



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Habitat for Humanity New York City Announces New Leadership Council**

*The advisory board will support the efforts of the Board of Directors and Habitat NYC's mission to provide affordable homeownership opportunities throughout the five boroughs*

March 2, 2017—New York, NY—[Habitat for Humanity New York City \(Habitat NYC\)](#), a major advocate for affordable homeownership in New York City, today announced the formation of the Leadership Council. As an advisory board that will support the Board of Directors and strengthen Habitat NYC's mission, the Leadership Council is comprised of a curated group of resourceful, accomplished New Yorkers.

"Bringing people together to help build community is at the very core of Habitat's mission all around the world. In New York City we are indeed fortunate to have an abundance of generous and passionate supporters dedicated to putting their influence to task and helping extend the reach of our organization. Together we are strengthening our mission of providing hardworking New Yorkers with the chance for homeownership," said Habitat for Humanity New York City CEO Karen Haycox. "To honor these talented individuals, and recognize their contribution, along with our Board of Directors, I am excited and proud to announce the launch of our new, Leadership Council. I look forward to working alongside them to propel our organization forward and strengthen the cause of affordable homeownership throughout the five boroughs."

The Leadership Council will be led by Chair Christine A. McGuinness, partner, Schiff Hardin LLP, and will draw on the unique skills of nearly 20 New York professionals, whose backgrounds include law, politics, residential and commercial real estate, faith, finance, athletics, entertainment, and more. The new advisory board will meet monthly and is tasked with harnessing the passion, commitment and enthusiasm of its diverse membership of contact-and-resource-rich ambassadors in support of and to elevate Habitat NYC's mission.

"Habitat NYC is a critical voice for affordable homeownership in New York City that puts real muscle behind its words," said Leadership Council Chair Christine A. McGuinness. "The Leadership Council will enable Habitat NYC to reach new levels of success and tap into the unique talents and networks of each of its members. We are all incredibly excited to support this organization and help make affordable homeownership a choice for all hardworking families."

The Leadership Council members include:

- Chair- Christine McGuinness, Schiff Hardin LLP
- Dr. Debbie Almontaser, Muslim Community Network

- Emily Bergl, actor
- Liz Blake, Habitat for Humanity International (retired)
- Erica Buckley, Stroock & Stroock & Lavan
- Amy Carlson, actor
- Denise Courter, FiDi Families
- Ron Darling, New York Mets (Retired)
- Pastor Ziddie Hamatheite, Wayside Baptist Church
- Marc Heinrich, McKinsey & Company
- Carmen Hughes, Handel Group
- Karim Hutson, Genesis Companies, LLC
- Blair Lichter, attorney
- Keith Mestrich, Amalgamated Bank
- Pastor Gilford T. Monrose, Mt. Zion Church of God 7th Day
- Lee Olesky, Tradeweb Markets LLC
- Blanca Ramirez, Hudson Housing Capital
- Councilman Donovan Richards, New York City Council Member
- Martha Speranza, candidate for New York City Council

The [Board of Directors](#), led by chair Doug Morse, will remain responsible for Habitat NYC's governance and be the vital leadership role in making strategic decisions about the immediate and longer-range direction of the organization, as well as identifying and obtaining essential financial support.

Habitat for Humanity New York City transforms lives and communities by building and preserving affordable homes for hardworking, lower income families. Its unique model combines the “sweat equity” of Habitat homebuyers with that of volunteers and contractors to build high quality homes at lowered costs. Partner families pay a 1% down payment and a low, fixed-interest rate mortgage. To learn more about homeownership through Habitat or volunteer opportunities, visit [www.HabitatNYC.org](http://www.HabitatNYC.org).

#### **About Habitat for Humanity New York City**

Habitat for Humanity New York City transforms lives and communities by building and preserving affordable homes with hardworking families - and by uniting all New Yorkers around the cause of affordable housing and homeownership. With the help of thousands of volunteers each year, Habitat NYC builds and repairs homes for families across the five boroughs. Learn more at [www.HabitatNYC.org](http://www.HabitatNYC.org) and connect with us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) at @HabitatNYC.

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