On October 26, 2013, Laura Spears received a call that would forever change the Spears family.

Her son, First Lieutenant Garrett Spears had a promising career ahead of him after graduating from Texas A&M University in 2011 with a degree in chemistry. He entered the army as a Chemical Corp (CBRN) officer for the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood in Killeen, Texas, and was promoted to First Lieutenant two years later.

But on that fall day in 2013, everything changed. While participating in field training, Garrett was struck by lightning. Laura and her husband, Michael Clint, rushed to Garrett’s side. He was in a coma for two months and remained in the hospital for the next two years.

When Garrett was finally discharged in 2015, the challenges were just beginning. Garrett’s journey while in the hospital was long and challenging, riddled with uncertainty about his condition and recovery. Once Garrett was released, Laura and Michael were faced with another unfamiliar obstacle: the new responsibility of being Garrett’s full-time, primary caregivers — in a two-story home they never imagined would need to be modified.

On New Year’s Eve in 2017 the Spears family was surprised with the news that they would receive a custom-built, mortgage-free home from Operation FINALLY HOME and Lennar.

The Spears family was chosen to receive Lennar’s Next Gen® home. The first of its kind, Lennar’s Next Gen® home is custom built with multigenerational functionality in mind, allowing Garrett and his caregivers to live together under one roof with their own separate spaces.

“‘When we got the news that we were selected for a mortgage-free home, we were in the process of making home modifications to accommodate Garrett,’ said Garrett’s step-father, Michael. ‘To have someone tell us we don’t need to make those modifications because they’re going to provide us with a brand-new, custom-built home designed for Garrett’s specific needs, it means the world to us.’”

Garrett is on an unimaginable journey, facing new and difficult challenges, but Laura and Michael are right there with him. We salute Garrett and acknowledge the dedication and compassion his caregivers, Laura and Michael, share with him daily.

“I would love people to know that it might seem like a long, hard road, but there is hope.”

– Michael Clint, Garrett’s step-father

Here to Help: Resources for Caregiver Education and Support

Caregiver Resources
It’s a constant job, but one many would not trade for the world. As if caring for one’s self wasn’t enough, these men and women have taken on the responsibility of caring for another. We’ve gathered resources to help caregivers navigate their important role. Visit www.caregiver.va.gov for more information and to learn how to get involved in these programs.

The VA Caregiver Support Line
Caregivers are encouraged to call The VA Caregiver Support Line at 1-855-260-3274 anytime to ask questions and get help with self-care.

VA Peer Support Mentoring
The VA offers 6-month peer mentoring programs for those seeking support and those looking to offer support.
A Few Words from Dan

Family makes a house a home.

At Operation FINALLY HOME, we remain humbled by our unselfish heroes who answered their call to serve our country. This decision removes service members from their loved ones, some of which will never return home.

As a result of their service, many endure countless visible and invisible injuries – injuries with lifelong implications for these heroes and their families.

According to the Rand Military Caregivers study, 5.5 million spouses, parents and friends are caring for U.S. veterans. These caregivers are often tasked with maintaining their household, managing finances, overseeing their loved one’s care and providing daily support for their families. Unfortunately for many, these circumstances often create a number of hardships.

Having over 250 homes and modifications completed or in planning stages, we’re humbled to continue alleviating a basic need for these families: a place to call home.

With faith in God and determined action, we continue bringing together supporters who design, build and fund homes not only for America’s heroes, but for those who stand by them.

In partnership with these noble caregivers and all who support our mission, we will continue to give back to these men and women who’ve made great sacrifices in service to our country.

God Bless,

Dan Wallrath

Founder of Operation FINALLY HOME

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CARING FOR CAREGIVERS

Our nation’s heroes who selflessly answer the call to serve often return home to their families with injuries – both visible and invisible – that permanently alter the course of their lives. Operation FINALLY HOME and our network of partners aim to ease the transition home for our veterans, their families and their caregivers. We’re honored to work with many families who are walking beside us in pioneering these changes.

Melissa Comeau is the wife and caregiver of Operation FINALLY HOME hero U.S. Marine Staff Sgt. Stephen Comeau. Staff Sgt. Comeau was awarded a Purple Heart for wounds sustained in a rocket-propelled grenade attack and was forced to medically retire. Because of her role as her husband’s caregiver, Melissa has invested her time and energy into long-term care and recovery for our nation’s heroes, their families and their caregivers.

Joining Melissa in her passion for caregiving is Jacqueline Goodrich, wife of Operation FINALLY HOME hero U.S. Army Sgt. Michael Goodrich. Sgt. Goodrich was severely injured in Afghanistan when his outpost was attacked just 10 days after his second child was born. He sustained a shattered jaw and injuries to the entire right side of his body.

Both Melissa and Jacqueline serve as fellows for the Elizabeth Dole Foundation, an organization empowering, supporting and honoring military caregivers. Dole Caregiver Fellows are leaders in the military and veteran caregiver space, and we’re proud to have these two women in our Operation FINALLY HOME family. For more information, visit elizabethdolefoundation.org.

Texas police officer Lt. Cortney Renfroe met his now-fiancé U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Tammy Barrett while serving with the Austin Police Department. This summer, Operation FINALLY HOME in partnership with Austin Cops for Charities and Henley Homes, Inc., welcomed the pair to their mortgage-free accessible home – a home that would provide space for Lt. Renfroe to oversee Staff Sgt. Barrett’s care, while creating accessible options for her to regain independence. During the special dedication ceremony, Lt. Renfroe surprised Staff Sgt. Barrett with a proposal. We wish the pair nothing but the best!

This home is more of a blessing than we could ever describe. I did not realize the freedom of movement and ability it would give to Tammy. Mornings are now so much less stressful and less painful to both of us - the whole thing has a blessing that we will be forever grateful for.”

- Lt. Cortney Renfroe

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SPOTLIGHT: BEHIND THE BUILD WITH “MAMA RUTH” COFFMAN

Operation FINALLY HOME Case Manager

I love working with our families before, during and after they receive a custom built, mortgage-free home. Having worked 30 years with the Dept. Of Veterans Affairs prepared me to understand and guide them in their transition to civilian life. Support for the Veterans and their spouses/caretakers is instrumental in their path to success post-military. Connecting them with resources to achieve their goals and being there for them through their journey is so rewarding.

Pictured with Ruth is OFH Recipient Haywood Range and daughters.
PILLAR EVENTS:

**SURPRISES, GROUNDBREAKINGS, NOTES OF LOVE & DEDICATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Type</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>Notes of Love</td>
<td>U.S. Army SSG Tammy Barrett</td>
<td>Del Valle, TX</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Willie Lenard</td>
<td>Claremore, OK</td>
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<td>May 9</td>
<td>Notes of Love</td>
<td>U.S. Army Lt. Garrett Spears</td>
<td>San Antonio, TX</td>
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<td>May 30</td>
<td>Notes of Love</td>
<td>U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Miguel Simental</td>
<td>McAllen, TX</td>
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<td>June 11</td>
<td>Notes of Love</td>
<td>U.S. Army Sgt. Roland Sengstock</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 12</td>
<td>Notes of Love</td>
<td>U.S. Army SFC Josh Ferguson</td>
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<td>June 14</td>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>U.S. Army SFC Matthew Weise</td>
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<td>June 15</td>
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<td>U.S. Army PFC Ian Rook</td>
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<td>U.S. Army Spc. Heath Howes</td>
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<td>July 2</td>
<td>Surprise/Groundbreaking</td>
<td>U.S. Marine Sgt. TJ Brennan</td>
<td>Culpeper, VA</td>
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<td>July 12</td>
<td>Surprise/Groundbreaking</td>
<td>U.S. Army CPT John Arroyo</td>
<td>Burleson, TX</td>
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<td>July 23</td>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>U.S. Army Lt. Garrett Spears</td>
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<td>U.S. Army Sgt. Howard Appleby</td>
<td>Babcock Ranch, FL</td>
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<td>July 30</td>
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<td>U.S. Army SSG Tammy Barrett</td>
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<td>August 13</td>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>U.S. Army Sgt. Roland Sengstock</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 22</td>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Miguel Simental</td>
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There’s a lot going on this summer for our families — From fun vacations to new family additions, check out what our heroes have been up to!

Ashby family visits the most magical place on earth Disney World! Ft. Worth, TX (PulteGroup)

Howes family enjoying a beautiful sunset. Wildwood, MO (Hobbs Homes)

The Sweger family visits Omaha Beach in Normandy on the 75th anniversary of D-Day. (Castlerock Builders & New Gulf Resources)

Howes family enjoying a beautiful sunset. Wildwood, MO (Hobbs Homes)

The Kadlecks welcomed a new family member through adoption! The Woodlands, TX (Beazer Homes)

The Veros family celebrated an 8th birthday! Jacksonville, FL (PulteGroup)

Lee Kirkman visits the Goodrich family. Stafford, VA (Miller & Smith)

Living the lake life with the Hutcheson family. Ball Ground, GA (Portico Properties & Southern Living)

Hillyer Family landscaping for summer! Alvin, TX (Belleau Wood Homes)

Fourth of July fun for the Jantz kids! Watauga, TX (Cameron Classic Homes & Gateway Church)

Night swimming with the DeTuccio family. Santa Rita Ranch, Georgetown, TX (Highland Homes)
TVC GRANT OF $250,000 HELPS TEXAS VETERANS

Operation FINALLY HOME was awarded the GY19-20 Fund for Veterans’ Assistance (FVA) grant from the Texas Veterans Commission, totaling $250,000! We are unbelievably grateful for the support of the TVC and the impact they will have on so many. The grant will support home modification projects in Texas. Katie Herries and Dan Wallrath will accepted the check in Austin, Texas, on September 12. The Fund for Veterans’ Assistance provides grants to organizations serving veterans and their families.

SGT. SWEGER PARTICIPATES IN D-DAY TRIBUTE

U.S. Army Sgt. Ronny Sweger, a member of the Operation FINALLY HOME family, led a team to jump into Normandy to commemorate the 75th anniversary of D-Day. He brought along a few Operation FINALLY HOME coins for his jump!

HOWES FAMILY VISITS LOCAL LOWE’S

Thanks in part to a grant from Lowe’s, U.S. Army Spc. Heath Howes and his family recently received the keys to their mortgage-free home in Wildwood, Missouri. The Howes family visited Lowe’s employee Danielle, who was instrumental in helping complete their home. We are grateful for their continued support!

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN: SHOW SOME LOVE

We are excited for our inaugural year as an approved charity for the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Show Some Love to veterans by giving to Operation FINALLY HOME through the CFC. Our designation number is 20331.

$30,000 DONATION CHECK AT SOUNDWAVES GRAND OPENING

Operation FINALLY HOME, along with ambassador Craig Morgan and U.S. Army Sergeant First Class Josh Ferguson, participated in a ribbon cutting ceremony for Soundwaves, a new indoor/outdoor waterpark located inside the Gaylord Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee. Operation FINALLY HOME heroes from the middle Tennessee area were invited to be the first guests of the park. Executive director Rusty Carroll and ambassador Craig Morgan accepted the donation on behalf of Operation FINALLY HOME.

NEW VIDEO FEATURES CRAIG MORGAN

Check it out! Operation FINALLY HOME recently debuted a new brand video featuring ambassador Craig Morgan. The new video can be seen on our website, operationFINALLYHOME.org and across all social media channels.

BOBOS PARTNERSHIP OFFERS HERO BAR

In support of an upcoming project in Texas, Bobo’s created a limited edition “Hero Bar” where a portion of every sale will be donated back to Operation FINALLY HOME. Visit eatbobos.com to find a store near you or purchase these delicious chocolate chip oat bars online.

FINAL THOUGHT:

“Your concerns have been heard. There are a lot of people who are joining together to try to make a difference – a positive difference for the caregivers. They deserve so much honor and respect. And they are caring for those that cared for us. I want them to know they are not alone.”

- Elizabeth Dole, U.S. Senator

Visit OperationFINALLYHOME.org or call 615-732-6143 to help a hero!
**Operation Finally Home**

Today we were truly blessed to hand over the keys to a new, mortgage-free home to U.S. Army Lt. and Texas A&M University graduate Garrett Spears and his family! Thank you to Lennar San Antonio and Cushman & Wakefield for making this build possible. Welcome home!

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Thank you to NNC12 for helping us tell U.S. Marine Sergeant Thomas Brennan's story! And thank you to Crepine Homes, Inc., Structural Building Components Association (SBCA) of the Capital Area, Helping Homefront with The Christian Broadcasting Network, Fredericksburg Builders Association (FBBA) and several community supporters for making this build possible.

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**Veteran receives mortgage-free home through 'Operation FINALLY HOME'**

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**Operation Finally Home**

Bringing people together to build homes and hope for America’s military heroes and their families.

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**Operation Finally Home**

There are no truer words.

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**Operation Finally Home**

Home of the Free because of the Brave.

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Today is the National Day of Prayer. We’re lifting up our heroes, our families, our friends, our supporters, our country, and so many more.

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