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Shovels in the Dirt, Hope in the Air: Habitat Celebrates Groundbreaking in West Palm Beach

West Palm Beach, FL (June 9, 2025)— Habitat for Humanity of Greater Palm Beach County, alongside the Nerestin family, celebrated a joyful milestone with a Groundbreaking Ceremony in West Palm Beach, marking the start of construction on the family's future home.

The event was made possible through the generosity of the Marshall E. Rinker Sr. Foundation (Home Sponsor), and Land Sponsors: The City of West Palm Beach and the Urban League of Palm Beach County. Dozens of community members, local officials, sponsors, volunteers, and Habitat supporters gathered to commemorate this life-changing moment for Garry and Wila Nerestin and their five children.

Originally from Haiti, the Nerestin family has called Palm Beach County home while working tirelessly to build a better future. Garry, a groundskeeper for a local municipality and active church volunteer, and Wila, a devoted caregiver and congregational cook, have dreamed of owning a safe, stable home for their children. "This means everything to us," said Wila Nerestin. "It's not just a house—it's where we'll build memories as a family and give our children the chance to grow up with the stability we never had."

The morning ceremony featured remarks from Habitat leadership, representatives from partnering organizations, and a ceremonial first shovel of dirt. The event concluded with warm wishes for the construction ahead and the promise of a brighter future for the Nerestin family.

"Today isn't just about breaking ground—it's about building a future filled with hope and possibility," said Jennifer Thomason, CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Palm Beach County. "We're thrilled to stand beside the Nerestin Family as they take this first step toward homeownership, and we're deeply grateful to the partners and supporters who are making this dream a reality."

This home is part of Habitat's mission to bring people together to build homes, communities, and hope. The Nerestin family will work alongside volunteers to help construct their home, putting in "sweat equity" hours as part of their partnership with Habitat, and will purchase the home with an affordable mortgage.

About Habitat for Humanity of Greater Palm Beach County:

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Palm Beach County is a 501©(3) organization and an affiliate of a global nonprofit, Habitat for Humanity International serving Palm Beach County. Families and individuals needing safe and affordable housing partner with Habitat for Humanity to build or improve a place they can call home. Habitat homeowners help build their own homes alongside volunteers and pay an affordable mortgage. Through financial support, volunteering, or adding a voice to support affordable housing, everyone can help families achieve the strength, stability, and self-reliance they need to build better lives for themselves. Through shelter, we empower. To learn more, <https://habitatgreaterpbc.org>

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