



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

May 30, 2022

### **Niagara Falls student wins \$10,000 grant to Habitat for Humanity Niagara in national writing contest**

**NIAGARA FALLS, ON** The annual Meaning of Home contest asks students in grades 4, 5, and 6 to share what home means to them. Grade 5 Niagara Falls student Diya C. is a runner up, earning a \$10,000 grant for Habitat for Humanity Niagara.

For the third year in a row, a record number of students shared what home means to them in Habitat for Humanity Canada's Meaning of Home contest. Over 13,000 students entered, beating last year's record by more than 1,000 entries and raising over \$311,000 for local Habitat for Humanity organizations across Canada.

By sharing what home means to them, students learn about affordable housing issues in their community and raise funds to help build homes for people in need of safe and decent housing. In addition to three grand prize winners who won a \$30,000 grant each for a local Habitat, nine runners up have won a \$10,000 grant and every student who entered the contest earned a \$10 donation for their local Habitat.

"Having a safe, decent and affordable home to live in is the foundation for families to build a better life," said Mark Carl, Habitat Niagara CEO. "In reading Diya's submission, she shares that home is a place where she feels safe and secure, and she mentions that home was a place where she spent most of her time during the Covid pandemic, which made her realize that a home is more than just four walls and one roof. It's for reasons like that why we continue building and advocating for more affordable housing and homeownership in Niagara."

The Meaning of Home contest would not be possible without the generous support of Founding Sponsor, Sagen™, Award Sponsors Urban Systems Foundation, Chapman's Ice Cream, and Home Trust, and Judging Sponsors Microban 24, Face to Face Games, and Hunter Douglas.

"We could not be more proud that this contest continues to grow year over year," said Stuart Levings, President and CEO of Sagen. "Children across Canada are provided the unique opportunity to be a part of something so important on a national scale while helping their local community at the same time, all with a short poem or essay."

To read all the winning entries, including Diya's submission, please visit [meaningofhome.ca/page/winners2022](https://meaningofhome.ca/page/winners2022)

#### **About Sagen™**

As a sponsor since 2000, Sagen has donated over \$6.8 million in support of Habitat Canada and has helped thousands of Canadian families realize their dreams of affordable homeownership. While Sagen's financial support provides crucial funding for their homeownership program, its support of Habitat Canada extends far

beyond financial support. Throughout the sponsorship, Sagen employees from all levels of the organization, including President and CEO Stuart Levings and his executive team, have lent their leadership experience, industry knowledge and time to help launch many of Habitats' signature programs, including the Sagen Homebuilding Grants, Global Village Volunteer Program in Canada and the Meaning of Home Contest. These programs, along with Sagen's support and involvement in them has significantly increased their ability to raise funds, recruit volunteers and ultimately, support more families and build stronger communities. Find out more at [www.sagen.ca](http://www.sagen.ca)

### **About Habitat for Humanity Niagara**

Habitat Niagara builds safe, decent, and affordable homes, providing no down-payment, interest-free mortgages to qualifying families who would otherwise not be able to purchase their own homes. Habitat is not a giveaway program in that we provide "a hand up not a handout." Established locally in 1993, Habitat Niagara is constructing its 71<sup>st</sup> home in Niagara at the end of this year, serving 77 families over the past 29 years, creating stable and secure housing for more than 270 children.

Habitat for Humanity Niagara also operates a home improvement retail store – the ReStore – selling donated new and used appliances, furniture, kitchens, building materials and home supplies. Habitat for Humanity ReStores play an integral part in Habitat's mission, providing financial support for our work. The Niagara ReStores are located at 2499 Hwy 20, Fonthill, 185 South Service Road, Grimsby, and 150 Bunting Road, St. Catharines. For more information, please visit [www.habitatniagara.ca](http://www.habitatniagara.ca)

### **About Habitat for Humanity Canada**

Founded in 1985, Habitat for Humanity Canada is a national charitable organization working toward a world where everyone has a decent and affordable place to call home. Habitat for Humanity brings communities together to help families build strength, stability and independence through affordable homeownership. With the help of volunteers, Habitat homeowners and 49 local Habitats working in every province and territory, we provide a solid foundation for better, healthier lives in Canada and around the world. Habitat for Humanity Canada is a member of Habitat for Humanity International, which was established in 1976 and has grown to become a leading global non-profit working in more than 70 countries. For more information, please visit [www.habitat.ca](http://www.habitat.ca).

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