



INDIA CANADA FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE

...forging close ties among Canadians with an interest in India

announces its panel discussion event

**on Sunday, 29 March 2015, 3:00 – 5:00 PM (Registration from 2:45 pm)
at Palki Cuisine of India, 1060 Ogilvie Road, Gloucester**

Habitat for Humanity Canada – Providing a Hand Up

Jayshree Thakar, Bryan McDonald, Alexis Ashworth



Even Canada is not immune to the challenges of housing accessibility and affordability faced by low-income communities such as those living in aboriginal communities and inner-city areas. These challenges are even more acute in emerging economies and developing countries like India, where the problems are exacerbated by a large population and increasing imbalance in supply and demand, especially as millions are moving from rural to urban areas in search of livelihoods. In addition, limited access to housing finance (which most Canadians take for granted) makes it even more challenging for lower-income households to meet their housing needs.

Founded in 1985, Habitat for Humanity Canada is a national, non-profit organization working towards a world where everyone has a safe and decent place to live. With the help of over 63,000 volunteers every year and 58 affiliate organizations from coast to coast, their mission is to mobilize volunteers and community partners in building affordable housing and promoting homeownership as a means to break the cycle of poverty in Canada and around the world. Habitat for Humanity Canada is a member of Habitat for Humanity International, which has built, rehabilitated, repaired or improved more than 1 million houses worldwide, providing better shelter for more than 5 million people.

Jayshree Thakar will share some of the efforts undertaken by Habitat at home, as well as in the international arena through its Global Village Program and provide a broad overview of Habitat's work while **Bryan Macdonald** who has just returned from Goa building a home for a partner family will share some wonderful stories, and **Alexis Ashworth** will talk about some of the exciting projects under way in the Ottawa area. For more information, please visit www.habitat.ca

About the Speakers

Jayshree Thakar, National Manager Aboriginal Housing Program, Habitat for Humanity Canada

Jay leads Habitat for Humanity Canada's Aboriginal Housing Program. Over the last five years, well over 100 Aboriginal families have realized their dream of affordable homeownership. She passionately pursues the cause and envisions that many more Aboriginal families will partner with Habitat in coming years. Jay retired from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) in early 2012. As CMHC's International Division Director of Business Development, she promoted the core principles of Canada's housing and mortgage-finance system globally and pursued opportunities for Canada's housing export industry in foreign markets. Jay, an Architect-Planner has worked with Canada's largest Builders and Developers and launched her career in Ottawa in 1978.

Bryan McDonald, Team Leader (Global Village)

Bryan McDonald lives in Ottawa, Ontario and is a general contractor who spends his working days renovating older homes. He is married with 2 kids of his own and he and his wife have had numerous foster kids over the past 15 yrs. Since his first Habitat trip to Costa Rica, Bryan has been captivated by the Habitat spirit and hopes to be able to go on 2 builds per year. India was his 11th Habitat trip, 10th as a leader. Bryan has been to Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Jordan three times, Cambodia, Bolivia, Portugal, Nepal and China with Habitat.

Alexis Ashworth, CEO Habitat for Humanity, National Capital Region

Alexis has been passionate about the organization since 2004 when she became their Executive Director in Halifax. She holds a B.Comm (Finance) and an MBA in International Development Management. Born and raised in Halifax, Alexis has lived and worked in countries around the world and her international interest is taking her to Ethiopia for a 2015 Habitat Global Village build. Alexis' career has spanned from the investment industry to banking to non-profit. Volunteerism and community involvement has been an important part of her life, having served as a Big Sister with Big Brothers and Sisters, a board member for Fusion Halifax, a Connector for recent immigrants with the Greater Halifax Partnership, and a Judge for Youth in Motion's Top 20 Under 20 awards.

About India Canada Friendship Circle

India Canada Friendship Circle (ICFC), a non-profit Canadian organization, operating in Ottawa since 2004 and conducting lectures by prominent speakers, encourages dialogue on India in a non-religious, non-partisan and harmonious environment. The words "friendship" and "circle" in its name, convey an explicit desire to forge and maintain close ties among Canadians with an interest in India.

ICFC's mission is to promote an intercultural relationship between India and Canada in the areas of philosophy, history, literature, the arts and sciences through prominent speakers.

For further details and online registration, please visit our website:

<http://icfc.ws>