



AS WHITE FLAGS WAVE IN GUATEMALA, REAL ESTATE FIRM LARKEN ASSOCIATES FINDS A WAY TO HELP

Urges Real Estate Community to Lend Helping Hand as Nation Grapples with Humanitarian Crisis

BRANCBURG, NJ, July 23, 2020 — Millions of Guatemalans are now on the verge of starvation with thousands in the streets of cities, large and small, waving white flags signaling their dire need for help. As one of the world's poorest nations, the economic impacts of COVID-19 have hit Guatemala hard. For Guatemala's 17 million people already living below the poverty line, dwindling food supplies have created a crisis that only gets worse with each passing day.

A longtime supporter of From Houses to Homes, a Guatemalan-based grassroots organization providing sustainable housing and access to health care and education, Larken Associates employees raised \$2,000 to donate to the organization. Leadership added an additional \$3,000 to bring the total donation to \$5,000 providing vital financial assistance amidst a rapidly devolving humanitarian situation in the Central America nation.

"Even during the best of times, securing food, shelter, health care, and schooling is a challenge for many of Guatemala's citizens," said Jody Kozlow, a member of the From Houses to Homes Board of Directors. "With so many living perilously on the razor's edge between subsistence and starvation, even the tiniest disruptions in economic activity can have disastrous ripples throughout the nation, which is why we're so grateful for the generous donation from Larken Associates and their employees."

Guatemala is currently in a state of almost complete shutdown to limit the spread of COVID-19, which has spurred an extreme spike in starvation as millions struggle to survive with no income or access to food. Larken Associates is dedicated to giving back and has provided financial support to From Houses to Homes for over a decade. President and CEO, David Gardner, has traveled to Guatemala 12 times to assist in the organization's work to build homes. Last year, Gardner expanded his volunteer efforts with the organization, sending two teams of Larken Associates employees to volunteer in Guatemala to help construct homes.

As COVID-19 has swept through the nation, foreign volunteers have been barred from entering the country and travel for residents has been made difficult. From Houses to Homes has been providing aid to the most deeply affected communities. Each day, teams of Guatemalan-based staff members and volunteers work to distribute food and other needed supplies to local communities.

"When we learned of the increased hardships that the people of Guatemala were experiencing due to COVID-19, we knew we had to do something to help," added Babette Rutman, Chief Financial Officer at Larken Associates, who organized the employee fundraiser. "Unfortunately, travel restrictions due to the virus have shut out all volunteer efforts to the country but through From Houses to Homes we were able to ensure that our donation went directly to those in need providing food and essentials for basic survival."



From Houses to Homes' mission is to create pathways out of poverty through providing Guatemalans with access to the safe housing, education, and health care that are typically impossible to find in the rural areas of the nation. Through its St. Joseph's Medical Clinic, free medical and dentistry services have provided care to more 30,000 people who typically would not see a doctor or dentist for their entire lives. To increase access to education, From Houses to Homes built Escuela Kemna'oj, an elementary school that currently has an enrollment of 175 children ranging in age from Pre-K-9th grade.

"The situation facing the citizens of Guatemala continues to devolve by the day and the fact is From Houses to Homes is 100 percent reliant on donations to support their lifesaving work," said Gardner. "Many of us in the real estate industry are in a position to help make an immediate difference by providing financial assistance so that the people of Guatemala have a fighting chance at survival. I hope others will join us in supporting this lifechanging organization during this critical time."

To learn more about From Houses to Homes and how you can make a donation or help, please visit their website at <https://www.fromhousetohomes.org/>.

About Larken Associates

Larken Associates is a regional leader in commercial and residential real estate building, development and management. Leveraging over 50 years of experience, they are dedicated to bringing great spaces to live and work to life through a long-term ownership strategy and full suite of in-house capabilities. With a diverse commercial portfolio consisting of nearly three million square feet and 800 tenants across office, industrial, retail and mixed-use and approximately 2,000 owned and/or managed residential units across 22 unique communities, Larken Associates' is deeply committed to the communities in which they work as well as the tenants and residents who call their buildings home.

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