



**Mayor Joe Fontana buys a square foot in support of
Habitat for Humanity London's Youth Build Project**

LONDON, ON, January 17, 2012 –London Mayor Joe Fontana is encouraging Londoners to support the Habitat London Youth Project by purchasing his own \$75-square foot for the campaign. The project supports the building of a safe, decent and affordable home for a low-income family. This build is part of a three-year project partially sponsored by Libro Financial Group.

The Mayor will make his donation to the home in the Mayor's Office, 2nd Floor, City Hall on Thursday, January 19, 2012 at 9 a.m. Students from the Habitat London Youth Project at The University of Western Ontario will invite Mayor Joe Fontana to purchase a square foot of their Square Foot Campaign that will help fund the second Habitat London Youth Project (HLYP) for a low-income family in need of a safe, decent and affordable home. Students of the Habitat London Youth Project are hoping Londoners will pledge the remaining 181 square feet at \$75 per square foot that will complete the fundraising campaign goal of \$75,000. Although many of the students involved with the project do not call London their home, they are contributing because they want to leave a lasting impression of their time spent in our city.

Mayor Fontana is pleased to be part of the Square Foot Campaign and he will make his purchase in the name of his grandson, Matthew. "There are so many right things about this campaign that I don't know where to begin. Firstly, we have students getting involved in the very heart of what makes our community great – how we care for others. Secondly, our young people are working with London's Habitat for Humanity to provide a home for a family – it doesn't get any better than that! And thirdly, my grandson and I can be a part of this project and share the joy that comes from helping others. I urge other grandparents, parents, spouses, siblings – everyone - to be part of this remarkable gift. Purchase a square foot for someone you love – share with them and your community." Said Mayor Joe Fontana.

Habitat for Humanity London's mission is to provide safe, decent and affordable homeownership opportunities for hard-working, low-income families. The Habitat London Youth Project brings student leadership opportunities to the cause and is part of a three-year commitment of support by Libro Financial Group. Libro is both a financial supporter, purchasing 500 square feet this year alone, as well as a mentor to the students. The project fosters the development of sustainable partnerships in the community and will result in three homes for qualifying families.

"Until someone had introduced me to Habitat for Humanity London, I was losing hope of finding a nice, clean place to live that was affordable," said Hamid Rashid, recipient of the 2011 Habitat London Youth Project home.

"Habitat UWO continues to bring a youthful enthusiasm to the project that has inspired many youth organizations to join the movement," said Jeff Duncan, Habitat London's CEO. "Additionally, Libro's financial and professional support of the students is an essential component to the success of this project as is the endorsement of our Mayor, Joe Fontana. The Mayor is demonstrating more than just his

financial support, he's speaking to his faith in the abilities of our youth and their power to make positive change in our community."

Bonnie Hardy, Libro Financial Group member representative, said the project is a great fit for Libro because it helps youth to develop essential work and life skills while also helping the community.

"The Libro Community Builder Program supports initiatives that give youth the opportunity to develop leadership and career skills," she said. "The youth that are involved are extremely talented and passionate about giving back to our community, and together, we look forward to building the next Habitat home."

WHAT: Mayor supports Square Foot Campaign for 2nd Habitat London Youth Project Build

WHERE: Mayor's Office, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 300 Dufferin Ave.

WHEN: Thursday, January 19, 2012, 9 a.m.

Media opportunity: Photos and interviews with Mayor Joe Fontana, Habitat UWO Executive students, Jeff Duncan, CEO, Habitat for Humanity London

About Habitat for Humanity London

Habitat for Humanity London believes that every man, woman and child has the right to the confidence, security and hope that a home provides. Affordable housing is key to building strong, equitable and thriving communities. By mobilizing volunteers and community partners, we can build affordable housing and promote homeownership as a means of breaking the cycle of poverty. Amazing things happen to people when you "address" them.

For more information, please contact:

Jeff Duncan, CEO, Habitat for Humanity London Inc., 519-659-1949, ext. 222,

Cell: 519-200-2339 jduncan@habitat.london.on.ca