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## Meet the Class of 1989

The much awaited celebration of Hartford Area Habitat for Humanity's 20th Anniversary took place on Wednesday, December 2nd, at the beautiful Town and County Club in Hartford.

The Affiliate's founding board members were honored that evening by a large crowd of volunteers, donors, homeowners, and staff members. Guests had the opportunity to look back through a display of pictures that dated all the way to 1989, and many also reconnected with friends and volunteers that they had not seen in a long time.

The guest speaker for the evening was Mr. Ron Terwilliger, Chair of the Board of Directors for Habitat for Humanity International. Mr. Terwilliger spoke about his involvement and passion for Habitat for Humanity's work around the world and the importance of getting involved.

Homeowners Carol Gordon and Currene Blake spoke about their experience with

Hartford Habitat and how becoming Habitat homeowners has impacted their lives and their families.

Pictured above are some of the honorees in attendance. Standing from left to right: Lorelee Huston, Robert Rodney, Mike Baldwin, Anita Nardone, and Rev. Dr. Bill Trench. Sitting are Bob & Marion Mayo, who were also recognized earlier in 2009 with Hartford Habitat's second Lifetime Achievement Award.

Several founding board members who were not able to make it to the event were also recognized. Those individuals were: Shawn Downing, Grace Morgan, Mickey Groshart, Bob Smeitana, Rev. Bill Watson, Bill Wieder and Evan Spencer\*. They all received a well-deserved standing ovation for their leadership and initiative.

Thanks again to everyone who attended and participated in the evening's event.

*\*awarded posthumously*

### Board of Directors:

Eric Crawford, President  
Pam Carpenter, Vice President  
Vanessa Rossitto, Treasurer  
Adam Jeamel, Secretary

Kristine L. Bankowski  
Jeff Digel  
Veronica T. DeLandro  
Dr. Bruce Douglas  
Lynette Dowe-Forgie  
Ed Kindelan  
David Kuzmak  
I. Charles Matthews  
Eric Santini, Jr.  
Don Shaw, Jr.  
Sara Taylor

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# Families *in Action*

## *Currene and Alffe Blake*



"We would first like to give thanks to Habitat for Humanity for the wonderful opportunity and blessing that have been bestowed upon us."

"Our family has lived in our home on Huntington Street in Hartford for 5 years now with our three daughters, ages 18, 16, and 5. Since owning our home, we feel that it has given us a sense of independence. Although it is hard work to maintain it, it's well worth the time and a good investment that will pay off in the future."

"Being a homeowner has given my family more space, a yard for the family to enjoy, and most of all, a feeling of security and pride in the community. We have become more involved in our neighborhood by participating in the community garden that provides fresh fruits and vegetables to families."

"My eldest daughter is currently in her second year at Northeastern University. I am into my fifth semester of school working on my Criminal Justice Degree and my wife, Currene, is working on an Associate's Degree in social services." - Alffe Blake

The Blake family attends Kings Chapel Church of God, located on Woodland Street. Alffe serves on the Board of the Family Center while Currene serves on the boards of the NRZ, Boys and Girls Club Development Association, is the president of the PTO at West Middle Elementary School, and is also a member of the School Improvement Team.

Currene continues to play a major role in Hartford Habitat and is currently a family partner for Komi and Stella Akoumani and has partnered in the past with Junior and Marie May in 2007.

### *Many, many thanks!*



Special thanks to Hunt Liebert Jacobson, P.C. and their employees who collected and donated enough items for a total of 19 Hartford Habitat families to make Thanksgiving dinner special.

Margaret Breen, who has been organizing the collection for years, is a former Hartford Habitat board member and Family Services volunteer.

*Thanks Margaret, for all that you have done through the years!*

### *New beginnings*

Altagracia Jose and her family celebrated the dedication ceremony of her brand new house on Friday, December 11, in the company of friends, staff and volunteers. Family partner and fellow Habitat homeowner Vicki Ramos, on the left, presented Altagracia with two gifts: a bible and a toolbox.



*Best wishes to Altagracia and her family as she begins her journey!*

## NEXT A.I.M.

*The next Applicant Information Meeting for prospective homeowners will be on Saturday, March 6, 2010 beginning at 8:45am at The Village for Families and Children, 1680 Albany Avenue in Hartford.*

## FAMILY BUILD DAY

Almost 30 homeowners came out on Saturday, October 24, to test their construction skills and help build on Guilford Street in Hartford.

It was inspiring to see past, present, and future homeowners working together and sharing their experiences with each other.

This was a great opportunity for current homeowners to re-connect and for prospective homeowners to fulfill some of their sweat equity hours.



*Thanks to all who joined us!*

# Volunteer Accolades

## The Gengras Team

*Unified in Strength and Talent*

The Gengras Team is a group of friendly, young students who attend the Gengras Center at Saint Joseph College. They frequently lend a hand at the Hartford affiliate to help with landscaping, painting, moving furniture, and cleaning up, among many other projects. Todd Girard is the leader of the group, guiding them every step of the way.

*“Volunteering at Habitat has shown the kids meaningful work in the community. It creates stronger students and reaching out to the local neighborhood truly has a positive, educational effect on them; the younger students can’t wait to start!”*, Todd Girard, Gengras Group Leader.



Last June, twenty-one year old student, Sam Wilson, was honored with four awards for his dedication to volunteering.

*“The Gengras Kids are one of the best volunteer groups we’ve ever had!”* Burt Mitchell, Director of Construction.

Their participation plays a major role in our Affiliate’s success and is deeply appreciated.

## Jimmy Carter Work Project 2009

This year, just like in prior years, Tom and Dougie Trumble attended the 2009 Jimmy Carter Work Project along with Don and Peggy Shaw. Both couples are long time volunteers with Hartford Habitat, serving at one point or another on the Board of Directors, as Crew Leaders during our builds, delivering devotions, emceeing our events or simply helping with our mailings. Below is a note from Don and we are sure you can feel his excitement!



*“Here’s our house team picture from the Habitat Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Mekong Build Work Project that Tom, Dougie, Peggy and I participated in. Also from the Hartford area was Jared Mickleson of Suffield. Jared is a recent UConn graduate and a first-time Habitat volunteer who ventured to Chiang Mai on his own to contribute. The homes we built were in the village of Nong Gon Kru, some 20 kilometers north of Chiang Mai city in northern Thailand. The build consisted of 82 houses. The number 82 was chosen to honor the 82nd birthday of the Thai king, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. The homes complemented a recently rehabilitated*

*school and a new community center just completed before we arrived. The result was an “instant village” with 82 families buying simple, decent homes and moving out of shacks and away from dumps. The Mekong Build was part of a kick-off event launching a five nation, multi-year campaign to help improve the housing conditions for 50,000 families in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and China’s southwestern province of Sichuan.”*

Hartford Habitat has been represented several times by these four volunteers at the Jimmy Carter Work Project in places such as Mexico, India and Thailand, among others.

## AmeriCorps VISTA

*Getting It Done!*



Since 2003, Hartford Habitat has worked in partnership with AmeriCorps. We are especially proud of our VISTA members as they have been, and continue to be, an integral part of our day-to-day operations.

Our VISTA members are with us for one-year and help with our capacity building. They have worked in different areas like Family Services, Development, Marketing, Faith Relations, Information Technology, and Volunteer Relations.

From left to right: Ebonie T. Hosendove, Monica Kaweck, Jennifer Armini and Turquoise D. Blue (front).

# "Building More Than a House"

## Community Partner Profile

### *Hartford Foundation for Public Giving*

Hartford Habitat has been fortunate enough to work closely with the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving over the last fifteen years.

Since 1994, the Foundation has donated almost \$750,000.00 to our affiliate to fund a variety of initiatives, including house sponsorships, technology upgrades, strategic planning and fundraising events. The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is dedicated to improving the quality of life for residents in the capitol region of Connecticut.

Founded in 1925 by local bankers Maynard T. Hazen and Clark T. Durant, the Hartford Foundation has been a

reliable resource for the local charitable community for almost a century. Through financial support to individuals and organizations that serve the community and by bringing people together to discuss important local issues, the Foundation has had a positive impact on donors, community leaders and nonprofit organizations of all types and sizes.

The Foundation continues to grow and expand, and while it has undergone significant changes over the years, the primary goal has always remained the same: to bring together both human and financial resources in order to strengthen the fabric of the community and improve the lives of all of its residents.

The Hartford Foundation is among the largest of almost 700 community foundations in the country. Since its founding, the Foundation has received gifts from thousands of generous individuals, created a permanent endowment and awarded grant funding totaling more than \$450 million.

We thank Linda Kelly (right) and the staff at the Hartford Foundation for their unwavering support, and look forward to continuing this partnership for years to come.



## Swinging Away!

### *The New Britain RockCats and Stanley Works*

On September 3, the New Britain Rock Cats took time off from their race to the playoffs to give back to their New Britain community by helping to build one of Hartford Habitat's houses on Bond Street in New Britain.

Employees from Stanley Works, who are sponsors of both the New Britain Rock Cats and Hartford Area Habitat for Humanity, joined Rock Cats players and staff to help build at 204 Bond Street.

That house is now the home for Altagracia Jose, a single mom who came to Connecticut ten years ago from Santo Domingo and worked very hard to raise her sixteen year old daughter, Dabely. She had attended a New Britain AIM meeting along with over 150 potential homeowners.

The day was a combined effort by the Rock Cats, Hartford Area Habitat for Humanity and Stanley Works, to provide decent affordable housing for a family in need, and to make the New Britain community a better place to live and work.

The Rock Cats community activities are organized through the Rock Cats Foundation. The Rock Cats Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing better opportunities for the youth and families in our surrounding communities in connection with the activities of the New Britain Rock Cats baseball club.

### *Two generous sponsors facilitate a new home for our construction supplies and equipment!*



The Associated Construction Company and the William and Alice Mortensen Foundation sponsored the construction of the Hartford Habitat warehouse.

The building was started in April and was officially "open for business" on August 21st. The warehouse has become a success and great addition to the Hartford affiliate, eliminating the need to rent space to house our supplies.

Many thanks to all our Weekday Saints and our construction staff for their work during the construction of our warehouse!

# Partners in ONE community

## The Aldo DeDominicis Foundation

### *A lasting legacy*

Aldo DeDominicis immigrated to the United States in 1920 at the early age of sixteen. During his first years in America, he worked as a barber and a salesman of Italian import food products. After saving enough money, he opened his own Italian food market in Meriden, Connecticut.

Aldo hit hard times during the depression, and he was forced to close his business and go back to selling Italian food products. By the early 1940's, Aldo was able to begin another business venture, and he opened his first AM radio station in New Haven, Connecticut.

Over the years, he was able to open a number of radio stations, including WNHC-FM, now WPLR, WHAY

and WRCH-FM. He also started New England's first television station in 1950, now WTNH Channel 8 in New Haven.

Although Aldo is now gone, his spirit lives on through the Aldo DeDominicis Foundation. The Foundation has five directors, including Enzo DeDominicis and Robert McNally, two of Habitat's Weekday Saints.

Since 1996, the Aldo DeDominicis Foundation has generously contributed more than \$55,000.00 to Hartford Habitat for projects such as the Build-A-Thon, the Bike-A-Thon, and the golf tournament.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to our work!

## HAHfH Recognized *by our Muslim partners*

Hartford Habitat was presented with a \$2,000 donation at the Annual Muslim Coalition of Connecticut Banquet held on October 31.

Volunteers from the Muslim Coalition who have participated in Hartford Habitat's House of Abraham were recognized at the event.

Dr. Reza Mansoor, from the Muslim Coalition and one of the leaders of the House of Abraham builds, presented Krista Colletta, our Director of Volunteers and Community Relations, with the donation that evening.

We are honored to be the recipients of gifts of love and talent such as this one!

## Open for Business *Our Habitat Stanley Store*

An important part of our operation is the Habitat Stanley store in New Britain. The business generated through sales at the store is another way for us to raise funds to build more houses. Every purchase our patrons make help us in our mission to end poverty housing.

We are fortunate to be able to count on store volunteers like Jim Gray, Paul Anderson, the Gengras Team and others who perform all types of business transactions. Under the supervision of our store manager, these volunteers organize all the inventory, decorate the store, operate the registers and take care of our customers.

The Habitat Stanley Store is located at 114 Burritt Street in New Britain and it is open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10am until 5pm, and Saturdays from 9am until 2pm. Call Rose Vigdal, the Store Manager, at 860-827-5291 if you have any questions, or visit [www.114burrittstreet.com](http://www.114burrittstreet.com).

## Habitat Haiti

### *Faith in Action*



The powerful 7.0-magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010, destroyed thousands of buildings and homes. Habitat for Humanity has worked with Haiti for over 26 years and will continue to serve the people there by helping to rebuild.

Currently, Habitat for Humanity is working diligently to assess the situation in Haiti and mobilize disaster relief efforts.

If you're interested in helping or donating, visit Habitat's website at [www.habitat.org](http://www.habitat.org).

## Cars for Homes™

### *Donate your clunker today!*



Wondering what to do with that car that has been sitting in your driveway or your back yard for months or even years? We have the solution! Donate it!

By donating a car to Habitat's Cars for Homes™ vehicle donation program, you help our affiliate build houses in partnership with families in need of a hand up, not a hand out.

It is quick and easy to recycle your used cars, trucks, boats, RVs, motorcycles, construction equipment or other vehicles - running or not! Plus, you may be eligible for a tax deduction if you itemize. (Consult the IRS or your tax advisor for details.) To donate a car, truck, boat or RV to Cars for Homes™, call (877) 277-4344 or visit [www.carsforhomes.org](http://www.carsforhomes.org).



Nice Car

# In the loop: what's going on?

## 15th "Sticks for Bricks"



Hartford Habitat hosted its 15th annual "Sticks for Bricks" golf benefit tournament on a beautiful August day at Wampanoag Country Club in West Hartford.

The event raised over \$31,000 to help us build more homes. A special thanks to the entire golf committee, our sponsors, volunteers and supporters without whom this event would have not been possible! The 2010 "Sticks for Bricks" golf tournament will be held on Monday, August 30th. Register early on our website at [www.hartfordhabitat.org](http://www.hartfordhabitat.org) and join us for a fun afternoon at Wampanoag Country Club.

## Music for a Change presents Lucy Kaplansky

*A concert to benefit Hartford Habitat*



Lucy Kaplansky

The University of Hartford, in cooperation with WWUH radio (91.3 FM), has created a way to use music to help our Hartford-area neighbors.

The *MUSIC for a CHANGE* benefit concert series,

launched in the spring of 2000, has raised thousands of dollars for Greater Hartford charities and nonprofit organizations working to improve the lives of our neighbors.

Consider this your invitation to join us on May 7, 2010 when Lucy Kaplansky performs with Hugh Blumenfeld! The concert begins at 7:30pm in the Wilde Auditorium. Tickets will be on sale on March 26 and a portion of the proceeds will benefit Hartford Area Habitat for Humanity.

Performers who have appeared as headliners in the *MUSIC for a CHANGE* series include Wynton Marsalis, Art Garfunkel, Alison Krauss and Union Station, Shawn Colvin, Richie Havens, Jonathan Edwards, and Aztec Two-Step.

### Artist Websites:

<http://www.lucykaplansky.com>

<http://www.hughblumenfeld.com>

### Music for a Change:

<http://www.hartford.edu/mfac>

## Build-A-Thon 2009

Over 200 volunteers throughout the greater Hartford community came together over the course of five days to swing hammers, build floors, raise walls and put up siding on seven new houses on Guilford Street in Hartford. Habitat volunteers raised over \$60,000 for this event by soliciting donations among their friends, families and colleagues, and in their places of worship.

The 2010 Build-a-Thon has been scheduled for the week of May 4-8 and will take place on Sexton Street in New Britain. To register for year's fundraiser, contact McKinley Albert @ 860-541-2201 x-110 or send her an email at [mckinley@hartfordhabitat.org](mailto:mckinley@hartfordhabitat.org).

We would like to thank all of our sponsors, crew leaders and Weekday Saints for making this event a huge success year after year!



## Bulding On Faith 2009

Hartford Area Habitat for Humanity celebrated its Building on Faith event from Thursday, October 1st through Saturday, October 3rd. The event united Baha'i, Christian, Hindu, Jewish and Muslim faith communities to build together and raise awareness for substandard living.



For three days, over 100 volunteers continued to build on Guilford Street, where the ground-breaking took place earlier in May. Building on Faith Days raised over \$8,000 for the House of Abraham Project! Huge thanks to everyone who participated, our snack and lunch providers and all our volunteers!



# "Green Initiatives" with the environment in mind

## Building More Than a "Green" House...

### *Eco-friendly initiatives*

Hartford Habitat has been using green techniques in the construction of our houses since before the terms "green" or "environmentally-friendly" became popular. These techniques have allowed us to build houses that are more energy efficient and sustainable while cutting down on material and building costs.

The trust joists and the sheathing are all made from recycled wood. Studs are set at 24" from each other during the framing process, saving on the number of studs used per house. Plywood is nailed vertically to the studs as opposed to horizontally. This technique allows us to eliminate gaps where heat can escape after the house is built. Compared to the building process used three years ago, we also save nearly 30% of the wood used in our houses. We also

caulk every spot where air or water penetration may be possible like corners and joints.

*"The less material we use, the more efficient we are. Eventhough we are a non-profit, we must think like a professional builder,"* says Burt Mitchell, Director of Construction.

All boilers, plumbing and fixtures are energy efficient. Bathrooms are equipped with dual-flushing toilets to conserve water. Almost all plumbing installed is plastic. The plastic plumbing eliminates the need for copper pipes and soldering.

Read our Habitat Happenings e-newsletter to see how our eco-friendly techniques help us keep our costs down and our houses "green."

## Recycle More, Trash Less!

### *Electronics Recycling*

Our office staff and volunteers also make every effort to recycle as much as we can when items such as paper, file folders and supplies are used. We started the recycling of electronics in late 2009.

We have a volunteer who drives to our office the last Friday of every month\*, and collects any electronics that are brought to the office for recycling.

These items are best described as "any used, broken and outdated electronics for parting out and recycling. These include business equipment as well as household electronics."

Examples of items collected include:

- Computers - towers, laptops, motherboards, drives, monitors, keyboards, mice, cables, routers, modems, servers, surge protectors, UPS units, scanners, printers, print cartridges, toners.
- Phones and mobile devices
- Batteries - all kinds and sizes.
- Video - VCRs, DVD players, cable boxes, DVRs, remote controls.
- Cameras and camcorders
- Audio/stereo equipment
- Video game equipment
- Appliances - microwaves, vacuum cleaners, toasters, dryers, washing machines, fans.
- Wires and Cables
- Circuit boards, electric motors, electronic toys, power tools.

**Items not allowed: televisions or tube type fluorescent light bulbs.**

If you have any questions or would like more information on how to organize your own recycling drive, please send an email to: [greenliving@hartfordhabitat.org](mailto:greenliving@hartfordhabitat.org).

### 2010 Electronic Recyclables Drop-Off Dates Only from 10am until 2pm

- February 26
- March 26
- April 30
- May 28
- June 25
- July 30
- August 27
- September 24
- October 29
- \*November 19
- \*December 17

## One Hartford Habitat family received a

### "recycled car"

*A national collaboration!*



Hands on Hartford and the New Haven Home Recovery joined forces to take part in the national program called "**Recycled Rides**" which is organized by the National Auto Body Council. Vehicles are repaired, recycled and then donated to families in need.

The Connecticut Collision Repair Specialists (CCRS) Association, "Hands on Hartford" and the New Haven Home Recovery lead the search for qualifying families. It is the first time all three organizations collaborate on a project.



Hartford Habitat homeowners Jonna and Rennard Washington from Hartford, were among the four families to receive a recycled vehicle on Monday, November 23 in front of the State Capitol. The Washingtons have been in their Hartford Habitat house since 2006.

***Congratulations!!!***



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## 2010 EVENTS CALENDAR

<b>March 6:</b>	Applicant Information Meeting
<b>March 10:</b>	Board of Directors Annual Meeting
<b>May 4-8:</b>	Build-A-Thon 2010
<b>May 7:</b>	Music for a Change Concert
<b>May 15:</b>	Habitat Family Day Picnic
<b>June 24:</b>	Guilford Street Dedications
<b>August 30:</b>	Golf Tournament
<b>Fall:</b>	Building on Faith*
<b>Fall:</b>	Annual Recognition Event*
<b>October 4:</b>	World Habitat Day
<b>October 4-8:</b>	Jimmy Carter Work Project

\*Dates/location to be determined.

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