



For Immediate Release

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**Habitat for Humanity Virgin Islands Breaks
Ground on First Home**

(St. Thomas, VI) - At Habitat for Humanity of the Virgin Islands the excitement is building. On Saturday, November 4, 2006 at 8:30AM, Habitat for Humanity will host a groundbreaking for its first home at No. 4 Adele Gade in the Garden Street area of St. Thomas. The event is open to the public.

Habitat will announce its first "partner family" at the groundbreaking. Cecile Galiber deJongh and the Galiber family donated the home site for Habitat's first project. It is the former home of their grandmother, Adele Louise Galiber. The home site which was devastated by Hurricanes Hugo and Marilyn will be restored to a three bedroom, two bath home for a Habitat family who is currently living in substandard housing. Habitat will also introduce its new Executive Director, Dianne Wells, at the groundbreaking.

The event will include the posting of permits; followed by remarks by Dr. Andre Galiber, Habitat's new Executive Director and Habitat President, Tom Bolt. "Truly this will be glorious day, a culmination of many years of work by many hands. We are witness to our community coming together to help one another," Bolt said. For public convenience, Habitat will provide shuttle service from the Fort Christian parking lot to the Habitat home site beginning at 8:00am.

There are several requirements to become a "Habitat Family" including living in inadequate housing, the inability to obtain a conventional mortgage and the ability to pay back the no interest mortgage loan, real estate taxes and insurance. "Habitat will help applicant families develop a budget and continue to provide support for the family after the homebuilding is complete," said Cliff Graham, Chair of Habitat's Family Selection Committee. "In addition to the other requirements, the Habitat Family will need to invest sweat equity into the home," Graham said.

Habitat for Humanity of the U.S. Virgin Islands was incorporated in January 2005 and is a Christian, faith-based non-profit organization that builds homes and hope through partnerships with individuals, businesses, and faith communities. Volunteers provide most of the labor and individuals and corporate donors provide money and materials to build Habitat homes. Habitat families invest hundreds of hours of labor - "sweat equity" - into building their homes, as well as the homes of others. Their mortgage payments go into a revolving fund, which is used to build more homes. Habitat is in need of home sites and is accepting donations of vacant land and homes in need of renovation. Habitat for Humanity International has more than 3,000 affiliates in 100 nations which have built more than a quarter of a million homes for Habitat families.

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