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## Habitat for Humanity jump-starts local funding efforts

By **MERLIN JnBAPTISTE**  
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Daily News Photos by SEAN McCOY Clive Rainey, Habitat for Humanity International director of community relations, gives the keynote address at a fundraiser Sunday at Coral World.

ST. THOMAS - Habitat for Humanity International of the V.I. kicked off fundraising efforts at Coral World on Sunday.

The chapter has raised more than \$60,000 since its inception a little more than a year ago, said Adrian Bishop, executive director. The first house will need \$100,000 for construction costs, he said.

"We need to raise \$150,000 every year to build one house a year," Bishop said.

The process to select the family to move into the first Habitat home will soon be complete, Bishop said.

"Habitat discourages waiting lists. We expect to select the family by the end of May and one backup family," Bishop said. He said 45 families applied for the tax-free, interest-free mortgage on the Habitat house that will be erected with donated materials and labor on the donated 4,000-square-foot Adele Gade lot.



U.S. Virgin Islands Habitat for Humanity president Tom Bolt speaks at the brunch.

André Galiber Jr. said the donated lot, where a greenhouse with a red tin roof once stood, holds special memories for his family. The house overlooking Garden Street belonged to his grandmother Adel nee Lanclos Galiber, a music educator who he said raised six children and taught music out of the family's home after she retired from the public school system.

"We had a view of the ocean and the neighborhood," Galiber, a radiologist at Luis Hospital, said Sunday. A slight breeze carried the sounds of schoolchildren playing within the gates of the Anglican Church.

Galiber's sister, Cecile Galiber DeJongh, donated the family lot to Habitat last year.

Habitat for Humanity typically builds wood-frame houses, but that won't be true for this house, Bishop said. "There won't be any crash-building here," he said. "These will be masonry houses built with hurricane resistance to decrease insurance premiums," Bishop said.

The new homeowners will have to put in some work for their home.

The chosen family must commit to "sweat equity," with adults contributing a suggested 200 hours of labor to the home's construction right along with the 400 program volunteers, Habitat president Tom Bolt said. "The program will provide permanent housing. This not a hand-out. It's a hand-up."

Bolt said the program will begin to include to St. Croix and St. John. "St. Thomas is the nucleus. We're branching out to the other islands immediately," he said.

The keynote address was given by Clive Rainey - Habitat's first volunteer in Americus, Ga., April 1, 1977. The former Dawson, Ga., middle school teacher said Habitat founders Millard and Linda Fuller recruited him to the Christian-based service organization.

The Fullers picked up on the concept of "partnership housing" at Koinonia Farm near Americus. Farmer and biblical scholar Clarence Jordan had founded an interracial Christian farming community in 1942, Rainey said. The Fullers applied the program in Zaire, where they lived for three years, and formed Habitat when they returned to the United States in 1976.

More than 200,000 houses have been built to date.

On Sunday at Coral World, more than 100 people participated in the "Let's build a house!" auction. Bids on items for a mock home, such as windows, toilets and the foundation, started from \$20 to \$5,000. The money from the auction goes toward construction of the real home.

For additional information about the V.I Habitat for Humanity visit [www.habitat.vi](http://www.habitat.vi) or call 714-5678.

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