



Foundations

A Newsletter from Homes For Our Troops | www.hfotusa.org | May 2020



*Our Mission
Goes On*



YOUR SUPPORT ENABLES VETERANS TO REBUILD THEIR LIVES

Dear Mission Supporters,

The world and nation are coping with incredibly challenging times with the current pandemic. Please be assured we remain steadfast in our mission and are committed to continuing to Build Homes and Rebuild Lives. While keeping our Veterans and staff safe, construction continues around the country, albeit at a slower pace to ensure safety on the job sites.



Trying times like these present an opportunity to unite and support one another. Your loyal dedication to our mission is especially crucial during times like these because a specially adapted custom home provides severely injured post-9/11 Veterans a safe and secure environment to protect themselves and their families.

Since our inception in 2004, we have donated over 290 specially adapted custom homes to severely injured post-9/11 Veterans, and this year we will donate our 300th home to Army Sergeant Nathan Shumaker, who you will read more about on page 4. As we embark on this important milestone, we are grateful for donors like you who have propelled us this far. We cannot sustain this critical mission without you.

This newsletter provides an overview of some of the lives you are changing. On page 3, Army Sergeant Charles "Doug" Harris and his wife Autumn share their inspiring story of becoming foster parents after receiving their home. This has led them to adopt four children, and foster eight additional children in need of stability and a safe and nurturing environment. This truly exemplifies our motto of rebuilding lives. Marine First Sergeant Marcus Wilson and his wife Briarly, who received their home earlier this year, express their heartfelt thanks for the life-changing gift of an adapted home on page 5.

I hope these stories inspire and motivate you to stay invested in our mission. I look forward to seeing what we will achieve together and the lives we will continue to change in the future.

Sincerely,

H.T. Landwermer, Jr.
Brigadier General, USA Retired
President & CEO

MAY 2020

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On the cover: Future HFOT home recipient Army SGT Mario Lopez sings the National Anthem at ABC Supply's National Managers Meeting where the company announced its partnership with Homes For Our Troops. Read more on page 6.

FIND & FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Keep up-to-date on all things HFOT by following us for the latest information, photos, videos, events, e-store specials and more!



A History of Excellence

HFOT has been evaluated as one of America's Top Rated Veterans and Military Charities.

Fostering a New Journey

After her first day working at a shelter in 2016, Autumn Harris felt heartbroken knowing there were so many children in need of a home with people who will love and care for them. That night, she shared her thoughts with her husband, Army Sergeant Doug Harris, and they knew instantly they wanted to become foster parents. Having received their specially adapted custom home in Romney, W.Va., the year before, the couple had more than enough room in their home – and in their hearts – to provide a warm and welcoming environment to children who need it the most.

Because their single-level, four-bedroom home is fully accessible to Doug, who lost both of his legs while serving in Afghanistan, he and Autumn felt confident to begin this new journey. They received their first placement in January 2017 – four siblings, including a newborn. “We were very nervous going from no kids to four, but it became easier because they needed us just as much as we needed them,” says Autumn.

Since then, Autumn and Doug have fostered 12 children, four of whom they have adopted. They became parents to Kaydence and Freedom in October 2019, and in 2020 Reagan and Bentley joined their family. Autumn says she was overwhelmed with relief when the adoptions became official. “They are our kids and we can now advocate for them and make decisions on our own,” she says.

Without their HFOT home, Autumn and Doug say they would not have been able to become foster parents and have the family they have today. “When the social worker visited, she was amazed at how beautiful the house was and loved the open layout,” Autumn says. “If we didn’t have this home, it would have been years before we could have started to foster. Because our home is mortgage free and easy to maintain, this was possible for us.”

Doug says he is grateful to have the ability to care for his children in a barrier-free environment, especially Freedom who is fast and likes to run around. “I can play with him and get from room to room in my wheelchair without worry. Plus, I can help cook and clean up. This house has been a blessing for me and my family.”

The home is also a relief for Autumn. She can focus her energy on caring for the children and not worry about Doug’s safety. Their previous home had several stairs, which often limited Doug to one room. “If we had kids when we lived there it would have been harder for Doug to watch them. Also, he couldn’t cook in the house at all because nothing was level with his wheelchair,” she says.

Above all, Autumn and Doug want HFOT’s donors and supporters to know their generosity will not only benefit themselves, but the children they have cared for as well. “We wouldn’t have been able to do any of this without you. You made it possible for four kids to get out of foster care and into a forever home, and eight kids to be loved and cared for in a safe environment before being reunited with their birth families,” she says. “If it wasn’t for you, these children would not be where they are today.”



Since receiving their HFOT specially adapted custom home, Autumn and Doug Harris have adopted four of the 12 children they have fostered.

HFOT'S 300TH HOME:

Army Sergeant Nathan Shumaker



When Army Sergeant Nathan Shumaker was first injured in 2010, concerns about his future filled his mind. Having lost his left leg while serving in Afghanistan, he worried about his career and how his injury would impact the life he and his wife Missy envisioned together.

The social worker assigned to Nathan through Veterans Affairs (VA) helped him navigate his way through recovery and his adjustment to civilian life. She was such a big influence on him, he was inspired to pursue a career in the field. "If I called her up and had questions, she was always there to help and still does to this day. I thought becoming a social worker would be a great way for me to give back to fellow Veterans," he says.

Nathan earned his master's degree in social work from St. Louis University in May 2018, and he is now working on his licensure. Nathan has also returned to doing the activities he loved before his injury, especially running. After much determination and hard work, he has returned to the sport using his prosthetic and often participates in 5K races and finds the activity to be beneficial in his recovery.



Though Nathan is moving forward in his professional and personal life, the challenges he experiences in his non-accessible home present much frustration. In his current two-story home, Nathan is often forced to use crutches to navigate the stairs when his prosthetic becomes too painful. This living environment hinders him from helping Missy around the home and caring for their two children. "I get really down on myself when I can't do things independently. I know it puts a lot of stress on the family," he says.

It is hard for Missy to watch her husband struggle. "No one sees what Nate goes through on a daily basis more than I do. Most people see him happy and wearing his prosthetic every day. What they don't see is him when he can't wear it. It is very frustrating for him when he is unable to wear his prosthetic in our current home," she says.

Missy and Nathan were overjoyed when they found out Homes For Our Troops was building and donating a specially adapted custom home to them. "It brings tears to my eyes to think about how much stress will be taken off Nathan when we move into our home. He will no longer be in pain from wearing his leg all day long and will not have to worry about stairs. He will be able to safely help our kids from his wheelchair whenever I am not home," Missy says.

The Shumaker Family's build is especially significant – it will be HFOT's 300th home. They will receive the keys to their home in Hillsboro, Missouri, this year. "We are very excited to be a part of the HFOT Family to begin with, let alone be the 300th home. I am so happy and thrilled to be a part of this milestone and cannot wait to celebrate," Nathan says.

Nathan says he cannot thank HFOT's donors and supporters enough for this life-changing gift. "Without all of you, this would not be possible. Thank you for giving me some of my freedom back and giving me a safe environment to raise my family in. I am forever grateful for your support."



Army Sergeant Nathan Shumaker and his family will receive HFOT's 300th home this summer.

MILITARY APPRECIATION: *Marcus & Briarly Wilson*

Marine First Sergeant Marcus Wilson and his wife Briarly received their specially adapted custom Homes For Our Troops home in California earlier this year, and their daily lives have already significantly improved.

"Following our Key Ceremony, we immediately felt at home in our HFOT home. The changes I have seen in my husband, in terms of mobility and accessibility, have brought so much happiness and have really given us back time with our children. Everyday tasks, such as bathing and cooking, are now done without the frustrations we experienced in our previous home. The donors who contribute to HFOT's mission of *Building Homes and Rebuilding Lives*, provide beautiful adapted homes--what cannot be measured is how these donors rebuild lives. HFOT's donors have provided my husband with a calm and peace that he has not experienced since his injuries. We have been welcomed into a community that has embraced and included us in activities, and volunteers to assist us in landscaping and other chores to maintain our home. Our children are thriving and spending more time playing outdoors because Marcus is able to safely navigate the inside and outside areas of the home. We are eternally grateful for the opportunities these donors have provided for our family and we look forward to the diplomas, degrees, holidays, and all other special events we are able to celebrate in this beautiful home because of their support and commitment." – Briarly Wilson

"I am overjoyed in my new accessible home and am enjoying the safety and security it has brought to my family. The home has given me back so many freedoms while removing the frustrations I used to experience. We would like to thank Homes For Our Troops, corporate partners, volunteers, and donors for continuing to not only recognize, but support the mission of providing homes to injured Veterans." – Marine First Sergeant Marcus Wilson



RUNNING IT FORWARD *Army SGT Preston Kaplan*

Team HFOT runners are generous individuals wanting to make a difference in the lives of severely injured post-9/11 Veterans. Some HFOT Veterans are so grateful for their support, they want to Pay it Forward for others by joining the team themselves. This past January, future HFOT home recipient Army Sergeant Preston Kaplan fundraised and ran his first ever half marathon for Team HFOT during the Houston Marathon Weekend.

"HFOT is an organization filled with individuals with different injuries. Whatever each one of us has, we each have one another. I not only run for me, I run for brothers in arms, I run for my sisters in arms, I run because I can. And if my running can inspire him or her.... I've succeeded!" - Army SGT Preston Kaplan



Army SGT Preston Kaplan running in the Houston Half Marathon.

UPCOMING RACES

TBD	BMW Berlin Marathon , Berlin, Germany	SOLD OUT Own Entry Available!
10.11.20	Bank of America Chicago Marathon , Chicago, IL	JOIN NOW!
11.1.20	TCS NYC Marathon , New York City, NY	SOLD OUT Own Entry Available!
11.15.20	Big Sur International Marathon Weekend Big Sur, CA	SOLD OUT Own Entry Available!
1.16-17.21	Houston Marathon Weekend (5K, Half Marathon & Marathon), Houston, TX	JOIN NOW!

HOMES FOR OUR TROOPS *Welcomes ABC Supply*

Homes For Our Troops is proud to announce ABC Supply as a National Partner. ABC Supply welcomed HFOT into their family by announcing a multi-year/multi-million-dollar partnership at its annual National Managers Meeting in Chicago on Feb. 26, 2020. Future home recipient and artist Army Sergeant Mario Lopez kicked off the meeting by singing the National Anthem, and surprised the crowd by presenting ABC with his original painting titled *ABC Across America*.

“We’re deeply grateful for the work that Homes For Our Troops is doing,” says Mike Jost, ABC Supply’s Chief Operating Officer. “And all of us at ABC Supply are honored to have the ability to give back to these Veterans who have sacrificed so much for our freedom. We’re glad that we’re able to provide a financial commitment to the organization, and we’ve heard from associates across the country who are eager to help locally, however they can, when a Homes For Our Troops home is built near them.”

“Homes For Our Troops is absolutely thrilled to have ABC Supply join us as a National Partner,” says HFOT Executive Director Bill Ivey. “They are an exceptional company, and Chairman of the Board and Founder Diane Hendricks and Chief Executive Officer and President Keith Rozolis are leading the way in helping us advance our mission of building and donating specially adapted custom homes to severely injured post-9/11 Veterans. We look forward to working closely with them nationwide.”

ABC Supply Co. Inc., is the largest wholesale distributor of roofing in the United States, and one of the nation’s largest wholesale distributors of select exterior and interior building products. The company’s main focus is serving professional contractors by offering products, services, and support for their businesses.



Army SGT Mario Lopez sang the National Anthem at the annual National Managers Meeting in Chicago.

Thank you to all of our Corporate Partners!



Learn more about our Corporate Partners at www.hfotusa.org/partners

NEW OLS DONOR SPOTLIGHT

B. Click

B. Click found out about Homes For Our Troops when she saw a commercial about Veterans in need of housing. After doing some online research, she came across Homes For Our Troops and knew she wanted to support the mission. The cause is near and dear to her heart as she has many relatives who have served, including her husband, Sterling, who served in the Air Force. She chose to join HFOT's monthly giving program Operation Lasting Support (OLS).

"As I've gotten older, I want to serve our country in any way I can. I am not a materialistic person," she says. "I choose to give monthly because it is easy and automatic. I felt the urge to give and am glad to help."



B. Click was inspired to become a monthly donor by her family members who have served, including her husband, Sterling Click, who served in the Air Force.

Interested in becoming a monthly donor? Learn more at 508-823-3300 x 502 or by visiting www.hfotusa.org/ols



Honor Home

HONOR HOME PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

Andrew Pepper

The Homes For Our Troops Honor Home Program is a way for real estate agents, offices, and associations to support our mission through transaction donations or hosting fundraising events.

"Homes For Our Troops is so much more than building homes for Veterans – it's relationships, quality time with fellow Veterans, new friends, camaraderie, the opportunity to impact lives, communities, and our country. Most of all, it's a great way to experience and show LOVE, COMPASSION, and PURPOSE. I love their mission, I love my Veteran brothers and sisters, and I'm honored to be a part of something so incredible. It's about living our best life and giving back to those that paid a high price to let us enjoy our American Freedom and way of life. Thank you, fellow Veterans!"

Andrew Pepper ~ Veteran, Honor Agent, and Keller Williams Realty Select REALTOR®
Here to Serve you and yours.



To get started, visit: www.hfotusa.org/hhp | (508) 823-3300 Ext. 230

Join the Honor Home Program today to help Homes For Our Troops Build Homes and Rebuild Lives and share with real estate professionals you may know.



HOMES FOR OUR TROOPS - *Building Homes, Rebuilding Lives*

Last Will and Testament

**Ensure your legacy lives.
Make a thoughtful commitment today.**

————— **TYPES OF GIFTS** —————

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GIFT ANNUITY • STOCK & SECURITIES

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