

OP FH HOME FRONT

2025 // SPRING

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR OUR SUPPORTERS

MOTIVATED BY MISSION: BEHIND THE SCENES AT OPERATION FINALLY HOME

Operation Finally Home exists to build hope in the lives of veterans, first responders and their families, a mission we live out through providing mortgage-free homes, home modifications and transitional housing. Our partners, supporters and donors make that work possible with the help of the Operation Finally Home team.

As we celebrate our 20th anniversary throughout 2025, we want to introduce to you the Operation Finally Home staff, which works tirelessly behind the scenes to keep projects moving toward completion.

"The Operation Finally Home team is committed to serving America's heroes, and there's a whole team of people working behind the scenes to ensure we make a difference in those heroes' lives," said David Drew, Operation Finally Home executive director. "They are continually working to create processes that help us identify and serve more veterans while also working to keep projects moving from start to finish."

Surprises, Groundbreakings, Notes of Love events and Dedications are all exciting milestones we celebrate as we progress through each mortgage-free home project—but the work begins long before we surprise a family with good news.

Here are a few of the ways the Operation Finally Home team works to keep our mission moving forward:

Case Management and Family Support: Case managers review applications and help vet recipients, assessing the physical, emotional and financial needs of each family. Staff members also help review applications, match deserving recipients with a builder or remodeler and often provide ongoing support throughout the project and after completion.



Operation Finally Home staff, partners and former recipients join U.S. Army Sergeant Major Jose Barreiro and his family at the Groundbreaking for their home.



Lee Kirgan, Vice President Operation Finally Home, with U.S. Army Specialist Jakob Spraggins and his daughters at the Groundbreaking for their home in Waco, Texas.

Project Coordination: Each mortgage-free home or modification begins with a local builder or remodeler, and Operation Finally Home team members coordinate with these partners throughout the project, marking exciting milestones with pillar events and ensuring the needs of the recipient family are met.

Fundraising and Donor Engagement: We couldn't do the work we do without the help of our donors and supporters. Securing funding for projects is an important part of our work, and some Operation Finally Home team members devote most of their time to donor engagement, fundraising, and grant writing.

Awareness: Team members also help to get the word out about Operation Finally Home's mission and the families we serve. This includes media relations, social media and helping to organize and promote pillar events and encourage community involvement.

Administrative and Operational Support: Behind the scenes, administrative staff ensure compliance with nonprofit regulations, maintain financial transparency and handle day-to-day operations.

At Operation Finally Home, we strive to build more than houses. We help build homes filled with hope, healing and a strong sense of community—and that commitment runs deep in the hearts of our team members.

Credit: BAM Builders/Rachel Thomas Photography

Credit: Lerner



A FEW WORDS FROM DAN

Twenty years ago, I set out with a simple but powerful vision: to honor our nation's heroes by giving them a safe, secure place to call home. As we celebrate Operation Finally Home's 20th anniversary this year, I am filled with gratitude—for the partners, donors and supporters who have made our work possible, and especially for the dedicated team working tirelessly behind the scenes to keep our mission moving forward.

In this issue of HomeFront, we're celebrating the very heartbeat of our organization—our team. These individuals are the quiet force behind every Surprise and Groundbreaking, every Notes of Love event, and every Dedication. I love every one of our unforgettable pillar events, but I also recognize that they are visible milestones of a much deeper process.

The Operation Finally Home team works daily to ensure our projects reflect the honor, care and dignity our veterans, first responders and their families deserve. From case management to project coordination, fundraising, communications and more—each role plays a vital part in giving America's heroes a safe place to call home. We're doing more than building or renovating houses. We're in the work of creating homes filled with hope and healing.

While our hearts still ache from the loss of our dear friend and teammate Rusty Carroll, his legacy continues to inspire our work. His passion for our mission lives on in the team he helped shape—one that serves with integrity, compassion and purpose.

Thank you for continuing to walk alongside us. Here's to 20 years of building hope—and to the team that makes it possible.

God Bless,

Dan Wallrath

Founder of Operation Finally Home

GET TO KNOW OUR STAFF

Learn more about the people working behind the scenes to fulfill Operation Finally Home's mission.



Sheena Beaver, Vice President, Operations

What do you love about your work? Providing veterans, first responders, and their families with a safe and stable place to call home is more than just housing—it's about restoring dignity, fostering healing, and honoring their sacrifices. It's meaningful work that creates real, lasting impact in people's lives.

Ashleigh Chesser, Vice President Administration and Controller

Favorite Quote: "We can see hope in the midst of hopelessness. We can see peace in the midst of chaos. We have hope that the world does not have because of the grace of God." – Nick Vujicic. This one pops up almost weekly for me on my daily devotional I get. It asked me what my job was a long time ago, but I feel like it fits our work!

Darlene Drew, Program Director



Most memorable moment: Vincent Pena is such a kind and humble person. During his project, we learned as much about his precious family member, Koojaa, as we did about him. Vincent would always have a Koojaa update and picture. When we finished his project, it was only fitting that we give something to Koojaa as well. In the Texas heat, goggles and a cooling bandana seem appropriate.

David Drew, Executive Director

Most memorable moment: The Dedication for retired U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. William Makaafi and his family was my first new home project. At the dedication, William's wife, Precious, sat in the car for 10 minutes trying to stop herself from crying. She was so overjoyed; she needed that time to gather herself before getting out of the car to meet everyone and enjoy the ceremony.

James Gaylord, Operations Manager

What I love about Operation Finally Home: Seeing the gratitude in the eyes of the veterans we get to serve is extraordinarily humbling and invigorating. It seems as though sometimes we are the first good thing to happen to them in a very long time.

Molly Halliday, Senior Vice President, Marketing

What I love about Operation Finally Home: Over the past 11 years, I've seen how receiving the gift of a home lifts the weight off the shoulders of our recipients and their families. It's amazing how military children carry these burdens as well. So awesome to watch families focus on their healing and renewed family time!

Katie Herries, Vice President, Donor Engagement

What about Operation Finally Home's mission motivates you?

As the wife of a first responder, I love the work we do for those who serve without asking for anything in return. They sacrifice selflessly for their communities and country, and it is an honor to serve them back.

Lee Kirgan, Vice President

What I love about Operation Finally Home: I love that Operation Finally Home is a ministry. I enjoy getting to know our veterans and first responders and their families and understanding their needs. Knowing we have made a difference in their lives for the better and given them renewed hope and an opportunity to fulfill their dreams is what keeps me going.

Ronnie Lyles, Senior Project Manager

What excites you about Operation Finally Home's mission: The joy of being part of an organization that honors those who have sacrificed so much for this great country!

Ginger Raney, Senior Case Manager

Most memorable moment: It's the same for all of my applicants. ... They all become my family. I love the bond we make and their excitement when their dreams come true.

Chris Reiley, Associate Case Manager & Finance Coordinator

What excites you about your work? Our nation's heroes have sacrificed so much to protect our freedoms and values and to keep our communities safe. Giving back by providing hope and a safe space to call home is a daily motivator for me.



U.S. Air Force Master Sergeant Christopher Weichman Dedication, Spokane, Washington

Credit: Lennar



U.S. Army Specialist Jakob Spraggins Notes of Love, Waco, Texas

Credit: BAM Builders

PILLAR EVENTS:

SURPRISES, GROUNDBREAKINGS,
NOTES OF LOVE & DEDICATIONS



February 21	Kingwood HS Tiny Home	Dedication	Houston, Texas
March 4	Christopher Weichman	Dedication	Spokane, Washington
March 27	Jakob Spraggins	Notes of Love	Waco, Texas
April 8	Langetree Community Center	Notes of Love	Liberty, Texas
May 13	Kingwood Park HS Tiny Home	Dedication	Houston, Texas
May 21	Summer Creek HS Tiny Home	Dedication	Houston, Texas

BUILDING HOPE IN NEW WAYS



Earlier this spring, Operation Finally Home along with the SBCA Foundation and the Greater Houston Builders Association partnered to host a Notes of Love event at the new Langetree Community Center in Liberty, Texas. The Langetree Community Center will serve as a safe gathering place for veterans who live in the community of temporary short-term tiny homes housing designed specifically for homeless veterans.

Through Operation Finally Home's partnership with Lowe's Home Improvement and the "Big Heroes, Tiny Homes" project of the Humble Independent School District, the Langetree Retreat and Eco Center will ultimately feature 35 tiny homes. Currently, there are six tiny homes and one bunkhouse on the property. In addition to providing temporary housing, the Langetree Retreat and Eco Center provides at risk, underserved and homeless veterans with tools and training to build social and financial independence, recreational activities, social services, life skills management, educational services, cultural arts and more.





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Visit OperationFinallyHome.org or call 512-329-2661 to help a hero!

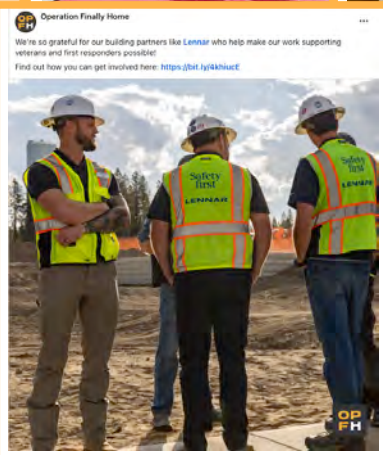
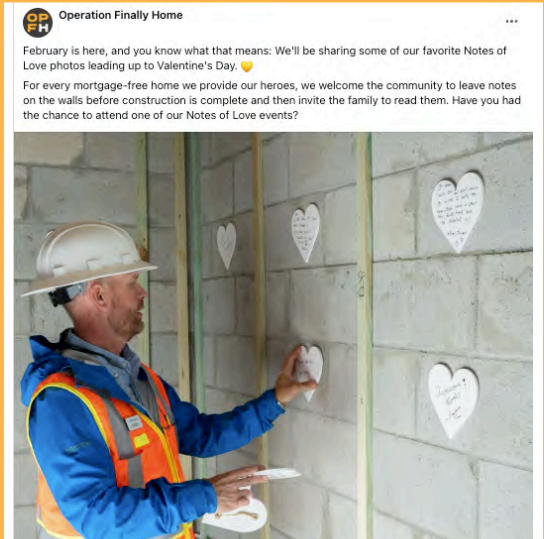
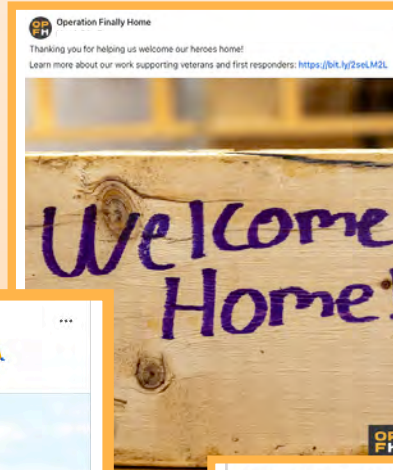
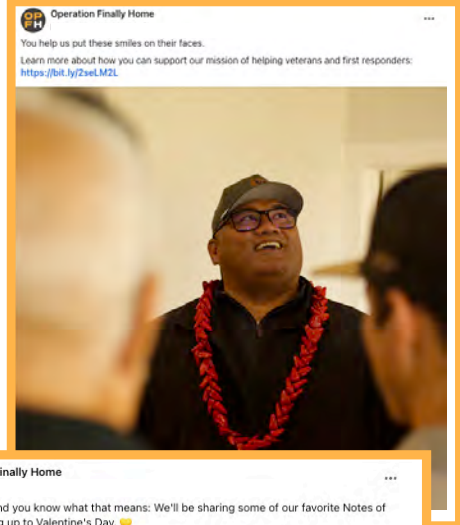
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FACES, PLACES & SPACES

INTERNATIONAL BUILDERS' SHOW



Members of the Operation Finally Home team took part in the NAHB International Builders' Show in Las Vegas, Nevada, Feb. 25-27. This trade show has been such a blessing over the years as a way to meet with partners, potential partners and experts from across the building industry. We're grateful for the opportunity to connect!

BIG SHOT SHOOTOUT

The annual Big Shot Shootout took place March 23 at The Range of Richfield in Richfield, Wisconsin. Thanks to all who came out to support Operation Finally Home!



FOCUSED ACTS OF CARING

In January, a visit with our partners at the Lennar Orlando office turned into check presentation! Each year, Lennar supports nonprofits that help to improve quality of life through their Focused Acts of Caring initiative. The Lennar Orlando office presented Operation Finally Home with a check for \$20,000 to help more veterans, first responders and their families have a safe place to call home.



Ericka Pace, Division President at Lennar, presents a check for \$20,000 to Darlene Drew, OFH Program Director, and David Drew, OFH Executive Director.

AN EVENING WITH OPERATION FINALLY HOME

On May 1, the Operation Finally Home team enjoyed a concert in Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin, featuring Mark Nesler and Brice Long. Operation Finally Home recipient, Jesse Frewer, also performed. The proceeds from the event benefitted Operation Finally Home.



Credit: Jan Cline

HERE TO HELP

Would you or someone you know benefit from a mortgage-free home, or a home modification? The Operation Finally Home process begins with our initial contact forms. Please check them out at operationfinallyhome.org/apply.

FINAL THOUGHT

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

— **Philippians 4:13**

a favorite quote of several Operation Finally Home staff members

Visit OperationFinallyHome.org or call 512-329-2661 to help a hero!