



THE DOORWAY

building homes, communities and hope

WINTER 2020

FOUNDED 1988

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Brent Bohanan

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One More Move



Bouchra has moved 13 times since coming to the United States in 2007. Stability means everything to her and her family. If she and her husband, Hamid, hadn't been accepted to Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity, they would be facing another potential temporary move.

This family of five, one being Bouchra's elderly mother, is currently living in a third floor, two-bedroom apartment. When Hamid returns home from work late at night, he wants to unwind and watch television. However, TV is not an option since either his ten-year-old stepson or his mother-in-law are asleep in the living room. They rotate based on who needs more sleep that night.

Rent continues to rise each year, so thinking of upgrading to a three-bedroom is out of the question. And lack of space prevents them from downsizing. Furthermore, Bouchra's mother, Mina, is beginning to have difficulty climbing the three flights of stairs each day, and the apartment complex they live in does not permit lateral moves. In order to get a first-floor apartment, they have to downgrade or upgrade. Or they have to move elsewhere.

Hamid and Bouchra were accepted into the Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity homeownership program this past December. When asked what the waiting process was like, Bouchra said, "That was the most challenging process I've ever had. I prayed every single day. I sweat a lot. Every time. I'd say, may God give me the opportunity. I'd hope and pray that we'd be one of the candidates to be accepted."

They are looking forward to the entire construction process, including working alongside other future homeowners and volunteers. They also know that this means, no more moving. Mina will be comfortably on one floor and there will be enough bedrooms that no one has to sleep in the living room any longer. Additionally, this family will be able to make financial plans beyond tomorrow. Hamid and Bouchra are both in school, so this move into their own home will financially provide the means to graduate, find higher paying jobs, and to save for their children's college education.

"Following my dreams: a better life, a nice house, and a nice family. That's all that matters," said Hamid. "America is the land of opportunities. You have a lot of help. You also have a lot you have to do. If you work hard, you get what you want. I am excited. We're ready to be involved and get everything done. I'm ready for the backyard!" 🏠

Habitat for Humanity's 2019 Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project

Guest Writer and Project Participant: Rick Damato

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Greetings From Your Lawrenceville ReStore

If you've never been to the Gwinnett ReStore in Lawrenceville, you are missing out on this great resource. The ReStore is a good deal for you, your community and the environment.

Gwinnett ReStore is a home improvement store and donation center that sells new and gently used furniture, appliances, home accessories, building materials and more to the public at a fraction of the retail price.

So, how does Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity benefit from the ReStore? A portion of the profits goes to Gwinnett Habitat to help build strength, stability, & self-reliance through shelter. It's as simple as donate, shop, build homes!

To donate your gently used items, please give us a call on our donation hotline at **770-962-4200**, or schedule your free pickup online at: <http://suburbanatlantarestores.org/donate>.

We want you to know how grateful we are for your continued support. As a donor, shopper and volunteer, you help Habitat for Humanity build homes and hope for families right here in Gwinnett County.

Thank you,

The staff & volunteers at Gwinnett ReStore
 2100 Riverside Pkwy, Lawrenceville GA 30043



Each year beginning in 1984, Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) partners with former President Jimmy Carter and former First Lady, Rosalynn Carter, to stage a week of building in locations all over the US and the world. Each Carter Work Project is conducted in concert with the local affiliate of HFHI and consists primarily of building new homes but has also included development of entire neighborhoods and other community improvement initiatives. When President and Mrs. Carter started the Project in 1984, the resulting publicity vaulted Habitat for Humanity into the public spotlight.

The 2019 Project was held in Nashville, Tenn. Nashville has been riding a tide of explosive growth for over a decade. One of the consequences from all the growth has been dramatic increases in rents and home prices along with a shortage of homes and apartments. Not unlike what we have experienced here in Gwinnett. These increases in living costs have not been met with increases in wages, making it particularly difficult for working people, especially at the lower end of the wage scale.

The local affiliate in Nashville is the developer of a 175-home subdivision in north Nashville and the Carter Project worked on construction of 21 of these homes and provided construction costs for a total of 59 homes.

The future homeowners were on site working all week, including Noella and Mberye, who hope to move with their children into their finished home before the end of this year. Theirs is a fascinating story that began when they were resettled into Nashville from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Like the other homeowners, they will now be able to raise their young children in a stable, safe environment.

President and Mrs. Carter were characteristically energetic and spent the week on site building corbels that would be used on all 21 of the new homes. When asked about their experience for the week, Carter said that he and Mrs. Carter have, "...always gotten more out of it than we put in". This was their 36th Carter Project.

By all accounts the 2019 Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Work Project was a rousing success. Sure, there were sore muscles and maybe a bandage or two, but it was a well-organized and safe worksite. And best of all, the 21 homes will be completed on schedule! 🏠

Affordable housing meets many needs

Excerpt from Habitat.org

Quality housing — housing that is safe, healthy and affordable — is foundational to individuals and families, to the communities in which we live and to the economies in which we all participate.

Increased family stability and economic mobility, a greater sense of dignity and civic pride, stronger and more vibrant communities that can attract and keep business and manufacturing — these are all connected to stable, decent, affordable housing.

But millions in the U.S. struggle daily with housing costs. One in 3 families pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Worse, 1 in 6 families pay half or more on housing — a level deemed “severely cost-burdened.”

Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity has joined the Cost of Home Campaign through Habitat for Humanity International to advocate for policy solutions that will improve home affordability for rental and ownership and to help those in our own Gwinnett community have a decent place to live.

There are many ways to join us, including volunteering, sponsorships, and donations. Please reach out to see where you are best able to help provide affordable housing in Gwinnett. 🏠



Reach out to **Randi Sayers, Director of Philanthropy**, to learn more about these and other opportunities to invest in our mission to provide safe, decent, affordable housing in Gwinnett.

Email: rsayers@habitatgwinnett.org

Phone: 770-931-8080 x1025

Help Us Find Adequate Land and Properties!

As Gwinnett County continues to grow, acquiring land for Gwinnett Habitat's home projects is becoming more challenging. If you are aware of raw land for sale, or houses for sale that are in need of repair, renovation or demolition, we would love to hear from you!

We are looking for RAW LAND that:

- Is a buildable lot for a 1,200-1,500 square foot house
- Cost under \$40,000 (20% appraised home value)
- Could be donated (donor will receive a letter of donation for tax purposes)

We are looking for HOUSES to rehab or demo that:

- Cost under \$80,000
- Are salvaged due to storm damage/fire, foreclosed or are HUD properties
- Could be donated (donor will receive a letter of donation for tax purposes)

If you know or are aware of such properties or would like to speak to us about the sale or donation of your property, please contact our Executive Director, Brent Bohanan, at (770) 826-4638 or bbohanan@habitatgwinnett.org.

Thank you for your support and for helping us to create affordable housing in Gwinnett County.



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A Brush With Kindness helps Bobby and Vera



Last year, Bobby Moore and his 90-year-old mother, Vera, had the privilege of respectfully aging in place with help from Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity's program, A Brush With Kindness or ABWK. This critical home repair program serves low-income elderly, veteran, and disabled homeowners so that they can age in place and continue to live in safe, decent and affordable homes for years to come.

The Moore family has lived in their Buford neighborhood since the 1950s and Vera is proud that she was able to raise four kids in their home by herself. However, their home is over 60 years old and needed many critical repairs that they could not afford.

Our ABWK team has made the Moore's home safer and more accessible by:

- Installing a new accessibility ramp to their front porch
- Replacing rotted siding and trim and preserving remaining trim with exterior paint
- Replacing the dilapidated flooring and molded drywall in bathroom
- Installing an ADA-compliant toilet, sink, and walk-in shower stall to minimize future risk of falls

Bobby and Vera are just 1 of 32 households that our A Brush With Kindness team served with critical home repairs in 2019. This year, we plan to grow this home repair program by 40% to serve at least **45** households. 🏠



PO Box 646
Lawrenceville, GA 30046

Donate, Volunteer, Advocate

Join us in building **Better Homes** and **Brighter Futures** in Gwinnett County.

- Make a donation to Gwinnett Habitat
- Volunteer on one of our build sites
- Be an advocate: Share the Habitat story with others and help raise awareness

For more information, visit www.habitatgwinnett.org or call 770-931-8080.



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Executive Director's Corner

Now that 2020 is here, we want to share our exciting plans for the year. We are planning to construct six new homes in Gwinnett County next year. Five homes will be built in Snellville off Center-ville Rosebud Road. The other home will be built in Dacula near Hebron Baptist Church. Our Homeowner Selection Committee worked hard last fall selecting our new homeowners and we announced our new 2020 homeowners on January 1st.

This year we plan to follow the journey of one of our homeowners from start to finish. Check out an introduction to future homeowners, Bouchra & Hamid, and their family on page one. We are so excited that they are joining the Gwinnett Habitat family and that we can help provide the space and stability they desperately need. Be on the lookout for updates on our website and social media as construction begins on their new home in mid-February!

Thank you for supporting our mission and for being an important part of our team. Together, we are building strength, stability, and self-reliance through shelter. May God bless you and your family in the new year. 🏠

Brent S. Bohanan

Brent S. Bohanan - Executive Director