



PRESS RELEASE



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Habitat for Humanity Celebrates New Home for First Nations Family Marking 50th Build in Windsor

WINDSOR, Ontario, December 10, 2009 — Habitat for Humanity Windsor – Essex Inc. (HFHWE), Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and Can-Am Urban Native Non-Profit Homes (Can-Am) joined together to celebrate the completion of a new home for a First Nations family today.

Today's dedication ceremony marks an important milestone for Habitat for Humanity Windsor – Essex. They are also celebrating 50 builds in the City of Windsor. Since 1994, HFH Windsor – Essex has been coordinating volunteers and collecting building materials and funding to help families secure a home.

This build is the first Ontario partnership between an urban First Nation organization and Habitat to build a home specifically for a First Nations family under Habitat's Aboriginal Housing Program that aims to help more Aboriginal families access homeownership.

CMHC is the Lead National Partner for the Habitat for Humanity Aboriginal Housing Program. CMHC has supported this build with a \$10,000 SEED funding commitment and a \$10,000 donation from staff charitable activities, as well as CMHC's ongoing work in support of Habitat's Aboriginal Housing Program.

"Safe and affordable housing is particularly critical for our most vulnerable citizens, including Aboriginal Canadians," said Jeff Watson Member of Parliament for Essex, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and Minister Responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. "The Government of Canada, through CMHC, is proud to be the lead partner with Habitat for Humanity in helping to find creative housing solutions for Aboriginal families."

All Habitat homes are built by volunteers and the successful applicant families under the supervision of professionals. This is a cost-effective way of producing a home while giving families the opportunity to participate in the construction of their own residence.

"I'm very fortunate to have worked alongside our committed staff, volunteers, donors, community collaborators and partner family toward the successful completion of the 50th house of Habitat for Humanity Windsor-Essex Inc.," says Laura Gould, Executive Director of HFHWE. "We're also very proud that our landmark 50th build is Energy Star-certified and part of Habitat Canada's Aboriginal Housing Program".

"It's inspiring to see the significant and positive impact the Windsor – Essex Affiliate has had on our community. They have hosted both National and International Events, including the Ed Schreyer Work Project, the Annual Jimmy Carter Work Project as well as a Women's Build and Student Builds," says past HFHWE President, Rick Farrow. "It's wonderful to see that in their 15th year, they not only completed their 50th partner home but their first home for a First Nation family."

Also partnering on this project is Can-Am Urban Native Non-Profit Homes, which was started in 1988 by a group of volunteers who recognized an urgent need for affordable housing for First Nations people in the Windsor area. Currently, Can-Am has 81 single family homes, the Nash Kanonhsa Home and the Biimskiinodin Transitional House.

“Can-Am Urban Native Homes’ mandate is to provide safe, affordable rental housing in good neighborhoods,” says Margaret Messenger, Executive Director of Can-Am. “The greatest testament to our success is to have tenants go on to homeownership.”

Overall, Can-Am strives to improve the socioeconomic well-being of First Nations residing in Windsor through various housing initiatives and provides leadership and involvement on various activities and projects.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has been Canada’s national housing agency for over 60 years. CMHC is committed to helping Canadians access a wide choice of quality, affordable homes, while making vibrant, healthy communities and cities a reality across the country.

Habitat for Humanity Windsor – Essex is a non-profit, faith-based organization working for a world where everyone has a safe and decent place to live. Their mission is to mobilize volunteers and community partners in building affordable housing and promoting home-ownership as a means to breaking the cycle of poverty.

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