

# CAPITAL BUSINESS

VIRGINIA ★ MARYLAND ★ DISTRICT

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# Giving

## HELPING OUT Kitchen designer puts skills to use to help Martha's Table

**Who:** Nadia Subaran, founder and senior designer

**Company:** Aidan Design, a custom kitchen designer in Bethesda

**Charitable giving highlights:** Aidan Design gave \$15,000 material costs to provide Martha's Table with a new kitchenette, hand-washing station and arts space.

*Tell me about your corporate philanthropy.*

We recently celebrated our 10-year anniversary, and wanted to do something on a much larger scale for a community that has a much larger need, and that would be in keeping with our skill set. We also wanted to do something that promoted the arts. So we were looking to update a kitchenette and create an arts space. Martha's Table was a perfect fit for us. We did an installation of a small kitchenette and a hand-washing station and created an art station. We got a lot of our local vendors to help donate materials, and contractors that donated their time. We did a full installation in seven hours, which, considering most of our projects are eight to 10 weeks, was pretty incredible.



*What philanthropic activities did you do regularly before this project?*

In the past, we would donate something to a school's silent auction. We've donated a custom piece to the Georgetown Jingle. We've donated a lot of extra material to the Habitat for Humanity store, Re-Store.

*What was the inspiration for installing a kitchenette?*

I got chosen as a designer for the D.C. Design House, which is a charity that supports Children's Hospital. It was a competition where I had 30 days to fully gut and remodel a kitchen on my own dime. I asked my contractors to give me two free days of labor. After that experience, I realized how as a group you can achieve great things.

*What was the process to find the charity?*

We put down in the criteria that we were looking for: the receptiveness of the people, the need, and a big thing for us was its impact on young children. We did a lot of online searching and pulled ideas from people in the office. For two of the employees, it was their job to go out and meet the organizations to get a sense of things. There was a list of eight or 10 early on. It got narrowed down pretty quickly. Many organizations had to decline because of the red tape involved.

— Interview with Vanessa Small