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Innovative Solution to the Homelessness Crisis Launched in Downtown Toronto
Downtown Toronto building to be Transformed through Raising the Roof's Reside Program

[Toronto, Ontario]: Raising the Roof has completed the latest Reside project in downtown Toronto, providing affordable housing with supports and construction career opportunities for vulnerable people. The Reside program renovates vacant properties into affordable homes for people who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness. Reside renovations are used as a vehicle to train and employ people with barriers to employment. The goal is to connect the work of affordable housing creation with the people who most need the opportunity for employment, preventing homelessness through both housing and employment training with supports..

Raising the Roof acquired a vacant single family home from the City of Toronto's Tenants First program (deemed "uninhabitable" by Toronto Community Housing) and renovated it into a safe, affordable home for a refugee family. Houses Opening Today Toronto (HOTT), a housing agency that has been providing support to refugees and other vulnerable people in the community since 1987, is providing wraparound supports for the tenant family. Through Raising the Roof's social enterprise partner, Building Up, 38 people with barriers to employment received hands-on trades training through this project.

The completed Reside homes have been very successful training centres. 85% of past trainees obtained permanent full time employment in the trades after completion of the program. The jobs that the Reside trainees are being trained for are full time, high paying jobs with advancement opportunities, often as unionized apprentices. Buildforce Canada has estimated that over the next decade, nearly 100,000 construction workers will be needed across the province to keep pace with the rate of retirement in the industry. There is a great need for workers and a great opportunity for personal and professional growth in the construction industry. Most of the trainees who worked on this project in downtown Toronto have already obtained full time positions in the construction sector. Raising the Roof ensures, through the wraparound supports for construction work trainees, that they not only get a job but truly break the cycle of poverty.

Due to the green building principles employed by Building Up throughout this renovation, trainees also had the opportunity to participate in high performance building science practices such as building envelope improvements and air tightness, smart vapour control layers, energy efficient windows, providing healthy indoor air quality through high efficiency heat recovery ventilation, and focusing on low and carbon negative materials. Through efficient project design this project will exceed the requirements for post-construction energy audits, allowing the future occupants to enjoy the use of an energy efficient and healthy home. The people trained through this project had the opportunity to learn advanced sustainable building practices, preparing them to be leaders in the construction sector.

With support of the Reside program sponsors, The Home Depot Foundation, Peter Gilgan Foundation and Catherine Donnelly Foundation, and through project investments from The City of Toronto, RBC Foundation, La Fondation Emmanuelle Gattuso, Toronto Atmospheric Fund, Grosvenor Group, Ontario Realtors Care and an anonymous corporate founding partner, the project is fully fundraised and will be able to be operated as affordable for at least 99 years. The project is a prototype for an innovative model of affordable housing creation and prevented homelessness for 44 people in Toronto through housing and employment with supports.

Raising the Roof is at a critical time of growth and is ready to take the successful Reside program and expand it to new projects and communities across Canada. They are actively seeking new properties to implement the Reside program and create a wide-spread impact on homelessness across Canada. Learn more or buy a toque in support of the program at www.raisingtheroof.org.

"The Reside Program is a fantastic initiative that provides homes for those in need while also providing training and career development for those searching for employment. It's a win-win for everyone and I'm so glad to have this program in Ward 14. I'd like to extend my thanks to Raising the Roof, Houses Opening Today Toronto and all those involved. We need to continue building more quality, affordable housing and implementing these types of innovative programs."

-- Councillor Paula Fletcher, Ward 14, Toronto-Danforth

"The City of Toronto is excited to see this project completed. As part of the City's Tenants First Initiative, houses owned by Toronto Community Housing have been transferred to non-profits to ensure affordability into the future. This project is a successful example of how the City can work with non-profit partners."

— Jenn St. Louis, Manager Tenants First, City of Toronto

"We are very excited to be able to provide another successful affordable renovation in Toronto - this is another example of the powerful social impact and sustainability that can be provided by the Reside program. We are already searching for our next

opportunity for Reside to contribute to the community and we look forward to creating new holistic housing projects in the near future."

-- Adrian Dingle, Director of Housing Development, Raising the Roof

"Building Up is thrilled about our growing partnership with Raising the Roof. Raising the Roof provides our participants with the unique training opportunity of first hand work experience in construction. By renovating vacant spaces into energy efficient affordable housing our participants build not only their skills, confidence and employability, but they also go home proud of the work they have done. Our work with Raising the Roof gives us the ability to truly set our participants up for success in both their careers and their lives."

--Tarah Clark, Partner, Chief Operating Officer, Building Up

"HOTT is delighted to be partnering with Raising the Roof to support a refugee family with the opportunity of having a long-term, stable and affordable home in Toronto. We have great respect for Raising the Roof as an organization and the innovative, transformative approach they take to creating housing and career development opportunities through the Reside Program. Their approach has a high impact on individual lives as well as providing broader social and community benefit by renovating housing that would have otherwise been vacant. As HOTT continues working hard to provide affordable housing and a helping hand in communities across Toronto, Raising the Roof's dedication and the support of many wonderful partners means that we are making the most of every available opportunity to provide housing to those who need it most."

--Lisa Horrocks, Executive Director, Houses Opening Today Toronto (HOTT)

About Raising the Roof:

For 24 years, Raising the Roof has been a national leader in homelessness prevention. Their research and pilot projects are used by organizations across the country to prevent and end homelessness in their community. The iconic Toque Campaign has raised over \$8 million for over 200 homelessness prevention programs across the country. Raising the Roof's Reside program renovates vacant properties into housing for people who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. The renovations of these properties are used as a vehicle to train and employ people with barriers to employment through social enterprise contractors. 85% of people who worked on past Reside projects obtained full time positions in the trades. <https://raisingtheroof.org/>

About Building Up:

Based on successful non-profit social enterprise models across the country, Building Up was developed in Toronto to improve the city's environmental efficiency, affordable housing stock, and most of all – to create a real pathway for individuals experiencing barriers to enter apprenticeships and careers in the trades. Participants of their trades training program graduate into careers with employer and union partners that are looking to fill significant labour shortages for well paying apprenticeship positions. Each trainee is paid for their hours in the program, reducing barriers to participation for their target population. <https://www.buildingup.ca/>

About Houses Opening Today Toronto (HOTT):

HOTT has been providing tenant support and affordable housing in Toronto since 1987. HOTT's model is founded on respect, relationship building, and a desire to meet the challenges of providing quality, affordable housing. HOTT is a responsible and ambitious organization, rising to the needs of our community through meaningful and reliable support programs. <https://www.hott.ca/>

For more information, please contact:

Leslie Bellingham, Director of Partnerships

Raising the Roof

289-821-0008

leslie@raisingtheroof.org

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