



Foundations

A Newsletter from Homes For Our Troops | www.hfotusa.org | MAY 2022

The HFOT Impact — *By the Numbers Issue* —



*See how you
empower our
Veterans*

YOUR SUPPORT ENABLES VETERANS TO REBUILD THEIR LIVES

A Letter from the President/CEO

Dear HFOT Supporters,

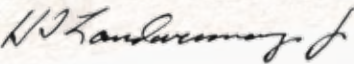
Part of measuring success at Homes For Our Troops is the number of homes we build and donate. However, our impact goes far beyond how many keys we present to Veterans.

What truly matters are the changes that take place after the Veterans move in. A few years ago, to capture these results, we started asking our home recipients how their homes enable them to rebuild their lives. Earlier this year, we again surveyed our Veterans on how the home has helped them in different areas, including freedom and independence, reduction in household stress, financial stability, education, family, and career. In this newsletter, I am proud to share with you the results of our *By the Numbers Impact* spread on pages 4 and 5. These homes help restore the freedom these Veterans sacrificed as a result of their service. Empowered by their renewed independence, they can continue moving forward with their lives by expanding families, pursuing careers, and advancing their education. Please know that these success stories are only possible because of donors and supporters like you.

While we celebrate the achievements of the 330 (and counting) Veterans in their homes, we are mindful of the work ahead. We have over 70 projects underway nationwide and over 100 Veterans in the application process of our program. You will meet one of them, Army Specialist Joshua Craven, on page 3. Joshua and his wife Holly cannot wait to spend quality time together as a family when they receive their HFOT home. They will soon have this dream because of your commitment to our mission.

Thank you for being a valued supporter of our cause. I look forward to continuing Building Homes and Rebuilding Lives with you.

Sincerely,



Tom Landwermeyer
President/CEO
Homes For Our Troops



May 2022

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ON THE COVER:

"Your support helps create environments for families that are built around love, care, and compassion. Being able to be a part of everything my family does will be the best gift I could possibly receive."

Army SPC Joshua Craven
Future HFOT home recipient

Homes For Our Troops will be building Joshua's home in North Carolina. Follow his project at www.hfotusa.org/craven



A History of Excellence

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



Holly with Joshua shortly after his injury.

Rebuilding Together

When Holly Craven received a call from an unknown number the morning of Aug. 4, 2010, she assumed it was her husband, Army Specialist Joshua Craven, calling to wish her a happy second wedding anniversary from his deployment in Iraq. To her shock, it was a phone call informing her an explosively formed penetrator (EFP) had detonated underneath Joshua's vehicle. Joshua had lost his left leg, and doctors were working to save the other leg.

Devastated by the news, Holly was determined to be there throughout her husband's recovery. *"I just kept thinking – as long as they can get him home to me, I can make him better,"* she says.

Once he returned stateside, Holly remained at Joshua's side, giving him shots and administering medication. Now, 12 years later, the couple has come a long way. They are busy raising their daughter, Aubrey, and enjoy spending time together as a family. However, Joshua faces challenges within their home that he cannot ignore. He experiences constant skin breakdown and wounds on his leg because his home is not accessible and he cannot use his wheelchair. He has been hospitalized due to infections because his wounds were unable to heal. Receiving a specially adapted custom home will enable Joshua to stay off his leg to recover. *"Being able to use my wheelchair more would allow me to spend quality time with my family,"* he says.

Joshua is especially looking forward to going outside with his daughter. In their current home, if he wants to go out in their yard with her, he has to use multiple assistive devices. In his new HFOT home, he will be able to exit and enter the home quickly in his wheelchair using the automatic doors and paved accessible walkways surrounding the home. The home will also benefit Joshua's entire family. Holly often becomes disheartened seeing her husband struggle in their current environment. *"It is such an amazing feeling knowing that he will be able to get around safely. His determination is strong, and he persistently pushes through the pain each day,"* she says. *"It will be a huge weight lifted when I know he can feel comfortable in his own home again."*

Once settled in, Joshua and Holly will be able to continue rebuilding their future together. They would like to expand their family, and Holly wants to continue her education. Knowing Joshua would be able to care for an infant safely while she is away at class eases Holly's mind. *"The biggest benefit of this home for me is knowing that Josh will have freedom within our home,"* she says.

Joshua and Holly want HFOT supporters and donors to know they are forever changing lives. *"Thank you for supporting an incredible mission. This donation is more than just building an adapted house. HFOT is helping Veterans rebuild their lives,"* Joshua says.

A Golden Experience

HFOT home recipient Joey Woodke wins gold medal in 2022 Paralympics!

Very few people can say they have won a gold medal in a world competition. Marine Corporal Joey Woodke is one of those who has reached this achievement – twice. On Saturday, March 12, 2022, Cpl Woodke and the U.S. Sled Hockey team won gold in the 2022 Paralympics with a 5-0 victory over Canada. Cpl Woodke got an assist in the second period. Joey and the team also took home gold at the 2021 World Championships in the Czech Republic last year.

Joey, who received his Homes For Our Troops home in 2020, lost both legs while serving in Afghanistan in 2011. He started playing sled hockey during his recovery. *"I've always loved competing and being a part of the best. Coming from the military, I love the camaraderie side of it,"* he says.

Joey's specially adapted custom HFOT home in Tennessee gives him a place to rest and recover from competing.



"My HFOT home was fundamental to my training. I was able to solely focus on training for the games knowing I had a place to recover comfortably."





By The Numbers HFOT IMPACT

How HFOT's specially adapted custom homes empower Veterans

Recent survey results demonstrate what we at HFOT have known all along: we make a lasting impact in the lives of our nation's most severely injured Veterans and their spouses/caregivers. Here is a look at the different ways our program sets the conditions for our Veterans' and their families' lifelong success.*

More than 1,000 service members who returned from post-9/11 wars with life-altering injuries still need adapted housing.

As of May 2022, HFOT has built and donated 330 specially adapted custom homes nationwide. Help us build more.

Employment Rate

AFTER RECEIVING HFOT HOME

Veterans	Spouse/Caregiver
123% <small>INCREASE</small>	273% <small>INCREASE</small>

"Being in our home has allowed me to dedicate to training for a career as a combatives and firearms instructor. It's taken years worth of training to be confident enough to instruct on prosthetic legs, but our home has allowed me to dedicate the time to get the training done."

I am now a Brazilian jiu jitsu instructor for a local Gracie jiu jitsu gym and I also work for Sheepdog Response, traveling the country as a contractor teaching rifle, pistol, combatives, and immediate casualty care." - Marine Cpl Garrett J. Carnes
2016 home recipient



Financial Stability

Education, better jobs for Veterans and spouses/caregivers, and no mortgage result in

60% <small>INCREASED FAMILY INCOME</small>	66% <small>DECREASED FAMILY DEBT</small>	92% <small>INCREASED FAMILY SAVINGS</small>
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"Thank you for the financial security and stability you have provided."

- Marine 1stSgt Marcus Wilson
2020 home recipient



OVER 90%
of Veterans have regained some/much of their
Freedom & Independence

Army Private First Class Heather Trujillo's fully accessible home makes it easier for her to make products for her soap making business.



95%
of Veterans have seen a
Reduction in Household Stress

"My home gave me hope and the ability to chase the future with a safe place to land when I push it too far."

- Army PFC Heather Trujillo
2018 home recipient

Family

Start/grow families, focus on role as parent and spouse

BEFORE RECEIVING HFOT HOME	AFTER RECEIVING HFOT HOME
56% Married	78%

Average America household size was steady at 3.0 from 2005-2020 - U.S. Census

HFOT FAMILIES **2.7** to **3.7**

Over **240** Babies have been born to HFOT families since 2010!

"In my home, I don't feel like I have a disability. I am able to do everything any able body person could do in a regular home, and care for my children without limitations."

- Army SGT Odin Ayala
2013 home recipient



Education

Obtained/Pursuing a degree or trade certification

BEFORE RECEIVING HFOT HOME	AFTER RECEIVING HFOT HOME
18% Veterans	72%
19% Spouse/Caregiver	79%



"Having my home has given me a good environment to focus on my education, and not having a mortgage gave me the peace of mind to prioritize my education, and build a better future for myself. This home has allowed me to be a husband, father, and focus on myself as well."

- Army SPC Fidel Bobadilla
2015 home recipient

Veterans Paying It Forward

Community Involvement and Volunteering

BEFORE RECEIVING HFOT HOME	AFTER RECEIVING HFOT HOME
22%	76%

"Having a mortgage-free HFOT home has given me the freedom to pursue worthwhile goals like being a dive instructor who trains Veterans with a local non-profit called Ranger Road. Without this huge gift from HFOT, I would probably be working a job for a paycheck to cover a house payment instead of doing something I feel is more worthwhile."

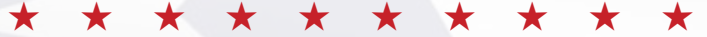
- Marine Cpl Joshua Hotaling
2015 home recipient



*Results are based on a 2022 survey of Veteran home recipients and their caregivers; response rate was 65%.



Board Member Spotlight: Captain (USMC, Retired) Cameron West



Born and raised in Georgia, Marine Capt Cameron West attended Army ROTC at North Georgia College and State University. After graduation, he commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps and became an Infantry officer. In 2010, Cameron was on his first deployment serving with Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, in Afghanistan, when he was severely injured during an improvised explosive device (IED) explosion. He lost his right leg, vision in his right eye, partial use of his right hand, and was medically retired as a captain.

Cameron joined HFOT's family in 2014, and received his home in Georgia in 2015. He is an original member of HFOT's Veteran Action and Advisory Team (VAAT) established in 2014, and became the VAAT president in 2020.

How did you find out about the organization?

While recovering at Balboa Naval Medical Center, I met other Veterans who were a part of the HFOT program and heard from them about the positive impact it had on their lives post-injury.

What motivated you to become a member of the organization's Board of Directors?

I, along with a small group of HFOT Veterans, wanted to pay it forward and helped to create the Veterans Action and Advisory Team (VAAT). From there, eventually, I was asked to lead the team and was invited to become a member of the Board of Directors. I have been honored and privileged to join as a board member after being given so much from HFOT. I thought this was a great opportunity to offer any insight from the perspective of an injured Veteran who received an HFOT home, while also understanding the inner workings of the organization. Having a seat on the board and leading the VAAT have been very rewarding for me. The great leadership I've observed of the board and HFOT staff have made me so proud to be a part of the organization's support team.

What would you say to encourage others to get involved with HFOT's mission?

If you want to be a part of a very positive mission that has a tangible, direct impact on an injured service member, this is the place where your donated dollar will go the furthest. Being a 2014 HFOT home recipient myself, I can speak first-hand about how this home has improved my life. I am fully immersed in the daily lives of my three children without any hindrance, whereas, before living in my HFOT home, stairs and bathrooms were major problem areas for me. My wheelchair didn't allow me to navigate those areas and therefore, I'd either have to wear my prosthetic all day which becomes uncomfortable, or attempt to navigate with one leg. Being able to access any area of this home in a wheelchair has given me the independence, freedom, and confidence that were taken from me when I sustained my injuries. Becoming involved in this mission in any way possible does nothing but positively impact the life of a service member who sacrificed so much for this country.

What has been your most memorable moment with the organization?

My most memorable moment was the first Veteran Conference I attended as a VAAT member and welcoming new Veterans and their families to be a part of the HFOT family. I had been living in my home for a few years by then so I was able to meet Veterans just starting the process and share one of the most exciting moments in their lives, knowing it would only get better once their homes were built. There were so many positive emotions when they learned they'd be joining the HFOT family and receiving a specially adapted home in the future. Having gone through the experience myself years before, it was really special to see others go through it.

How does our organization differ from other charities you've worked with in the past?

I've observed so many wonderful nonprofits do amazing things to help injured Veterans and their families. But I'd have to say that Homes For Our Troops' ability to put Veterans and their families into a mortgage-free, specially adapted forever home, is truly life-changing. The security and freedom that these homes give back to Veterans are indescribable. The HFOT staff have become family, and see the Veterans as such. They do not see this as charity or a job; they have true passion for the mission and work tirelessly to accomplish it.

What's the biggest challenge for HFOT – and what steps is the Board taking to meet/accomplish its mission despite that challenge?

Being on the Board of Directors I am always in awe of and proud of the fact that HFOT is responsible for every donor dollar they receive and ensuring as much of it goes to the mission as possible. In keeping with that, one of HFOT's challenges is awareness based on the fact that they don't spend much funding to advertise nationally. The BOD is always actively supportive in assisting in any way to make connections and spread awareness about the mission, which in turn can help HFOT build more homes for deserving injured Veterans. It also speaks to HFOT's quality since they rely heavily on word of mouth, that they are running a top-notch organization with the mission at the forefront.



Stacy and Phil Farley

Accelerating Fundraising Efforts

"On the road again. Just can't wait to get on the road again," are Willie Nelson lyrics that Stacy and Phil Farley live by. This adventurous couple sold their house in 2018, bought an RV, and started exploring the United States. Not long after purchasing their home on wheels, they created a YouTube channel, thus providing a way for their friends and family to follow their travels around the country.

Once they reached 20k subscribers, they knew they had a platform large enough to give back. Both Navy Veterans themselves, Stacy and Phil choose to support our military. Their creative fundraising efforts have raised more than \$90k for HFOT in just two years.

"We set up the Homes For Our Troops landing page and we were able to gain traction. The ability of our community to donate directly is very important to them. They can donate with confidence. Sharing a Key Ceremony on our YouTube channel lets us show our community exactly where their contributions are going and the impact on the entire family. Fundraising efforts include our line of military and Veteran clothing, Today is Someday t-shirts and hats, a silent auction, Today is Someday guitar raffle, and our annual Army vs Navy game fundraiser. The Army-Navy game is always so much fun! There is nothing like a little military rivalry to motivate our military community to donate!"

Stacy and Phil add lots of FUN to fundraising and are great examples of how out-of-the-box ideas can work for you while advancing our mission of Building Homes and Rebuilding Lives. Fundraising is not a one size fits all concept, and there are many ways to help build more specially adapted custom homes for deserving Veterans. Stacy speaks for us all when she says:

"Working with Homes For Our Troops has forever changed our lives. We have seen the impact that HFOT has on the daily lives of Veterans and their families. It reminds us that our work is not done. It won't be done until every severely injured post-9/11 Veteran is comfortable in his/her own home."

If you or someone you know would like to FUNdraise for our mission, please reach out to our fundraising team at ifundraising@hfotusa.org

Donor Spotlight: Gary Fredrick

Like many of you, Gary Fredrick learned about Homes For Our Troops through good old-fashioned word-of-mouth. Back in 2008, the local credit union near his home in New Brighton, Minnesota, promoted a build for a local Veteran, Army Sergeant Marcus Kuboy. He and his wife Elaine did their homework, made sure HFOT was an "A" rated charity, and made a donation that year and in subsequent years.

In 2014, Gary and Elaine attended Army Specialist Marco Solt's Community Kickoff in Minnesota and got to hear Marco's powerful words about how meaningful the home will be to his recovery. *"As I was retired by then, I realized I needed to step forward and help the mission,"* he says.

As an Army Veteran himself, Gary is no stranger to service, and he has given so much to HFOT ever since. He is one of HFOT's most vocal and staunch supporters, donating his time in various ways. Gary is an active volunteer and an HFOT Community Outreach and Engagement (CORE) Ambassador, serving as a photographer at build events, attending fundraisers as an official HFOT representative, and promoting the mission locally in Minnesota. And, it's a family affair! If you see Gary out at an event, he is often joined by his wife, Elaine, and his three grandsons. When not volunteering for HFOT, Gary spends time with his grandsons, teaching them archery, cycling, and now golfing with them. He says that is by far the *"BEST JOB EVER!"*



Gary (left) is recognized by Teamsters Local 120.

HFOT relies on donors like Gary to spread the word about HFOT. If you would like to learn more about how you can help promote HFOT in your community, visit www.hfotusa.org/ways

Homespire employees at Army SGT Melendez-Diaz's Volunteer Day.



Corporate Partner Spotlight: Homespire Mortgage

Homes For Our Troops welcomes our newest Mission Partner, Homespire Mortgage. Homespire Mortgage is an award-winning mortgage lender, proudly operating across 42 states with the mission of guiding and supporting homebuyers to responsibly and affordably finance their dream of homeownership. As an Equal Housing Lender and approved seller and servicer with Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, Homespire has been helping open the doors to ownership for thousands of homebuyers since 2006. As a proud Mission Partner for HFOT, Homespire's donation will help support our mission of building and donating specially adapted custom homes for severely injured post-9/11 Veterans, to enable them to rebuild their lives.

"We are honored to support HFOT in its mission to help restore freedom and independence for our nation's most severely injured Veterans, empowering them to rebuild their lives," said Michael Rappaport, President of Homespire Mortgage. "We are tremendously grateful to those who sacrificed so much for us. As mortgage professionals, we understand the significance of finding the perfect home, and through our partnership with HFOT, we are thankful for the opportunity to support Veterans and make that dream a reality."



OUR CORPORATE PARTNERS

PLATINUM NATIONAL PARTNERS



GOLD NATIONAL PARTNERS



SILVER NATIONAL PARTNERS



NATIONAL PARTNERS



MISSION PARTNERS



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