

Arya Samaj Greater Houston Volunteers join Habitat for Humanity team to build a house for a Family affected by Hurricane Harvey

By

Kanika Talwar & Aditya

Jacklyn's family, who lives in the 59-S / Tidwell, Houston area, was hosting a television event with 25 guests during the weekend of the highly destructive rainstorm Harvey. Little did they realize that in mere hours, their home and their guests' cars parked would suddenly be flooded. Jacklyn and her three kids had their home ripped away from them as it fell under the power of the hurricane. They were forced to quickly get acclimated to temporary crowded housing and a new school for the kids. This move caused much anxiety, financial loss, and a complicated future ahead for the children. Houston Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit local organization helping hard-working, low income families impacted by Harvey to get back on their feet. The organization provides zero-interest mortgage loans to first time home buyers to build affordable homes for low income Houstonians, with the help of local volunteer support.

It all started with visit from a young man Jacob Starr of Habitat for Humanity to Arya Samaj a few weeks ago. He explained their simple mission: 'Everyone deserves a Home', and how they go about achieving their objective with the help of the community. His brief talk inspired Arya Samaj members to sign up immediately for next volunteering opportunity. Arya Samaj motto ' "Krinvanto Vishwam Aryam" meaning "To Make the World Noble", perfectly aligns with Habitat for Humanity objectives.

Arya Samaj of Greater Houston, under the guidance of Anil Gupta ji, worked with Houston Habitat to help out in signing up, volunteering, raising funds to buy materials, and helping build a new home for Jacklyn and her family. ASGH's strong team of 30 members, including 10 AKM youth members, signed up to help build this new house on November 11th at 8700 Texas Acorn Drive in Tidwell, an area which fortunately did not flood. Taking up this field work was a completely unique and first time experience for most of the ASGH team. ASGH's enthusiastic team members, including the AKM youth members, homemakers, engineers, accountants, and dedicated professionals, arrived at 7:30 AM sharp to the new home site under construction. The purpose and safety of the project was clearly explained in the beginning by the Houston Habitat volunteers. The team started working with safety, good cooperation, constant leadership, and communication in lifting, moving, and installing heavy roof girders on top of the new home structure quickly. Everyone came together to join forces and complete the roof work right on schedule and then proceeded to install nails all around the walls of the house (6 inches apart all over the home to the city code so that they would pass inspection). Lunch was sponsored by Subway for the entire team courtesy Dinesh Aggarwal ji, and all the tools and equipment were put back safely and neatly for the next group of volunteers.

With new permanent homes built by the loving hands of Houston Habitat for Humanity, children of families displaced by flooding have their rightful chance for a brighter future, including the comfort of staying in their same familiar schools. Families moving into these homes put in up to 300 hours of exhausting physical work, learning about maintenance of the home, and financial planning to pay for them. Arya Samaj of Greater Houston raised \$5000 in just a few weeks to buy materials for the new home. Families will get to return to their lives much quicker, and a higher percentage of these kids will be able to graduate from high school and then go on to college to become successful members of society than they would have been without Habitat for Humanity's care.

ASGH can be reached at <https://www.facebook.com/AryaSamajOfGreaterHouston/> or <http://aryasamajhouston.org/>



**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY BELIEVES
THAT EVERYONE DESERVES A HOME.
ON 11 NOVEMBER, SATURDAY**

**ARYA SAMAJ WILL HELP IN BUILDING A
HOUSE.**



Arya Samaj Team helps build a home for Habitat for Humanity











