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**10 NYC COUPLES CELEBRATE VALENTINE'S DAY ON HART STREET,
BUILDING AFFORDABLE HOMES WITH [HABITAT FOR HUMANITY - NEW YORK CITY](#)**

Volunteers Also Raised More Than \$7,500 to Cover Construction Costs

Brooklyn, NY, Feb. 13 – Ten New York City couples made the Valentine's Day holiday extra memorable by celebrating it on a Habitat for Humanity construction site – appropriately located on Hart Street in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn.



They arrived with sleeves rolled up, hammer in hand, and ready to build affordable homes for fellow New Yorkers! This incredible group ditched their Broadway tickets and elegant meals this Valentine's Day weekend for a day out on a construction site with [Habitat for Humanity - New York City](#).

These enthusiastic volunteers also raised more than \$7,500 to help cover construction costs for the new homes on Hart Street and Lafayette Avenue. The four-story, four-unit affordable condominium building, where they installed Sheetrock and painted walls, is one of [four new Habitat-NYC buildings in Bedford-Stuyvesant](#).

So what exactly prompts 20 people to choose a dusty construction site over a quiet romantic weekend?

Here are some of their stories:

Celebrating their first ever Valentine's Day together, **Victoria Wagner** and **Anthony La Porta** debated about going away somewhere warm. Instead they decided "it would be far more rewarding and memorable a holiday weekend if we were able to help those in need!" Victoria explained. "My New Year's resolution was to start doing more volunteer work in 2010. I was so excited to learn that Anthony was interested in volunteering more as well!"

"This is our Valentine's gift to each other," said **Mary Ann DeJesus**, who worked alongside her husband **Jose DeJesus** to paint an apartment. "This is a really fun way to spend Valentine's Day with the man I love, doing the things I love."

(Over)

"It's great to think that there will be a family living in this room," said **Lee Donner**, pausing to survey the bedroom he and **Sarah Weintraub** were painting. "We've always wanted to do a Habitat build, and this seemed like a good opportunity."

"We can go to the movies or out to dinner any time," said **Ted Murphy**. His Valentine, **Laura Grave**, added, "We go out often – we wanted to take a day and do something different."

Sarah Tabia and **Elissa Greenfield** have been friends since college and moved to the city together in 2008. While they wanted experience everything the city had to offer and give back to the community, they were never able to find a program that fit into our busy lifestyles. When they heard of Habitat-NYC and the Valentine's Build, they thought, "This would be a *perfect* opportunity for us to service this great city that we have grown to know and love."

"My girlfriend and I were thrilled when we heard about the Valentine's Day Build because the day offers a way to show our love by sharing our love", said **Naomi Flinchum**, who will be building with **Daniela Marquez**. "We value community service and are looking forward to working together to give back this Valentine's Day. We are both incredibly thankful for the many ways we are blessed and hope to send a little love this February for the lots of love we've received."

The Valentine's volunteers worked alongside **June Hooper**, a family partner/homeowner who will be moving into a Habitat-NYC house in Ozone Park, Queens.

June and her seven-year-old son Michael currently share a bed in the basement of a very overcrowded house. A single mother who works fulltime in patient transport at a hospital, June says she "can't wait to move in." Michael is so excited that "every day he talks about our new home," she adds.

Habitat for Humanity - New York City transforms lives and our city by building quality homes for families in need and by uniting all New Yorkers around the cause of affordable housing. With the help of thousands of volunteers every year, Habitat-NYC has built more than 220 affordable homes in the five boroughs of New York City.

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