



## For Immediate Release

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### **Habitat for Humanity of Greater Providence and East Bay to Dedicate Providence Home to Local Family**

**PROVIDENCE, RI** (October 21, 2022) Selamnesh Area and her sons Yosef and Yosai are thrilled to be first-time homeowners. Selamnesh will receive the keys to her beautiful Habitat home in South Providence at a dedication ceremony on Saturday, October 22, 2022 at 12:00 PM. This opportunity would not have been possible without the support of more than 500 volunteers and corporate sponsors who donated invaluable resources.

Selamnesh and hundreds of volunteers have come together to build this home, and we are excited to celebrate all of their efforts and wish Selamnesh and her children all the best at the start of their homeownership journey. Senator Reed, Mayor Elorza, and other VIPs are confirmed to be in attendance at the event.

Azade Perin-Monterroso, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Providence and East Bay said, "Habitat's job is made easier when working with wonderful families like the Area's. We know children of homeowners compared to children of renters are 116% more likely to graduate from College and are 59% more likely to own a home within 10 years of moving from their parent's home. Homeownership also results in a better quality of life and the equity in the home creates generational wealth, which is why Habitat works so diligently to help families achieve homeownership."

"Habitat is a blessing for helping us," says Ms. Selamnesh Area, who cannot wait to move into this 4-bedroom, 1.5 bathroom home. "I am grateful for my family to have a better place to live, and a safer place to live."

Selmanesh and her two sons came to America as refugees escaping the totalitarian government in the East African country of Eritrea in 2009. The family lived in Utah until 2010, when they moved to Boston for the next three years. From knowing little to no English and lacking proper education to sending her boys to daycare all day to go to work, Selmanesh's mental and physical health deteriorated throughout her first few years in the new country. She describes the headaches she would get daily as the product of all the stress she underwent.

The three moved to Rhode Island in 2018 due to increasing rent prices in Boston. Since then, Selmanesh and her boys have fallen in love with the Ocean State, even claiming, "It is where God chose us to be." Despite the location change, Selmanesh has maintained her occupation in Boston – meaning that she has over an hour commute every day (Boston traffic permitting). Because of this, Selmanesh wakes up at 4:00 AM daily to prepare for herself for her fourteen-hour day and cook meals for her sons.

Despite her many hardships, Selmanesh has ensured stability for herself and her family. She has maintained sound finances through hard work and careful spending, even to have her eldest son in college. Selmanesh also strives to create as comfortable a life as possible for her sons, even if they are not in the best situation. Sacrifice is the one word best suited to describe her. No matter what she faces in her life, Selmanesh persists in providing stability for her boys, even if it adds some discomfort to her own life.

This philosophy – to sacrifice and keep faith in the face of adversity – has influenced Selmanesh's sons to become charitable and caring young men. Her oldest son, Yosef, is pursuing a career in nursing to help those in poverty or crisis. He also is passionate about charity and wishes for all of his money to be distributed to underprivileged individuals at the

end of his life. In addition to having a caring worldview, the two young men pray for their mother's safety and happiness every night. The family believes that their Habitat home is the answer to their prayers.

Habitat for Humanity Greater Providence is proud to welcome Selmanesh and her family as one of the first families accepted into our revamped Homeownership Program. Selmanesh represents the core idea of the American Dream: overcoming obstacles and making sacrifices to obtain success for oneself and one's family. Because of this, Selmanesh will be able to call herself a homeowner proudly. She describes this transition as "I felt handicapped until this day where I can stand up. This house will make me stand up." Selmanesh can stand now, but it is not because of the home. She has trained her muscles to get up through constant diligence. And now, she will have the opportunity to run.

***About Habitat for Humanity of Greater Providence and East Bay's Homeownership Program***

*People in Habitat's Homeownership Program partner with us to build brighter futures for themselves and their families. We work with individuals who might not otherwise qualify for a traditional mortgage. All Habitat for Humanity of Greater Providence and East Bay mortgages are provided at 0% interest.*

*Habitat homeowners must be active participants in building a better home and future for themselves and their families. Every Habitat home is an investment. For us, it is one answer to a critical need, and we believe that stronger homes will create stronger communities.*

- *Prospective Habitat homeowners must demonstrate a need for safe, affordable housing. Need will vary from community to community.*
- *Prospective households are low to moderate income. In the U.S., we serve families whose income does not exceed 60% of the area median income as defined for the area by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Homeowner eligibility and selection take place at the local level and it can vary from community to community.*
- *Once selected, Habitat homeowners must partner with us throughout the process. This partnership includes performing "[sweat equity](#)," or helping to build their own home or the homes of others in our homeownership program. Sweat equity can also include taking homeownership classes. We require 350 hours for a single applicant and 450 hours for co-applicants.*
- *Homeowners must also be able and willing to pay an affordable mortgage. Habitat makes a reasonable effort to ensure that an affordable mortgage does not exceed 30% of the homeowner's gross monthly income. Mortgage payments are cycled back into the community to help build additional Habitat houses.*

***About Habitat for Humanity of Greater Providence***

*Since 1987, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Providence (HabitatPVD) has been an independently chartered affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, the largest non-profit homebuilder globally. Our mission is dedicated to building decent, affordable housing with families that live in substandard and unaffordable housing and to make the need for affordable, safe, healthy, and efficient shelter a matter of conscience and action. [www.habitatpvd.org](http://www.habitatpvd.org); <https://www.facebook.com/HabitatPVD>; <https://twitter.com/HabitatPVD>; [https://www.instagram.com/habitatpvd\\_eb/](https://www.instagram.com/habitatpvd_eb/); <https://www.linkedin.com/company/habitatpvd>*

*Habitat for Humanity of Greater Providence knows first-hand that a decent home provides the strength, stability, and independence that individuals need to thrive. HabitatPVD's current strategy to fulfill its mission includes a first-time affordable homeownership program, a home repair and performance program, contractor incubator, and a home performance training institute.*

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