



# Foundations

A Newsletter from Homes For Our Troops | [www.hfotusa.org](http://www.hfotusa.org) | SEPTEMBER 2024

## A Safe Place



YOUR SUPPORT ENABLES SEVERELY INJURED VETERANS TO REBUILD THEIR LIVES

# A Letter from the President and CEO



Dear HFOT Supporters,

As the anniversary of 9/11 approaches, we are mindful of the nearly 3,000 lives lost on that September day. We remember and honor those who put themselves in harm's way and extend our gratitude to the brave men and women in our military who serve our country.

Many of the Veterans we serve at HFOT were inspired to join or re-enlist after the September 11 attacks, stepping forward selflessly to protect our nation. They were severely injured while defending our freedom, returning home to lives forever changed and to non-adapted living arrangements no longer safe or accessible. Based on U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs numbers, we estimate that there are still over 1,000 severely injured post-9/11 Veterans in need of adapted housing. This is why our mission is so critical.

As we celebrate our 20th anniversary and hand over the keys to our 400th home this month, we remain steadfast in our resolve to build and donate a specially adapted custom home for every post-9/11 severely injured Veteran who qualifies for one. These homes help restore some of the freedom and independence our Veterans sacrificed for all of us, so we could continue to enjoy our daily freedoms. We can only do this with your continued commitment to our mission. Your generosity fuels our organization and propels us forward.

In this newsletter, you can see how you are impacting the lives of HFOT Veterans and their families. On page 3, we introduce you to Air Force Technical Sergeant Adam Popp, a marathoner and elite para-athlete who is looking forward to moving into his HFOT home in Colorado with his wife, Amanda, and 2-year-old son, Logan. On page 4, you'll meet Marine Corporal Dan Lasko, who joined the Marines after high school and was sworn in on the morning of the September 11 attacks. Dan's HFOT home in Wind Gap, PA has enabled him to pay it forward in his community by coaching youth sports.

Individual donors and corporate partners dedicated to raising funds and awareness are key to the success of our mission. This issue highlights a few of these supporters, including our top fundraisers who continue to find new and creative ways to champion our cause.

Thank you for being a valued and essential supporter. I encourage you to attend one of our build events near you to see for yourself how your support is changing lives.

Sincerely,

H.T. Landwermeyer, Jr.  
Brigadier General, USA Retired  
President & CEO  
Homes For Our Troops



give.org

SEPTEMBER 2024

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ON THE COVER: Marine Corporal Dan Lasko and his family received the keys to their HFOT home on March 18, 2023.



### A History of Excellence

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

# Quality of Life



Air Force TSGT Adam Popp and family.

Adam Popp joined the Air Force directly after graduating high school in 1997, influenced by his desire to carry on his family's legacy of military service. He found a sense of purpose in his job as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Team Leader. "I took great pride in my ability to contribute to missions

that made a tangible difference to the safety of my fellow service members and the local populations," he says.

The safety of others was Adam's primary concern on his second combat deployment in 2007 when he was tasked with disarming a roadside improvised explosive device (IED) in Paktia Province, Afghanistan. He was successful in neutralizing the initial threat, but a secondary IED detonated, resulting in the amputation of his right leg above the knee.

In the aftermath of his injury, Adam struggled with his loss of mobility. "In a split second, I went from being very fit and independent to near death lying in a hospital bed, relying on others. Everyday tasks became challenging, and I worried about my ability to move freely and independently without risking further injury." After more than a year of rehabilitation at Walter Reed Medical Center, he faced continued challenges in his multilevel home with steep staircases to the bedrooms on the top floor, and laundry in the basement.

Now future recipients of a specially adapted custom HFOT home, Adam, and his wife, Amanda, are looking forward to joining the Lafayette, Colorado community where they've chosen to build their new home, and raise their young son, Logan and their daughter, due this November. The choice to build their HFOT home in the Centennial State, known for its stunning natural landscape and appeal to outdoor enthusiasts, complements Adam's active lifestyle. A seven-time Guinness World Record holder, he became the first above-knee amputee to complete a 100-mile ultramarathon. He won the 2024 Boston Marathon's Para Elite T63/63 division and set a world record at the London Marathon just six days later.

Yet what Adam is looking forward to most is the freedom and independence he'll have in the single-level, open floor plan of his new home. "Receiving an HFOT home will significantly improve my quality of life by providing a living space that is tailored to my specific needs. Features like wider doorways, lowered countertops, and accessible

bathrooms will enable me to navigate my home safely and comfortably. Additionally, this will allow me to grow old in my home while making it easier to chase my young kiddos around without worrying about going up and down stairs with them, which is one of my biggest concerns currently."

The mortgage-free home will give Adam the opportunity to pursue a career change and utilize his master's degrees in Rehabilitation and Clinical Counseling from George Washington University and Sport & Performance Psychology from the University of Denver. He will also be able to continue to pay it forward through his participation in the EOD Warrior Foundation, the VA Veterans' Advisory Committee on Rehabilitation, and as a certified peer-mentor and peer-mentor trainer through the Amputee Coalition of America.

Adam would like to extend his deepest gratitude to HFOT donors and supporters. "Your generosity and support have a profound impact on the lives of Veterans like myself, providing us with the stability and resources needed to thrive. This home will not only transform my life but also profoundly impact my children. They will see firsthand the difference that your kindness makes, which I hope will inspire them to grow into compassionate individuals who serve their fellow humans. Your contribution helps build a future filled with hope and opportunity, not just for me but for my entire family. Thank you for making a difference and for believing in the potential of Veterans to continue serving their communities in meaningful ways."



Air Force Tech Sergeant Adam Popp competing in the 2024 Boston Marathon.



Marine Corporal Dan Lasko and family at their HFOT home in Wind Gap, PA.



Dan and Jess Lasko know a thing or two about perseverance. The pair met as teenagers at a local football game, became high school sweethearts, and said a tearful goodbye

after graduation when Dan enlisted in the Marines, officially swearing in on the tragic morning of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. In the face of uncertainty, their bond never wavered.

Three years later, when Dan lost his leg in an improvised explosive device (IED) blast on a combat deployment in Afghanistan, it was Jess who spent the next year at Dan's hospital bedside while he recovered through extensive therapy and rehabilitation. "She always stuck with me," Dan says. "And that's what she continues to do, and that's what I love about her."

Back in civilian life, they continued to stick together through the many challenges they encountered in their former home, a raised ranch built into a hillside with a cramped layout. "We had so many stairs and rooms and they were all tight spaces. There was no way I could get around in a wheelchair. When I couldn't wear my prosthetic, I was either confined to the couch or the bedroom. There were times I had to crawl up the stairs and it was something I shouldn't have been doing," he says.

Recipients of a specially adapted custom HFOT home in early 2023, Dan and Jess, along with their two sons, Ben and Luke, have settled comfortably into the community in the Lehigh Valley area of Pennsylvania, the same state where they met on the bleachers at a high school football game all those years ago. Now though, the freedom and independence of their mortgage-free, single-level home with over 40 major adaptations have made daily life easier for the Lasko family, a luxury they don't take for granted. "Living comfortably in a safe place was unknown until now," Dan says.

Medically retired, Dan coaches both sons in youth sports and looks forward to new experiences and traveling as a family. He would like to thank HFOT donors and supporters for providing a safe and secure home. "Thank you so much for supporting HFOT and for the building of our home—a place my family can live without concerns or worry," he says.



# FUNDRAISING

**Annual Hog Roast:**  
"Shouldn't we live to give!"  
- Peggy Fasset  
HFOT Fundraiser

Over the past 20 years we have been honored and grateful to work with amazing fundraisers nationwide in support of our mission of Building Homes and Rebuilding Lives. Become inspired through their voices to fundraise today! Reach out to our fundraising team at [ifundraising@hfotusa.org](mailto:ifundraising@hfotusa.org). We are here to help!

**DEL RIO VINEYARDS:** "The connection we have made with HFOT, our Veterans, and their families has been incredible, and with each passing year, we feel the need to do more. We look forward to continuing this impactful work and growing our relationship together for many years to come."  
**Del Rio Vineyards Team**

**TEAMSTERS LOCAL NO. 120:** "Along with many of our Teamster members, my father and father-in-law both honorably served in the military. Our decision to partner with HFOT came from our desire to show respect and appreciation to the post-9/11 Veterans who fought courageously to defend our nation. We are grateful for the relationships we have built with the incredible HFOT staff and Veterans and are proud to call them family."  
**Tom Erickson, Teamsters Local 120 President**

**ALTER STICKBALL:** "For over a decade, my brother and I have organized an annual stickball tournament, which reunites us with friends and family and contributes to the remarkable cause of Homes For Our Troops. We deeply love this organization and the incredible work it does to provide specially adapted custom homes for severely injured post-9/11 Veterans."  
**Marine Major Kevin Alter, HFOT Fundraiser**

**CAI-NE SILENT AUCTION:** "All of us at Community Associations Institute are happy to give back to those who sacrificed for our country, and every home we help to build is a testament to our gratitude."  
**Jennifer Pappas, American Properties Team, Inc. Vice President**

**LUKE WALKER:** "Fundraising for Homes For Our Troops was the best choice of my life. My journey started as one man on a bike against the world and ended with a family that was helping me make a better one for our Veterans."  
**Luke Walker HFOT Fundraiser**

**TAILGATE FOR TROOPS:** "At our Tailgate for Troops events, people meet these deserving Veterans and enjoy putting a face to who they are helping. Through this incredible organization, Homes for Our Troops, we're reminded of the true meaning of gratitude, compassion, and service."  
**-David Ainslie, HFOT Fundraiser**

**LIPPERT FLOORING AND TILE:** "We have been proud to work with the excellent team at HFOT for the past 14 years. They do a tremendous job for our severely injured Veterans and their families, who have earned our best efforts to assist them with fully adapted homes."  
**Les Lippert, Lippert Flooring and Tile President**

## **INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS**

**LOCAL NO. 49 GOLF TOURNAMENT:** "We owe a debt to the men and women who have put it all on the line to protect our nation. Doing what we can to start repaying that debt by helping take care of our most severely injured Veterans is an honor that brings every member of our union great pride."  
**Jason George, IUOE Local 49 Business Manager**

**RADO BACKYARD PARTY:** "We are passionate about fundraising and supporting Homes For Our Troops in their mission because we are grateful to the men and women of our military who sacrifice their lives and limbs so that we can live free and pursue the American dream in this great country."  
**The Rado Family, HFOT Fundraisers**

**PUTTING FOR PATRIOTS:** "Having just completed our 17th annual Putting for Patriots event, I remain as proud of HFOT and our twenty-nine participating Course Managers as when we started the event in 2007. Our teams' special promotions—from golf and cornhole tournaments to silent auctions to rubber ducky races—have been essential in our team generating over \$826,000."  
**Bradford Graft, Pirates Cove Owner**

**FIDDLER'S CREEK GOLF TOURNAMENT:** "It was my pleasure to introduce the membership of The Golf Club at Fiddler's Creek in Naples, Florida to Homes For Our Troops. Our Veteran's Day 2023 tournament raised over \$23,000 and put Fiddler's Creek in the Top 20 of 2023 donors."  
**Navy Vice Admiral William Sullivan, HFOT Fundraiser**

**TEAM HFOT/DIY RUNNER:** "HFOT's mission is truly an amazing one and having the ability to contribute and raise awareness is the least I can do for the Veterans who sacrificed for their country."  
**Evan Jacques, HFOT Fundraiser**

**CIVIC ORGANIZATION FUNDRAISER:** "As a Veteran myself, I deeply appreciate the sacrifices our military members make to ensure that all Americans continue to enjoy our freedoms. A heartfelt thank you to HFOT for helping these Veterans rebuild their lives."  
**Jerry Ramirez, Brothers In Arms MC Seguin Chapter President**

**ROSEDALE CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT:**  
"There is nothing more rewarding than to see the broad smile across a Veteran's face when he first enters his fully accessible HFOT home. Knowing that we played a small part in making that happen brings so much joy into our lives."  
**The Kehoes and the Skeltons HFOT Fundraisers**

**THE POLAR PLUNGE:** "The Marshfield Elks is proud to serve those who served. One of our favorite fundraisers is the New Year's Day Polar Plunge. Members come from across Massachusetts to dive into the Atlantic and raise money for HFOT. The Elks Pledge: So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them."  
**Kevin Shapter, Marshfield Elks Member**

**CIVIC ORGANIZATION FUNDRAISER:** "Homes For Our Troops is the best place to donate to Veterans as they use the money wisely!!!"  
**Bill Stevens, Hawthorne Military Club Member**

**6TH ANNUAL VETERANS HOP BLEND:** "We were honored to work with HFOT and were deeply moved by seeing how positively your cause can affect individual Veterans that receive the housing."  
**Jonathan Sikes, Yakima Chief Hops Regional Sales Manager**

**STAIRS4RTROOPS:** "Fundraising for Homes For Our Troops for the last ten years has been an honor for us. HFOT has provided us support in a way that makes our relationship with them feel like a real partnership for an outstanding cause."  
**Matt Appel, HFOT Fundraiser**

**BRIDGEWATER FITNESS CENTER:** "Fundraising for Homes For Our Troops has been an incredibly rewarding experience for all of us! It is a fantastic way to connect with our community, support severely injured Veterans, and make a tangible difference in their lives."  
**Lauren Hanson & Brian Conroy, Owners of Bridgewater Fitness Center**



# LOCKHEED MARTIN

## AHEAD OF READY: EMPOWERING VETERANS

HFOT National Partner Lockheed Martin is making stronger communities possible every day. It only takes a brief conversation with one of their dedicated employees to understand their commitment to their communities, neighbors, partners, and Veterans. They pride themselves on supporting our military community, as stated on their website:

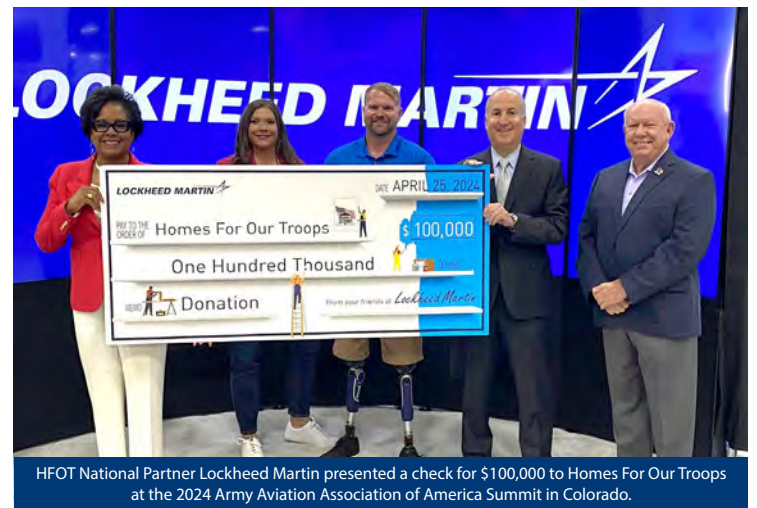
*"We are deeply committed to supporting service members and their families, empowering Veterans in transition to the civilian sector, and honoring the legacy of those who have served."*

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Lockheed Martin is a leading global security, defense, and aerospace contractor, ensuring those they serve always stay ahead of ready. Of their 122,000-employee population, approximately one in five is a Veteran, reservist, or military spouse. The entire organization is deeply proud to stand by the military community.

Lockheed Martin has been a National Partner of Homes For Our Troops since 2019, and they are an integral part of the HFOT family. From attending build events, to raising awareness about our mission and generously donating funds, they are with us every step of the way.



Lockheed Martin team members at a Volunteer Day in San Antonio, FL to help landscape Army SPC Michael Monthervil's HFOT home.



HFOT National Partner Lockheed Martin presented a check for \$100,000 to Homes For Our Troops at the 2024 Army Aviation Association of America Summit in Colorado.

"The impact that Homes For Our Troops makes on Veterans and their families is life-changing, and their mission aligns perfectly with our vision for a thriving and empowered Veterans community," says Stephanie C. Hill, president of Rotary and Mission Systems at Lockheed Martin.

As we commemorate our 20th anniversary of Building Homes and Rebuilding Lives, we are incredibly proud of the partnerships we have built over the years. As a responsible corporate citizen, Lockheed Martin strives to be a valued partner to their neighbors, nation, and allies. Thank you, Lockheed Martin, for your commitment to our Veterans, Homes For Our Troops, and everyone you serve!

It takes the help of countless people to complete our mission and put our nation's most deserving Veterans into their forever homes. If you or someone you know would like to become a Corporate Partner, please reach out to our team at [partnership@hfotusa.org](mailto:partnership@hfotusa.org).

# Recognizing Philanthropy: *A DEDICATED DUO*

HFOT donors for more than a decade, Michelle and Don were honored to share a few heartfelt thoughts about the importance of supporting our nation's severely injured Veterans and their families.



Army Sergeant Christopher Hancock's Key Ceremony supported by Don and Michelle.



Don and Michelle supported Army Staff Sergeant Daniel Lister's Community Kickoff event.

## *What does HFOT's mission mean to you?*

To us, the mission of HFOT is about giving back to those Service Members who sacrificed something of themselves to protect our freedom and deserve to have something given to them in return. We take great pride in knowing our contribution is helping these brave men and women take care of themselves and their families with a roof over their heads, making daily life much easier. We are proud Americans who cherish this great country of ours. Michelle's dad was a Marine in Korea. Don served in the Navy. His son, Heath, served in the Army, and in the Army Reserve until his recent death. Don's grandson, Tyler, is a Sergeant in the Army. Anytime we see someone in uniform, whether in the military or a first responder, we take the time to thank them for their service.

## *What would you tell others about us?*

We take great pride in spreading the word about the wonderful things HFOT does for our severely injured Veterans. We are grateful that we can help in some small way. Being a part of such a wonderful charity giving back to our troops feels amazing. All the HFOT staff we have had the honor to meet have been dedicated to helping improve the lives of our Veterans. In the future, we look forward to continuing to support this honorable mission.



## *How did you find out about the organization?*

We found HFOT on Charity Navigator when we were looking for charities that had a 4- star rating. After researching the organization, we realized just how important their mission is and how serious they are about building specially adapted homes for injured Veterans. HFOT is an amazing charitable organization that genuinely cares about the men and women who have fought for our country.




# MAXIMIZE Your Impact!

*Giving to Homes For Our Troops can also be an act of gratitude for yourself.*



Our **Smart Giving Suite** explains ways to maximize your giving options by donating through giving vehicles such as these:

 **Donor-Advised Funds**

*Donate and recommend grants.*

 **Qualified Charitable Distribution**

*Transfer from your IRA directly, and optimize your taxable income.*

 **Crypto**

*Modernize your giving with cryptocurrencies.*

These gifts offer tax benefits while also supporting our mission of Building Homes and Rebuilding Lives.

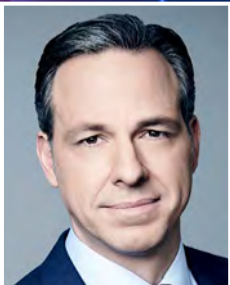
By using the Smart Giving Suite, your gift directly supports the mission, ensuring your generosity significantly impacts our Veterans and their families.

Please contact Suzanne Shaheen, Planned Giving Officer, at 508-967-9041 or [sshaheen@hforusa.org](mailto:sshaheen@hforusa.org) with any questions.



Celebrating  
**20<sup>TH</sup>**  
ANNIVERSARY  
2004-2024

# 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Homes For Our Troops Veterans Day Celebrity Auction



*Hosted by Jake Tapper, George Clooney, Wynonna Judd, Don Cheadle, & Mindy Kaling*

## Save the Date November 11<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>