

The Garcia Family



At 4572 Kingston Road's Groundbreaking Ceremony, Habitat Toronto Homeowner Antonio Garcia (pictured here at the event with his wife Helen as they give Home Depot Canada Foundation's Gino DiGiacchino a commemorative hammer) gave a touching speech to over 100 guests about his family's struggles and hopes for their future. This is what he said...

"Home sweet home. This is the place to find happiness. If one doesn't find it here, one doesn't find it anywhere.

Generous Donors, Volunteers, Partner families, Staffs, friends, Good Morning!

Today, as we embark with the groundbreaking of this build site, 4572 Kingston Road and commence the construction of 29 simple, decent and affordable homes for families living in substandard housing in Toronto, I can't help but recall the apprehensions I had when we first came here in Canada, particularly here in Toronto, Ontario last September 2005 from the Philippines. "Where do we live? Where can I get a decent but affordable housing for my wife and three very young children? These are just a few questions that a new immigrant has to confront with when starting a new life here in Canada.

Eventually, we ended up living in a 2-bedroom apartment shared with another family in St. James town, a common reality amongst new immigrants. Nine months later, I moved my family to another building and rented a 2-bedroom apartment whose building was built in the 70's. The rent is just within our budget but the conditions are poor, health-wise and safe-wise and there are many reported crimes and drug dealings in the community. So I thought of moving again to a better and safer place for my kid's sake. Enter Habitat for Humanity Toronto.

We came to know Habitat for Humanity Toronto through a letter sent to us in August 2009 by Housing Connections, informing us that Habitat for Humanity Toronto is looking for people who may qualify to apply for their home ownership program. It said in a letter that is a non-profit, non-government, charitable organization dedicated to improving the lives of economically disadvantaged people like me through home ownership. It reads further that it sells homes for no profit to qualified partner families with an interest-free mortgage. Well, this makes me excited, I said to myself, this is a big help in realizing our dream of owning a house that we can call our home, our habitat. Without time wasted, I booked right away for an information Session, gathered all the required documents and submitted the application in October 2009. After just a few months, our application was approved in January 2010 and right now we're halfway of the required sweat equity and working vigorously to its completion and other requirements towards our ultimate goal, and that is to move in to our new house that we can call our own.

Well, this dream house of mine and so with other partner families longing to have one, is made possible through the support received by Habitat for Humanity from corporate donors, foundations, faith groups, individual donors and fund raising events. I am very grateful that we have generous donors that support the mission of Habitat for humanity and that is to build simple, decent, affordable homes in partnership with low income families. I am very thankful also to all volunteers who help in building these houses without material gains but to see happy faces from partner families when they move in their new houses. So in closing, I found the place where happiness is, and it is here in 4572 Kingston Road, my home sweet home and is made possible by you. Thank you very much."