



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Habitat for Humanity organizations across Canada recognized for their contributions to innovative housing solutions

*Habitat for Humanity Canada announces national award winners from twelve local organizations*

**Toronto, ON** – Habitat for Humanity Canada is celebrating the achievements of twelve local Habitats in providing impactful housing solutions to their communities across the country.

Habitats were recognized for several accomplishments in 2023, such as: supporting members of Saugeen Ojibway Nation in Ontario with critical renovations to housing; achieving the province's highest energy efficiency rating in a four-unit build in Castlegar, British Columbia; and developing a ride-share app for future multi-unit builds that offsets parking space requirements and helps provide more space for homes in Peterborough, Ontario.

In addition, Habitat for Humanity Northwest Territories' board chair Dave Hurley and Habitat for Humanity Southern Alberta's CEO Gerrad Oishi both received the prestigious Terry Petkau Legacy Award for their visionary leadership, commitments to partnership and innovation, and accomplishments in building more homes for families.

"Congratulations to this year's award winners," said Julia Deans, President and CEO of Habitat for Humanity Canada. "These awards highlight the exceptional work of local Habitats at a time when innovation, partnerships, and leadership are critical to responding to Canada's housing crisis, and to helping us fulfill Habitat for Humanity's vision and mission in Canada and around the world."

Here are this year's award winners:

- **Terry Petkau Legacy award – Outstanding Volunteer: Dave Hurley, co-founder and board chair, Habitat for Humanity Northwest Territories.** Since Habitat Northwest Territories' inception in 2012, Dave's passion and commitment has led the organization through transformational change. His ongoing collaboration with all levels of government, First Nations groups, and potential partners and funders has leveraged available resources to help this Habitat succeed while expanding its reach. Through Dave's visionary leadership, Habitat Northwest Territories transitioned from traditional builds to modular, prefabricated homes, enabling it to build faster, more sustainably and more affordably, all while increasing its annual number of home builds to better serve families in the North.

- **Terry Petkau Legacy award – Outstanding Staff: Gerrad Oishi, CEO, Habitat for Humanity Southern Alberta.** Gerrad joined Habitat Southern Alberta in 2015 and since then, his passion, perseverance, expertise and thoughtful leadership have led to more stable housing options for families. The organization developed a financing model to access land trust property in the City of Calgary for higher-density affordable housing. In 2022, Habitat Southern Alberta completed the largest build in its history, a 32-unit stacked townhome project. Last year, Habitat Southern Alberta generated \$6.3 million in sales through its three Habitat ReStore locations and online store, all to build more affordable housing in Calgary and nearby communities.
- **Environment and Sustainability winner: Habitat for Humanity Southeast BC** achieved its province's highest energy efficiency rating of Step Code 5 on its four-unit townhome build in Castlegar, British Columbia. The build included acoustical sound insulation and concrete floor topping to support lower levels of noise transmission – a difficult area in which to achieve sustainability, along with xeriscape landscaping to promote low water usage.
- **Expanded Impact winner:** In 2023, **Habitat for Humanity Grey Bruce** partnered with 12 families – a 200% increase in families served; assisted 34 families through its ReStore Community Services program; and supported 77 Saugeen Ojibway Nation members with critical renovations to ensure safe and habitable homes. Habitat Grey Bruce also hosted 47 youth participants through 61 hands-on skill-building training events at its First Nations build sites – engaging participants in active Reconciliation with First Nations.
- **Innovation winners:**
  - In 2023, **Habitat for Humanity Nova Scotia's** ReStore continued to implement innovative strategies to help make it a leading local social enterprise retailer in its province. This included partnering with non-profit organizations to provide meaningful employment opportunities; redistributing surplus donations to enhance community impact and reduce waste; forging strategic partnerships with local recycling and junk removal companies to redirect usable items from landfills to the ReStore; partnering with local realtors to promote its kitchen removal program; and leveraging digital platforms to further expand the ReStore's reach and impact. Since 2021, Habitat Nova Scotia's ReStore has increased its annual revenue by 84% to more than \$1.4 million in 2023, directly translating to more proceeds to support its affordable homeownership program.
  - **Habitat for Humanity Peterborough & Kawartha Region** has been successfully working with the City of Peterborough to reduce its parking requirements to 0.5 parking spaces per housing unit for future higher-density developments – maximizing its ability to build more homes. To offset this reduction in parking spots, in 2023 this Habitat forged a partnership with students at Trent University to develop an app for the organization's new car-share program. The program will provide future Habitat homeowners with access to an on-site, Habitat-owned vehicle that can be rented by the hour or day for a reasonable fee, reducing the homeowners' overall environmental footprint in local communities.

- **Family Partnership winners:** Habitat homeowners are our most important partners and ambassadors.
  - o **Habitat for Humanity Red Deer** has robust processes in place to support homeowner success. This includes opportunities for personal growth, homeownership education, and financial literacy through workshops such as *Good Neighbours* conflict resolution, *Maintenance and Warranties*, and its *Money Mentors* financial courses. Habitat Red Deer maintains steady contact with homeowners, including check-ins to ensure families are doing well. This includes natural relationship touchpoints such as newsletters, invitations to special events, and regularly bringing families into the Habitat ReStore through homeowner discounts.
  - o **Habitat for Humanity Southern Alberta** continually refines its processes to establish and maintain successful relationships with families who have become true ambassadors for the Habitat brand. This includes improving future homeowner volunteer experiences; homeowner training on condos and board governance; follow-ups on household warranties before expiry; quarterly homeowner newsletters on home maintenance; homeowner surveys conducted during the first, fifth and tenth years of occupancy; and families in mortgages receiving ongoing support during touchpoints three times a year.
  
- **Community Outreach winner:** **Habitat for Humanity Okanagan** engaged new donors and supporters through 50/50 lotteries, raising more than \$173,000 in lottery revenue in 2023. Habitat Okanagan's lottery revenue goes towards programming such as volunteer recruitment, volunteer retention, and Habitat ReStore safety, helping the organization to sustain itself while raising money to continue to build safe and affordable homes.
  
- **'One Habitat' award winners:** **Habitats for Humanity Hamilton, Huronia, New Brunswick, Okanagan and Prince Edward-Hastings** for demonstrating their commitment to Habitat's vision of a world where everyone has a decent place to call home. Last year these Habitats assumed responsibilities for other local Habitats due to mergers or to provide interim support during leadership transitions.

For a full description of each award and award winner, please visit <https://habitat.ca/en/news/twelve-local-habitats-recognized-for-their-work-as-national-award-winners-announced>

## About Habitat for Humanity Canada

Founded in 1985, Habitat for Humanity Canada is a national charitable organization working toward a world where everyone has a decent and affordable place to call home. Habitat for Humanity brings communities together to help families build strength, stability and independence through affordable homeownership. With the help of volunteers, Habitat

homeowners and 45 local Habitats working in every province and territory, we provide a solid foundation for better, healthier lives in Canada and around the world. Habitat for Humanity Canada is a member of Habitat for Humanity International, which was established in 1976 and has grown to become a leading global nonprofit working in more than 70 countries. For more information, please visit [www.habitat.ca](http://www.habitat.ca)

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