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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Habitat for Humanity Helps to Revitalize Two Depressed Neighborhoods, Rehabbing Buffalo Houses

Buffalo, New York (June 24, 2017) — Habitat for Humanity Buffalo will celebrate the dedication of two rehabbed houses in the City of Buffalo on Saturday, June 24, 2017 in two ceremonies, at 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. The houses are located at 390 Dewey Avenue and 290 Germania Street respectively.

The house located at 390 Dewey Avenue (ceremony at 10:00 a.m.) was acquired by Habitat Buffalo in 2016. The previous homeowner was in the middle of remodeling the house when she ran out of resources, and was nearing foreclosure. Habitat helped the individual avoid the foreclosure process and pay back debts owed on the property. On Saturday, the home will be dedicated to the Minani Family.

The house located at 290 Germania Street (ceremony at 12:00 p.m.) was donated to Habitat Buffalo in June 2016, in partnership with Assemblyman Mickey Kearns and the WNY Laws Center through the Zombie Property Initiative. The house sat vacant for nearly a decade, after it had been converted into a multifamily unit. Over the past year, Habitat has invested heavily into making this home livable: repairs were made to the foundation, every wall within the house was replaced, and the home was returned to a single-family unit. The house will be dedicated to the Lay Family.

These two houses are among the last rehab-ready homes in Habitat Buffalo's inventory. Historically, nearly two-thirds of all Habitat construction projects have been rehabbed houses. Today, as Buffalo property values continue to climb, house donations have fallen significantly, forcing the organization to build more new houses.

"Of the nearly 300 houses we've built to date, nearly 200 have been vacant or abandoned donated properties," said Teresa Bianchi, Executive Director of Habitat Buffalo. "We are seeking new ways to acquire house that can be rehabbed, and ways to defray the additional expenses of constructing new-builds."

Saturday's ceremonies will be attended by the new homeowners and their families, Habitat Buffalo staff and volunteers, and representatives from Bank of America, who sponsored the construction at 290 Germania. Those interested in donating a home to Habitat Buffalo should contact the Habitat office at 716.204.0740.

Habitat for Humanity Buffalo works to build strength, stability, and self-reliance through homeownership. Habitat Buffalo was established by a group of dedicated volunteers, concerned about the lack of affordable homes in the City of Buffalo. Seeking to create homeownership opportunities for low income families, Habitat Buffalo subsidizes the cost of homes through donations (both, monetary and materials) and volunteer labor. Families that purchase homes through our program are required to first contribute 500 hours of "sweat equity", working alongside community volunteers to construct their home and the houses of other families in the program. Once approved, families purchase their homes from Habitat Buffalo by paying a low-interest, affordable monthly mortgage. For more information, visit www.habitatbuffalo.org.