

**August 17, 2016**

## **HABITAT BREAKS GROUND ON 52<sup>ND</sup> HOME**

**FORT ERIE, ON** – It's been a while since Habitat for Humanity Niagara last built in Fort Erie so today's ground breaking ceremony was extra special. The land on Crescent Road was donated to Habitat Niagara where two houses will be built, the first one being constructed this fall.

This new Habitat home is being built for a local family of six, who immigrated to Canada in 2011. The family had to make the decision to flee their home country of El Salvador when they were threatened by gang violence. "It was difficult to leave our relatives and our home, but we had to protect our children," explains Carlos.

Carlos, a Dentist in his home country, is currently going to school to be able to work as a Dental Hygienist in Canada. Both Carlos and his wife Rocio are very active in their community of Fort Erie, helping other Latin families settle in Canada. When they were selected to purchase a Habitat home they "felt the outpouring of love and joy".

Owning a Habitat home isn't as simple as getting the keys and walking into a new home. Contrary to what people think, Habitat does not give away homes. Families purchase their Habitat home with an affordable, no-interest, no-down-payment mortgage. In addition, Habitat homeowners are required to commit 500 hours of 'sweat equity', helping build their own homes alongside volunteers and receive financial education and training.

"We all deserve to have a decent and safe place to live," says Alastair Davis, CEO of Habitat Niagara. "Together with the community, Habitat for Humanity builds affordable houses that give families the strength, stability and independence they need to create a better life for themselves and their families. It's a strong foundation that gives families a lasting and meaningful outcome."

Many local businesses and community groups have signed up to participate to help build the house through Habitat's Adopt a Day sponsorship program. The program allows 6 – 8 volunteers the opportunity to work on the build site for a day as a fun and interactive way to give back. A combination of volunteer hours and financial contributions double the group's impact. Whether or not individuals have ever swung a hammer or are already skilled in the construction field, they can all be part of Habitat's Adopt a Build Day program.

This is the first of two homes to be built on the Crescent Road lot and applications are currently being accepted for the second home, designated as an aboriginal build for families with native status.

Visit [www.habitatniagara.ca](http://www.habitatniagara.ca) for more details.

