the Habitat model is that there is room for everyone at Habitat's table. It doesn't matter where we live, what we look like, what we believe, whom we voted for in the last election or whether we've even picked up a tool in our lives. Each of us can help create promise and stability in partnership with families in need of a better place to live.

In this edition of "Legacies," you'll read further about how we're changing lives together. And you'll read more about the potential legacy you can leave by participating in our Planned Giving program. Through that involvement, you may hear no nails clinking in the pockets of a tool belt, no saws whirring or sawdust flying. But the outcome will be the same: transformed lives, starting with mine and yours.

Thanks to God's grace and countless partners and friends, Habitat's model has succeeded across the globe for more than 30 years. As we continue making families part of the solution—and with an abiding trust in God—we will increase our impact as we equip more families with some of the tools they need to thrive. Not the least of those tools is the strong foundation decent housing provides.

Thank you for all you are doing to help build it!

Sincerely,



Jonathan Reckford
Chief Executive Officer
Habitat for Humanity International

Avoid Taxes and Use Your IRA to Build Simple, Decent Houses

By Robert Schmidt

By now you may have learned about a provision of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 that allows individuals age 70 ½ or older to exclude up to \$100,000 from gross income for IRA rollovers directly to Habitat for Humanity International and other qualifying charities. You may have concluded, as I did upon first reading, that you need to be in a high tax bracket and have a large IRA before this idea makes sense. But after some further study and a little math, I see that this is a good idea for non-itemizers who want to support Habitat with modest gifts from smaller IRAs.

Take for example a married couple in their mid-seventies who have an adjusted gross income of \$50,000. Their itemized deductions are less than the 2007 married-filing-jointly standard deduction of \$10,700. Before the Pension Protection Act, taking \$1,000 from their IRA and then giving it to Habitat for Humanity would have increased their adjusted gross income to \$51,000. After applying the standard deduction of \$10,700, a balance of \$40,300 is carried forward for further calculations.

Making the \$1,000 gift to Habitat through the charitable IRA rollover, however, means that the \$1,000 never shows up in the adjusted gross income, and so after the standard deduction is applied, the balance carried forward for further calculation is now \$39,300. Since folks in this income range are in the 15 percent tax bracket, keeping this extra \$1,000 away from your tax return saves \$150.

When I described this scenario to one prospective donor, she made the comment that the \$1,000 "investment" in Habitat for Humanity would pay a 15 percent "return." As a financial planner I'd have to quibble about her usage of this investment terminology, but I can certainly see her point. And anyway, I believe that an investment in simple, decent houses that give people a hand up out of poverty produces a return far higher than 15 percent.

Please note that unless the Pension Protection Act is extended, this opportunity expires at the end of 2007, so now would be a good time to get started. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at (800) HABITAT Ext. 3471, or rschmidt@habitat.org.



Habitat for Humanity International CEO Jonathan Reckford talks with volunteers at the Habitat Leadership Build in New Orleans, La., April 25, 2007.

Robert Schmidt is a certified financial planner and director of Planned Giving for Habitat for Humanity International.

Habitat for Humanity Celebrates Milestones in the Gulf Coast



WILL CROCKER

In May 2007, Habitat for Humanity raised walls on its 1000th and 1001st houses in the Gulf Coast, reaching its goal of building 1000 homes in areas affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita by mid-2007.

Former President Jimmy Carter and his wife Rosalynn joined musician and Habitat supporter Branford Marsalis; Habitat for Humanity CEO Jonathan Reckford; New Orleans Area Habitat Executive Director Jim Pate; and Chris Monforton, CEO of Habitat of the Mississippi Gulf Coast, volunteers, staff and supporters in celebrating Habitat's accomplishments since 2005 when hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated much of the Gulf Coast.

"We are enormously grateful to the thousands of volunteers, donors and other supporters around the world who have put so much effort into making these homes possible," said Reckford. "Their contributions will leave a lasting impact on the lives of families in need of decent homes and on the entire communities in which those families live."



DAVID SPELMAN

Rosalynn Carter speaks at a press conference announcing the Gulf Coast as the location of the 25th annual "Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Work Project," May 11-16, 2008.

Following the wall raisings, President Carter announced the Gulf Coast as the location of the 25th annual Jimmy Carter Work Project, to be held May 11-16, 2008. Since 1984, President and Mrs. Carter have led thousands of volunteers to help build Habitat

houses during a weeklong event held in a different location each year. For 2008, the event is renamed the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Work Project in recognition of the former first lady's years of dedicated service to Habitat for Humanity.

Habitat for Humanity Legacy Society

The Habitat for Humanity Legacy Society recognizes the importance of legacy gifts in eradicating poverty housing.

To become a member of the Habitat for Humanity Legacy Society, you must plan to benefit Habitat for Humanity after your lifetime—whether in the form of a bequest, annuity or other planned giving arrangement—and notify Habitat of your plans.

Habitat for Humanity welcomes these new members to the Habitat for Humanity Legacy Society:

Lorraine G. Gay
Trinidad Hidalgo
Mila Reyes Mesia
Thomas Moore
David Wickersham

Contact us

There are several ways you can find out more information about planned giving:

Write: Planned Giving Department
Habitat for Humanity International
121 Habitat Street
Americus, GA 31709-3498
Call: (800) 422-4828, Ext. 2253
E-mail: plannedgiving@habitat.org
Web: www.habitat.org/giving/planned

Habitat for Humanity International is a non-profit, ecumenical Christian organization dedicated to eliminating substandard housing and homelessness worldwide and to making adequate, affordable shelter a matter of conscience and action.



MELENE NAHOJIL

Trinidad Hidalgo presents the Ana Patricia Vicente Albano family with the key to their new Habitat home.

(Continued from page 1)

woman real estate broker, working through the Great Depression to sell homes during one of the worst economic times in U.S. history.

“It was hard,” she said, “but it was the most enjoyable job I’ve ever had.”

Her father taught her to be fair and upfront in dealing with her clients, she said, and encouraged her to treat her clients as she would like to be treated.

She has taken that to heart and made it one of the guiding principles of her life.

In April 2007, Hidalgo made a commitment to build homes with Habitat for Humanity Guatemala because of her father’s influence and that of her late husband, an architect that designed and built homes in the Dominican Republic.

From both men, Hidalgo learned the importance of a decent home and the safety and security it brings. Through Habitat, she can share that knowledge with hundreds of Guatemalans in honor and memory of her father.

“I think of the poor,” she said. “We must all help them.”

More than 1.6 million households in Guatemala live in huts or crowded into a small rented room. Due to the conditions in which they live, there is a high risk of maternal and infant death due to gastrointestinal, respiratory and skin diseases. These properties do not have basic utilities and are located in high-risk and high-crime areas. Habitat homes in Guatemala measure approximately 600 sq. ft., and are anti-seismic,

making the homes safer for families.

In June, Hidalgo traveled to Guatemala with family and Habitat for Humanity representatives to visit the proposed sites for the homes she will fund and see the need for herself.

She also got an opportunity to meet families already living in homes they built with Habitat Guatemala.

“I was so moved by the people,” she said. “I fell in love with them. They’re such good people. From nothing they became something. What they’ve done for their homes is to be admired.”

“I think of the poor,” she said. “We must all help them.”