



WINTER 2015-16

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God Has Blessed Us with a New House

Meet the **Timite Family**. Abdoul and Awa emigrated from Cote D'Ivoire (*Ivory Coast*). They are the parents of two children... their daughter, **Imane** (5), and their son, **Ibrahim** (2)...and are awaiting the birth of their third child.

The family resides in a 2-bedroom apartment, with the children sharing a bedroom. The apartment presents severe health issues for Ibrahim, caused by mold.

Abdoul obtained work as a Crew Member with **Dunkin' Donuts** within a short time of arriving in the U.S. Awa works as a Unit Clerk at **Grady Health System** and is working on her second Associate's Degree at **Georgia Perimeter College**. Awa and Abdoul have an earnest desire to establish a healthy, affordable home for their young family, and view the availability of affordable housing by **Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity** as the means to that end.

In their homeowner application, Awa stated: *"Let me start by thanking Habitat for Humanity for providing this exceptional opportunity for those who really need it – like my family"*.

As the family gets closer to the closing of their home, Awa wanted to share the experience they have had during the construction:

"Among His many blessings, this season, God has blessed us with a new house. The construction of our house was quite an event for our family. Week after week, it was with great excitement that we watched an abandoned house transformed into a beautiful place to live. It is amazing how everybody got together to make this transformation a success. Our sponsor, 12 Stone Church, the volunteers, and all the other crew members were so involved! They worked with us compassionately and made this house construction a success! We even nicknamed one volunteer Janice, our superwoman! Dan, the Construction Manager, consulted us when needed and made sure the new house will include everything our family cares for. I can already imagine the kids running around the house, and sleeping in their own bedrooms. This was an experience of a lifetime and our family says thank you from the bottom of our hearts."



The Timite Family



The Bik Family

Families Reunite Thanks to Gwinnett Habitat

Last year, your time, effort and support reunited 10-year-old **Milian** and 13-year-old **Lian** who were living with their aunt because there was not space in the apartment with their parents and baby brother.

Today, thanks to our volunteers and donors partnering with us, their family is now together in a new home.

"After becoming a Habitat homeowner, there were many changes in our family: reuniting our families together, the freedom from stress from paying high rental housing payments, and being able to watch the children in our own backyard. When we went through the process,



Greetings from Your Habitat for Humanity ReStore

Hoping you and your family had a wonderful holiday season. With the New Year upon us you may have made a resolution to spruce up your home... “out with the old and in with the new.”

Your Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity ReStore would love to pick your slightly used furniture, appliances and home furnishings. Just call our **DONATION HOTLINE** today at (770) 962-4200 to schedule your **FREE** pick-up.

Don't forget to stop by your Habitat ReStore at 2100 Riverside Parkway, in the Kroger Shopping Center, to find some real treasures and bargains to give your home that new and unique look and feel.

We are so grateful for your donations and purchases. Your generosity will help us serve even more families in 2016 by building homes and hope in our community and around the world.

Thank YOU!

Warm Regards,

Drew Meyer

Sr. Director, ReStore Operations Group

SuburbanAtlantaReStores.org

World Financial Group ~ In the Business of Helping Families

For the 18 volunteers from World Financial Group, Inc. (WFG), helping build a frame that will soon become an affordable home for a waiting family in Buford, GA is a labor of love. WFG employees have participated in Habitat for Humanity builds in Gwinnett County since 2007 and have also worked on builds in other counties. The plan is to keep doing so well into the future.



“WFG is in the business of helping families, and as myself and our other WFG employees will attest to – this is something that’s both personal and professional for us,” Dwight Wood, WFG’s Vice President of Organizational Capabilities & Community Relations, said. “Out here, we’re helping fill the gap between people who can afford a home and those who cannot. These are working families who are not able to save for a down payment, but deserve a home. We’re not just building houses, we’re building better futures for these families.”

For almost a decade, Wood and WFG volunteers have been working with the Gwinnett County Chapter of Habitat for Humanity to build affordable homes throughout the area. According to Wood, over the years the WFG volunteers have worked on just about every job connected to homebuilding. “Framing, painting, landscaping, deck building. We’ve even built a retaining wall,” he said. “It’s rewarding work and, although we’ve worked in other metro-Atlanta counties, we find that it’s easier for most of our employees, who live in Gwinnett County, to get to the work sites when it’s a local build. We’ve also developed a great relationship with Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity.”

Building with Habitat for Humanity is good for employee team building and can even become a family project, says Eva Holloman, a WFG Habitat for Humanity volunteer. “Both my daughter and husband have come with me on the builds and it was a lot of fun for us. Sometimes I’ll drive past a house I helped build and it’s a thrill to see it.”

Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity is also appreciative of WFG’s contribution. At a recent employee meeting, WFG was presented with a plaque commemorating their years of services to the organization.



Dedicated volunteers from World Financial Group.

“When I bought my first home, I wasn’t making a lot of money, but I was able to use the G.I. Bill, which was a bonus for my years of military service,” Wood said. “But not everyone has that type of opportunity. Some people work everyday but they just can’t afford a home.”

“It’s always a very emotional ceremony when you turn the key over to a new family and it’s now their home,” Wood said. “The houses are not free – they have to pay their mortgage – but these families can afford them because we’ve helped reduce the cost of labor of the build. Plus, they can be proud of their new home, because the new homeowner was right there with us, working together to build their future.”

Based in Johns Creek, GA, WFG’s core value is to help families & individuals, from all walks of life, to plan for a better and more secured financial future through life insurance & other financial resources. WFG supports a variety of local organizations.

To learn more about becoming a Habitat church or business sponsor, please call the Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity office at 770-931-8080, ext. 15.

(continued from page 1) ~ **Families Reunite Thanks to Gwinnett Habitat**

we discovered that if you become a Habitat homeowner, you will feel like a millionaire, not a way in money, but in heart. That is certainly true for me and my family. Moreover, picking our own vegetables from our backyard is the most convenient ever! All these things are gifts from God through Habitat. Thanks again. ~Van Bik & Family



"I feel so blessed and so honored that someone thought enough about me to help me! It is all so beautiful, so sweet a feeling that so many people took time out of their busy lives to do something for me." ~ Susan B., *Buford Homeowner*

Susan is one of 21 families who received home repair services this year. Sugar Hill United Methodist Church, World Changers and Life Unlimited Church in Buford all had a hand in making needed preservation and repairs to her home. The home received a "face-lift" with outside painting, inside



Susan B. looks on with delight as volunteers make much needed repairs to her home.

painting, some plumbing repairs and installation of laminate flooring that Susan's son purchased but didn't have anyone to install. Susan has some health issues and with the removal of old carpeting and the installation of laminate flooring and new paint she now has a healthy and clean home to enjoy. Usually, *A Brush with Kindness (ABWK)* projects only address exterior needs but once the volunteers became involved with Susan, interior work was spearheaded by these volunteer groups.

ABWK provides vital home repair and preservation services to elderly and low-income homeowners. The program offers painting, landscaping, yard clean-up, weatherization, critical safety repairs and minor repair services to eligible homeowners so they can continue to live in safe, decent homes for years to come.

If you are interested in volunteering for *ABWK*, please call our office at (770) 931-8080. YOUR financial support is also greatly appreciated to make this program available to all the eligible homeowners in our community who apply.

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 in need of repair, renovation or demolition, let us know!

We are looking for RAW LAND that:

- ✓ is a buildable lot for a 1,200–1,500 square foot house
- ✓ cost under \$30,000 (20% of appraised home value)
- ✓ could be donated (*donor will receive a letter of donation for tax purposes*)
- ✓ are salvaged due to storm damage/fire, foreclosed or are HUD properties

We are looking for HOUSES to rehab or demo that:

- ✓ cost under \$60,000
- ✓ 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*)

Contact Brent Bohanan @ (770) 826-4638, bbohanan@habitatgwinnett.org.

Thank You for Investing in Deserving Families!

We believe that no family should have to raise their children in unsafe, sub-standard conditions and that hardworking families deserve a chance to become homeowners through a hand up rather than a hand out. YOU have changed everything for these Gwinnett County families.

Working together with YOU, we have positively impacted 24 families that include 40 adults and 19 children.

2015 Donations Received:

\$461,930 from:

- Individuals
- Businesses
- Churches
- Grants
- Foundations

\$291,188 of In-Kind Donations for:

- Goods
- Services
- Office Space
- Property

9,500 Volunteer Hours valued at **\$95,000**

Results of YOUR valued time/financial support:

- **Two** new home builds
- **One** home rehab
- **21** home repairs completed

Making affordable housing available has many facets. Home construction is only one of them. Having the funds to pay for the administration of selecting families, training prospective families, finding land and the funding to pay for it, office expenses and payroll, organizational costs, utilities, etc. are all expenses that we need funding for to carry out our mission.

We are grateful to YOU for YOUR support. Please visit our website for more information about our families and programs. Better yet, click the DONATE button on our website or return the attached envelope to continue making affordable housing in Gwinnett County a realistic dream for deserving families.

www.GwinnettHabitat.org



Executive Director's Corner

Welcome 2016! The New Year is here, ready or not. Before we focus on the year ahead, I would like to celebrate all we were able to accomplish in 2015 because of your support. We were able to serve more families in 2015 than in any other year in our 27 year history! We were able to serve 24 families with a new home or home repairs through our new home preservation program called *A Brush with Kindness*.

We are well on our way of reaching our goal at **Gwinnett Habitat** of serving 100 additional families by the end of FY2019. By serving at least 20 families a year, we will reach our goal. This past year was a record year, but 2016 promises to be a year where we serve even more families and provide even more hope for those in need of a hand up in our community. Together, we are changing lives.

This is only possible because of friends like you. **Thanks for all you do** to help us achieve our goal of building **Homes, Communities and Hope** in Gwinnett County. May God richly bless you and your family in 2016. Happy New Year!

Brent S. Bohanan ~ Executive Director



Contact Us:

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Office: 770-931-8080

Email: info@HabitatGwinnett.org

Please visit us at:

www.GwinnettHabitat.org

[Facebook.com/GwinnettHabitat](https://www.facebook.com/GwinnettHabitat)



Donate, Volunteer, Advocate

Become a *HopeBuilder* and help us meet the needs 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.GwinnettHabitat.org
or call 770-931-8080.