



Foundations

A Newsletter from Homes For Our Troops | www.hfotusa.org | January 2019



Marine Sgt Milan Franklin
Shelton, WA - Home was
completed on January 5, 2019

For 15 years...
Building Homes, Rebuilding Lives

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Dear Friends,

The start of every new year here at Homes For Our Troops is a reason to celebrate, but 2019 is a special year. February 4, 2019, marks the 15th Anniversary of our organization's inception. All of you – our donors, supporters, corporate partners, volunteers – have played a part in expanding our critical mission of building and donating specially adapted custom homes to severely injured post-9/11 Veterans throughout the years.



What started as an offer from a Massachusetts general contractor to build a home for an injured Soldier back in 2004, has evolved into a thriving organization with over 60 employees, building 20 - 30 homes for severely injured Veterans each year. This, of course, could not have been possible without you, our valued mission supporters. An organization with an undertaking such as ours needs more than a dedicated staff – it needs individuals, organizations, and communities with compassion and an understanding of the challenges injured Veterans experience when returning home. Thank you for being one of these great Americans whose belief in our mission has propelled us to where we are today.

Throughout the year, you can expect to see special features highlighting our 15th Anniversary, including testimonials from our Veterans and important milestones we have reached. We are excited to celebrate this occasion with you, and hope it will inspire you to reaffirm your dedication to our cause by continuing to support our Veterans through donations, fundraisers, build events, and as corporate partners.

This issue provides a glimpse into what we are achieving together, and what is on the horizon. On page 3, you will hear from Kim and Alex Hussey on how they are growing and thriving in their new HFOT home, all thanks to your generosity. On page 5, Carlos Gomez shares his story about how life-changing a specially adapted custom home will be for him and his two sons. Perhaps you will be inspired to host your own fundraiser after reading about our Top Fundraisers on page 6. We are also thrilled to announce new partnerships with two Veteran-focused organizations, Wayfair and Wounded Warrior Project, featured on page 8. Finally, in "All Things New" on page 9, we highlight some upcoming initiatives and introduce you to some of the newest members of our HFOT Family.

"Thank you" does not convey the deep appreciation we have for your support over the past 15 years. We look forward to Building more Homes and Rebuilding more Lives with you for many more years. I hope to see you at a build event soon.

Sincerely,

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

Celebrating



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Find and Follow Us On Social Media



Keep up-to-date on all things HFOT by following us!

OUR MISSION

To build and donate specially adapted custom homes nationwide for severely injured post-9/11 Veterans, to enable them to rebuild their lives.

\$0 COST

No Financial Cost
to Veteran

274 HOMES

Built for severely injured
post-9/11 Veterans Nationwide

79 PROJECTS

Underway Nationwide

90 CENTS

Nearly 90 cents of every dollar
spent has gone directly to our
program services for Veterans



A History of Excellence

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

Homemade Happiness

Kim Hussey cried tears of joy the first time her husband, Alex, brought his plate to the sink in their new forever home. Kim's elation over the daily chore had nothing to do with the task itself, but rather the act symbolized Alex's newfound freedom. It was something Alex had been unable to do since being injured. Their previous home did not have enough space for his motorized wheelchair in the kitchen. *"His smile after doing it lit up the room,"* Kim says.

Alex and Kim have withstood more challenges than most couples. They were dating when Alex sustained a severe traumatic brain injury (TBI) and lost both legs and his hand while serving in Afghanistan during the summer of 2012. Since then, Kim hasn't left Alex's side, following him to each hospital and rehabilitation center where he was treated. For the first five years of their marriage, they could not live together on their own. They previously lived with Alex's parents, whose home had some minor adaptations, including a chair lift between floors for Alex. Still, the home posed many obstacles for both Alex and Kim. It was disheartening for Alex to have his wife transfer him to and from the lift multiple times a day. Additionally, space was limited so they could not share a bedroom. *"I had to sleep in a hospital bed due to back pain and skin wounds. Kim had to sleep in another room apart from me since there was no room for her bed,"* Alex says.

Once Alex and Kim cut the ribbon of their specially adapted custom HFOT home in Washougal, Wash., in May 2018, they felt overcome with relief, knowing they could finally begin their life together. In their new home, there is plenty of space for Alex to use his wheelchair, and he does not have to worry about narrow doorways or stairs anymore. It is especially comforting for Alex to finally have his wife by his side every night. The home also gives Kim freedom as well. She is able to find more time for herself and can run errands without worrying about Alex. *"Since moving into my home I feel a new sense of independence that I haven't had since before my injury,"* Alex says. *"I depend on my wife for a lot of things and this home has given me the opportunity to help her as well."*

Living in their home, Alex and Kim are looking forward to their future. They are talking about starting a family, and Kim is hoping to go back to school. As a major part of his recovery, Alex has taken up equine



Kim and Alex celebrate their first Christmas in their new home.

therapy. His dream is to have his own horse one day to ride on his property, and living in his HFOT home brings him closer to this goal. This past holiday season was a memorable one for Alex and Kim, since they were able to host their families in their own home for the first time. Alex and Kim say they are forever grateful to HFOT's donors and supporters. They lived in hospitals for so long, they never thought they would ever have a home of their own, let alone one adapted to Alex's injuries. *"Alex survived a bomb blast, he spent a long time fighting to live and getting past the initial injuries. But now, instead of just surviving we are thriving, planning, and looking forward to our future together,"* Kim says. *"Because of you, we are given a life, the opportunity to have dreams, and strive for those dreams together. Thank you for giving us this home; we are truly the happiest we have ever been."*

Learn more about Alex's story at www.hfotusa.org/hussey.



SPC Alex Hussey's Key Ceremony in Washougal, Wash. on May 12, 2018

A Priceless Gift



Marine LCpl Matias Ferreira with his wife, Tiffany, and their daughter at their Key Ceremony on November 10, 2018 in Smithtown, NY.

“Our words could never properly express all the gratitude we feel in our hearts today. So many beautiful souls have played a part in providing our family with this adapted house and the opportunity to make it into a home filled with love, happiness, and good memories. Moreover, you have subtracted a lifetime of frustrations, worry, stress, and sadness of being in a home which hinders Matias and our family from living daily life to our greatest potential. It is a gift that is invaluable to us to say the least.

With that, we look forward in excitement to our future and all it holds for us in Smithtown. We also will be in search of ways we can pay it forward as an important message to our daughter for what has been so generously given to us.” - Tiffany Ferreira



Make a thoughtful commitment today

CONSIDER HOMES FOR OUR TROOPS IN YOUR ESTATE GIVING PLANS FOR 2019

Visit www.hfotusa.plannedgiving.org

TYPES OF GIFTS:

- Wills & Trusts
- Life Insurance Beneficiary
- Retirement Account/401k Beneficiary
- Gift Annuity
- Stocks and Securities

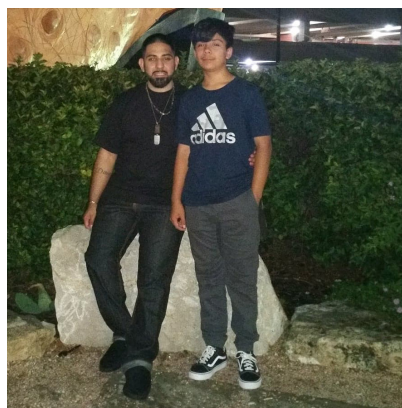
For more information contact Suzanne Shaheen at 508-967-9041 or sshaheen@hfotusa.org

Make Matching Gifts Your New Year's Resolution

Make a New Year's Resolution to support others this year. The money you would use toward a gym membership could be doubled – or even tripled – by your employer as a matching gift to Homes For Our Troops.

Matching gifts are a great way to increase your contribution and support the HFOT mission of building and donating specially adapted custom homes to severely injured post-9/11 Veterans. In 2018, HFOT received **\$250,286** in matching gifts!

Ask your employer if they match gifts or search your company's name at <https://doublethedonation.com/hfotusa>. Some companies even match gifts made by spouses, retirees, or board members.



A Brighter Future

ARMY SPC CARLOS GOMEZ'S HFOT HOME WILL PROVIDE STABILITY AND SECURITY FOR HIS FAMILY

On March 19, 2011, Army Specialist Carlos Gomez found himself drifting in and out of consciousness while being flown to Germany after being in an improvised explosive device (IED) blast in Afghanistan. His only thought was of his two young sons. *"I was afraid I wasn't going to live. I didn't think I would ever see them again and watch them grow up,"* he says.

Since becoming a father at the age of 15, every decision Carlos has made has been with his sons in mind. His main reason for joining the military was to support his young family, even if it meant leaving them for long periods of time. Months before being injured, Carlos said goodbye to his then six-year-old son Aaron and newborn son Isaac, and headed to his deployment with an inexplicable feeling he could not shake. *"I just had a big fear that something life-changing was going to happen because I was Infantry,"* he says.

That foreboding feeling turned out to be true. Carlos lost his right leg and sustained a spinal cord injury as a result of the IED blast, but was able to return to his beloved boys after undergoing rigorous therapies and treatment. As a single dad, Carlos continues to put his sons' wellbeing above everything else. He commutes over an hour to his job with the Army Corps of Engineers, often working through pain from wearing his prosthetic all day, to ensure his sons are clothed, fed, and happy. However, his current home presents obstacles that prevent him from being the father he desires. Since his residence is not big enough for his wheelchair, he is usually limited to one room. He often gets disappointed that he cannot keep up with his active sons. *"It makes me sad I can't run around with my kids and do activities with them,"* he says.

In October of 2018, Carlos had surgery on his residual limb, putting him out of work for several months. This has caused much financial strain, forcing him to make difficult decisions. However, no matter how tough his situation gets, Carlos always makes sure his sons are taken care of before himself.

Receiving a mortgage-free, specially adapted custom home will alleviate many of Carlos' current challenges. When he first found out he was accepted into the Homes For Our Troops family, he immediately called his mom, Melody, his biggest supporter and advocate. *"We have been waiting for this forever. It took a huge burden off my shoulders,"* Carlos says.

The home will also relieve much stress for Melody, knowing her son is safe and nearby. Carlos and his sons currently live nearly an hour away from her. His HFOT home is being built in Menifee, Calif., a short distance from her. *"I worry about him constantly. When he moves closer, I'll be able to cook for him and the kids and help out more,"* she says.

The financial freedom of the new specially adapted custom home will ease much of Carlos' current stress. Having a home big enough for his wheelchair will allow him to spend more quality time with his sons. Growing up a city kid, Carlos is looking forward to being in a more rural area, where he and his sons can start raising animals, like chickens and horses. Above all, Carlos is looking forward to having a place that he and his boys can call their "forever home."

Homes For Our Troops kicked off Carlos' project on Jan. 26, 2019, and the home is projected to be completed by early fall. Carlos says he still feels like he's dreaming, and is incredibly grateful to all HFOT's donors and supporters. *"After being injured, I had no hope in life. I always felt like no one appreciated Veterans and my service didn't mean anything. But receiving this home has lifted my spirits up tremendously. I can't even begin to express how much this means to me."*



To learn more about Carlos' story and to contribute to his build project visit www.hfotusa.org/gomez.

TOP 10 Fundraisers of 2018!



Teamsters Local 120 Picnic & Golf Tournament
Location: Minnesota • Years Fundraised: 3
\$124,008



Rosedale CC Golf Tournament
Location: Florida • Years Fundraised: 6
\$115,362



Haselden Construction Clay Shoot
Location: Colorado • Years Fundraised: 5
\$112,000



Rado's Annual Party
Location: Connecticut • Years Fundraised: 3
\$85,060



CALIBRE Golf Tournament
Location: Virginia • Years Fundraised: 5
\$74,855



Mulligans for Military Golf Tournament
Location: Colorado • Years Fundraised: 8
\$67,686



Swings for Soldiers Golf Tournament
Location: Kentucky • Years Fundraised: 9
\$53,531



DFW Clay Shoot
Location: Texas • Years Fundraised: 9
\$47,533



Stairs4RTroops
Location: Massachusetts • Years Fundraised: 4
\$45,348

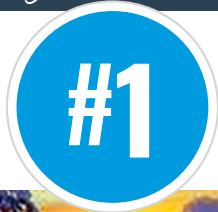


Lippert Flooring & Tile Golf Outing & Clay Shoot
Location: Wisconsin • Years Fundraised: 9
\$40,740



HFOT's TOP 10 fundraisers of 2018 raised a total of \$766,123

Teamsters 120 Driving for



In 2018, Teamsters Local 120 accelerated their fundraising efforts, ultimately parking themselves in the #1 spot. Headquartered in Blaine, Minn., Teamsters Local 120 represents nearly 12,000 members in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

The organization came on board in 2016 when they selected Homes For Our Troops as the sole beneficiary of their annual Member Appreciation Picnic. Cruising right along to 2018, Teamsters Local 120 has expanded their support of our mission by involving more companies, union members, and sponsors to support their event. Teamsters Local 120 President Tom Erickson believes that education plays an important role in their fundraiser, and suggests other fundraisers keep awareness in the forefront. He explains that the more opportunities you find to educate your audience, the more people you reach. The more people you reach, the more connections you make. The more connections made, the more support received. Knowing that their members and supporters could do more, Teamsters Local 120 decided to take on a second event, a golf tournament, to challenge their

"It is humbling to work with an organization where people of all walks of life can come together to show their gratitude to the brave men and women who have served our great nation and fought for our freedom."

community to raise even more funds to help more HFOT Veterans.

Erickson says the driving force behind their group's success lies with the hard work and dedication of Teamsters members, families, and friends across the nation. Their members are extremely proud and honored to support HFOT and its mission. *"Over the past three years, the partnership between Teamsters Local 120 and HFOT has grown immensely. It has been inspiring to get to know some of the incredible Veterans and to learn how HFOT has changed their lives. One of my favorite things about fundraising for HFOT is knowing that with each donation, we are helping to bring one more Veteran closer to rebuilding his/her life,"* Erickson says. *"It is humbling to work with an organization where people of all walks of life can come together to show their gratitude to the brave men and women who have served our great nation and fought for our freedom."*

Congratulations Teamsters Local 120! Homes For Our Troops is grateful to have your support and we look forward to seeing what's next from your outstanding members in 2019.



HFOT Welcomes Two New Partners

Wayfair and Wounded Warrior Project Announce Support to Help Advance HFOT Mission



Homes For Our Troops and e-commerce leader Wayfair are excited to announce a new partnership aimed at raising visibility and fundraising for Homes For Our Troops. Wayfair will be sharing HFOT's story across its customer base and inviting customers to donate via a new feature on the checkout page of their site, aiming to raise funds and support for HFOT's mission of building and donating specially adapted custom homes to severely injured post-9/11 Veterans, to enable them to rebuild their lives.

Most recently, Wayfair worked with Homes For Our Troops to fully furnish Army Staff Sergeant Carl Moore's HFOT home in Florida this past September.

"We're thrilled to partner with Homes For Our Troops, and it was an honor to furnish the Moore family's new, forever home," said Jane Carpenter, Head of Corporate Social Responsibility and Public Relations at Wayfair. *"We're looking forward to continuing to find ways to help more veterans live in homes that they love."*



Wounded Warrior Project

Through a grant of \$485,400, Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) will aid HFOT in its mission by providing funding toward several of the special adaptations in 24 homes to be constructed in 2019. These adaptations include roll-in showers, automatic door openers, tilt mirrors, grab bars, accessible shelving, and roll under countertops.

"When America's wounded, ill, and injured warriors return home after their service, their homes may need to be adapted to address their physical challenges," said René Bardorf, WWP Senior Vice President of Government and Community Affairs. *"Renovations to modify a home for physical or mental injuries can be prohibitively expensive. That's why we're supporting Homes For Our Troops and their efforts to build brand new adapted homes for warriors and their families free of charge - enabling them to focus on rebuilding their lives."*

Since 2003, WWP has been meeting the growing needs of warriors, their families and caregivers. With more than \$74 million in grants, WWP has also supported over 120 different organizations involved in the care of America's military community since 2012. WWP partners at the national and grassroots level with best-in-practice Veteran and military

organizations, such as HFOT. These partnerships are transforming the way America's injured Veterans and military families are empowered, employed, and engaged.



Thank You To Our Corporate Partners



All Things

NEW!

Homes For Our Troops has some exciting initiatives coming up in the year ahead we would like to share with you. We would also like to introduce you to some of our newest HFOT Family members!

At the starting line...

Team HFOT is taking on several new races this year! If you are interested in joining the team, or would like more information on any of these, contact Special Events Coordinator Krista Landry, *Email:* klandry@hfotusa.org or call 508-967-9029!

NEW UPCOMING RACES

Big Sur International Marathon Weekend

(12K, 11 Miler & Marathon)
Big Sur, CA
April 28, 2019

Colfax Marathon Weekend

(5K, 10 Miler, Half Marathon, Marathon Relay & Marathon)
Denver, CO
May 18-19, 2019

Falmouth Road Race

(7.1 Miles) Falmouth, MA
August 18, 2019

Houston Marathon Weekend

(5K, Half Marathon, and Full Marathon)
Houston, TX
January 19, 2020

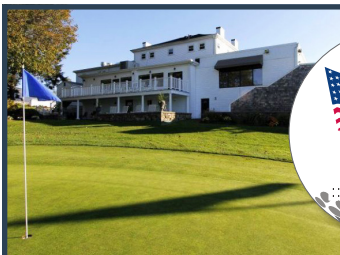


On the Green

We have a new location and date for our
9th Annual HFOT Golf Classic

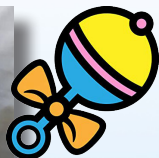
AUGUST 12, 2019

at Marlborough Country Club in Massachusetts.



New to the HFOT Family!

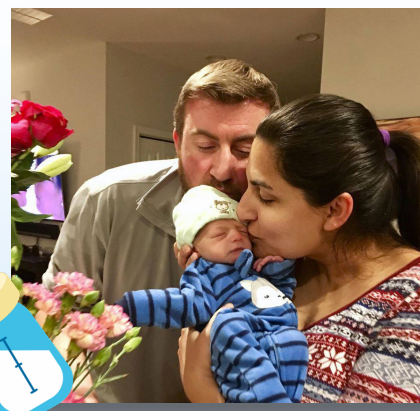
There were **25 babies** born to HFOT families last year! Here are a few of the new additions.



Navy PO1 Christopher Andrieu and his wife Autumn welcomed their second daughter, Natalie, on Dec. 12, 2018.



On Nov. 29, 2018, Marine Sgt Mark Smith and his wife Tabitha welcomed two little bundles of joy, Evelyn Elaine and Lillian Grace.



Marine Cpl Kevin Blanchard and his wife Myra rang in the New Year with the birth of their son, Beau, on Dec. 31, 2018.

Your continuous support of Homes For Our Troops has helped us Build Homes and Rebuild Lives for 15 years! Thank you!



Building Homes, Rebuilding Lives

Homes For Our Troops • 6 Main Street • Taunton, MA 02780 • 866-787-6677 • www.hfotusa.org

Find Us On Social Media - Keep up-to-date on all things HFOT by following us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram!



A History of Excellence

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