



# Foundations

A Newsletter from Homes For Our Troops | [www.hfotusa.org](http://www.hfotusa.org) | JULY 2023

## HFOT AT THE INDY 500!



YOUR SUPPORT ENABLES VETERANS TO REBUILD THEIR LIVES

## A Letter from the Executive Director

Dear HFOT Supporters,

Happy Independence Day!

As you enjoy gatherings and cookouts with loved ones this 4th of July, please know your continued support has brought the freedom and independence that we celebrate during this holiday to 360 deserving Veterans who were severely injured defending our freedom and independence.

In the following pages, we feature stories about our Veterans, fundraisers, donors, and corporate partners.

You will meet future home recipient HM3 Randell Leoncio, for whom we are building a home in California. Randell is looking forward to the peace of mind the home will provide his family for the years to come.

On page 4, we update you on Michael Boucher, who has been in his specially adapted custom home for nearly ten years. With the financial freedom of an HFOT home, Michael has been given the platform to pay it forward and assist others.

We could not do what we do without the assistance we get from our corporate partners. In this issue, we highlight a special thanks to Homes For Our Troops' Platinum Partner, ABC Supply Co. Inc., that recently helped HFOT raise over \$3 million by matching \$1 million of all donations received in the month of May. In addition, they spotlighted our organization during the 107th Indianapolis 500 by donating the design of their No. 14 AJ Foyt Racing Chevrolet, bringing awareness of HFOT to a national platform. The car's stars and stripes design celebrated American pride, and prominently featured the HFOT mission of Building Homes and Rebuilding Lives.

As our important work continues, the patriotic companies, organizations, and individuals dedicated to raising funds and awareness for our cause remain key to the success of our mission. Although 360 severely injured Veterans have received HFOT homes, we estimate there are more than another 1,000 Veterans severely injured in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts who need adapted housing. I know, with your continued commitment to our mission, we will be able to provide a home to every Veteran who qualifies for one.

Thank you for helping us Build Homes and Rebuild Lives. Have a safe and happy Fourth of July, and hope to see you at a build event soon.

Sincerely,

*Bill*

Bill Ivey  
Executive Director  
Homes For Our Troops



**JULY 2023**

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ON THE COVER: Homes For Our Troops at the Indy 500! See page 7.



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## A History of Excellence

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



## The Simple Pleasures of Home

Randell Leoncio always knew he wanted his life's work to be helping others in the medical field. With that aspiration in mind, Randell joined the Navy to serve as a corpsman with the Marines to gain medical experience.

On Oct. 4, 2005, HM3 Leoncio was on his first deployment, serving with the 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, when his vehicle drove over an improvised explosive device (IED) in Ramadi, Iraq. The explosion flipped the vehicle over, pinning him underneath. Randell lost his right leg, but before he was evacuated, he directed his comrades on how to treat his wounds, as well as others who were injured in the blast.

As part of his recovery, Randell has found a way to continue to serve his fellow servicemembers as a prosthetist at the Naval Medical Center in San Diego. When not working, he enjoys spending time with his wife, Abreail, a Navy nurse, and his stepsons, Jacob and Matthew. Randell has many interests and hobbies, including off-roading in his jeep, camping, snowboarding, and working on cars.

Randell has lived with his injuries for nearly 18 years, and although he has an active lifestyle, he continues to face difficulties and obstacles within his own home, especially as he ages. In his current residence, Randell often hops into the shower because it is too small for his wheelchair, and he has trouble reaching the kitchen cabinets. Randell recently underwent additional reconstructive surgeries, and while he was in recovery, he could not access every part of the home because he was limited to his wheelchair.

Receiving a specially adapted custom home from Homes For Our Troops will alleviate these concerns and give Randell and his family peace of mind. The single-level open floor plan will make it easier for him to help around the house with daily tasks without worrying about falling and injuring himself. The freedom and independence he will regain will give him the time to progress in his career, and allow him to reach his goals without the challenges of living in a non-adapted home.

Randell has seen firsthand the difference an HFOT home has made in the lives of fellow Homes For Our Troops home recipients, some of whom are his patients, enabling them to return to school, pursue careers, and start families. *"My eyes have been opened to what an accessible home will mean. No matter what happens, injury or old age, I will still be able to maneuver, and more importantly, be able to contribute my part to our household. Abreail and I will always take care of each other, and an accessible home will give us that security,"* he says.

Randell is excited about the future possibilities for his entire family. With the financial freedom of an HFOT home, he would like to take his education further and obtain his Ph.D. in a related field. He hopes to become more involved with policy to improve healthcare for amputees. *"I love what I do—helping people like me walk and be active again,"* he says. Randell and his wife have some other ideas on how to pay it forward, including fostering teenagers. They also look forward to the simple pleasures that the home will bring, like hosting a barbeque with friends and family.

Homes For Our Troops will kick off the building of Randell's home in California this year.





Michael Boucher joined the Marines in 2008 for reasons close to his heart—a deep love for his country, and a desire to carry on his family’s military legacy. A Georgia native who grew up fishing, hunting, and camping, Michael also looked forward to being pushed to his physical and mental limits.

On his first deployment to Afghanistan in 2009, Michael remembers feeling as though he was right where he needed to be. *“On top of the world,”* he says, reflecting on his service to his country with the 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion. It was on his second deployment to Afghanistan in 2011 when Cpl Boucher was severely injured in an improvised explosive device (IED) explosion while on foot patrol in the Sangin District. The blast resulted in the amputation of his legs above the knee and severe injuries to his left hand.

Stateside, following a sixteen-month stay at Bethesda Naval Medical Center in Maryland, Michael returned home to find his day-to-day life radically altered—in large and small ways. A simple task like boiling a pot of water became a dangerous undertaking with a stove too high to reach from his wheelchair. Narrow doorways and hallways restricted Michael’s mobility in his non-adapted home, making it difficult to move from room to room.

A Homes For Our Troops home recipient in 2013, Michael credits his specially adapted custom home with allowing him to be more independent. *“I am not limited to what rooms I can use. It is a wall-to-wall house that I can get around in,”* Michael says.

Along with fellow Marine Veteran and HFOT home recipient Tony Mullis, Michael used his newfound freedom and independence to pay it forward. The pair co-founded Amputee Outdoors, an organization aimed at helping injured Veterans recover through outdoor activities including hunting and fishing. All-terrain chairs called Action Trackchairs allowed Veterans the freedom to venture off-road, providing the ability to traverse and maintain balance on uneven terrain. Michael and Tony ran Amputee Outdoors until 2016 when their respective parenting and family obligations took precedence.

Now a married father of three, Michael stayed involved with Action Trackchair and is currently a certified dealer, a career he thinks of as more of a passion project than a job because of how personally rewarding it is. *“I love it because it’s kind of like my HFOT house—I take a product to people that unlocks the impossible in their minds. I tell my customers, this is as much for me as it is for you. Because of a chair that gets them out to the yard or out in the woods or to the beach—something that was once impossible, they realize now is doable.”*

With this year marking the ten-year anniversary in his home, Michael wants HFOT’s donors and supporters to know the full scope of what their support does for injured Veterans. *“There are just no words to express how the independence you get from an HFOT home gives you a mental boost. Not just the physical getting around and doing, but that mental boost of—I’m not a burden 24/7.”*

# Our Dedicated Donors

Support for Homes For Our Troops comes from a variety of sources, with a substantial portion of donations from individuals. HFOT's donors have their own reasons for giving, and every donor is a valued member of our HFOT Family.

Two donors, a married couple from New England who wish to remain anonymous, have been part of the HFOT family for years. The husband is a West Point graduate who served in the 82d Airborne Division, and his wife is a former nurse who worked at Fort Bragg. *"As a former Army officer, there is a very natural and genuine connection with organizations that support our Veterans. HFOT has a great mission. It fits squarely with our family's values,"* the husband shared, explaining why they hold Veterans close to their hearts.

The couple first heard about HFOT through Bill Ivey, Executive Director of HFOT, and the husband's former Army boss. *"Ivey was a tremendous boss—he always led by example. When I found out that Bill was Executive Director of HFOT, I knew HFOT would be an organization of integrity."* With this knowledge, it became apparent to both husband and wife where they wanted their contributions to go. *"HFOT is an outstanding organization. First, they serve a population frequently underserved by other channels; our severely injured Veterans. Second, they are very targeted in their mission. HFOT has a singular focus on building adapted housing for severely injured Veterans. When organizations focus and focus well, they deliver, and they do so efficiently. Third, HFOT has an outstanding record in terms of keeping overhead lean and getting the maximum dollars possible to serve its core mission of building adapted housing."*

This dedicated and generous couple focuses their support on HFOT and the Veterans they serve. They urge others to do so as well. *"If someone is looking for a first-class entity, an entity that sticks to its mission, an entity that embraces traditional American values, and an entity that serves an incredibly deserving demographic, our severely injured Vets, HFOT is a superb option."*



Home Recipient CWO3 David Field with Bill Ivey, Executive Director of Homes For Our Troops.



**SAVE THE DATE**

HOMES FOR OUR TROOPS

5th Annual

*Day of Giving*

JULY 17, 2023

**HELP US REACH OUR  
GOAL OF \$400,000!**

**This year the Champion Family Foundation is matching  
donations dollar-for-dollar up to \$50,000!**



## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: **Diane Hendricks** *Director*



Diane M. Hendricks is the sole owner of ABC Supply Co., Inc. which is the largest distributor of roofing materials in the United States. ABC is also a leading distributor of interior and exterior building products in the nation, with over 18,000 associates, in over 900 locations nationwide.

Diane is also Chairman of Hendricks Holding Co., Inc. (HHC) which presides over a diverse portfolio of businesses including manufacturing, distribution, real estate development, construction, recycling, and life sciences. Additionally, she is Chairman of NorthStar Medical Technologies LLC, a global innovator in the production and distribution of radioisotopes used for medical imaging. HHC is the lead investor and majority shareholder in NorthStar.

Diane considers her patriotic and conservative values of high importance and is passionate about civic responsibility and educating our youth. Her primary efforts are focused in Beloit, Wisconsin, where ABC and HHC are headquartered.

### ***Why is HFOT's mission important to you?***

America is the greatest country in the world, but our freedom is not free. As citizens, we have a responsibility to support the brave men and women who serve, particularly those who sacrifice aspects of their own independence to protect ours. It is a privilege to have such a meaningful way to give back to these heroes.

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

ABC Supply is built around seven Core Values; two of those are Give Back and American Pride. A few years ago, one of our ABC stores contributed to an HFOT build project in Wisconsin, and I had the opportunity to attend the ribbon-cutting ceremony. I met the Veteran, his family, and a number of members of the HFOT team. I saw the home, but more importantly, I saw the impact the home could have. I saw the dedication of all of those who were committed to the HFOT mission. When ABC began looking for a national charity that would align with our values and enable us to give back in a more significant way, we decided HFOT was a perfect choice. We are honored to be a partner in this work.

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

In 2022, I had the personal privilege of meeting some of the HFOT Veterans at the Indy 500, including several recipients of HFOT homes. Their stories moved me, and I felt called to do more for those who valiantly served our country. When asked to join the Board, I knew it was an opportunity to not only do my part, but a privilege to help our Veterans.

### ***What would you say to encourage others to get involved?***

It is our turn to serve. These Veterans and their families need homes specific to their injuries—homes that allow them to be self-reliant and to fully participate in the day-to-day lives of their families. HFOT gives them that home, designed just for them, in their home community. When you see the pride and the tears of joy in a Veteran's eyes, or the love and relief in the eyes of their spouse when they talk about the impact of their new home, you know this work matters. Your donations of time and money make a difference.

### ***How does our organization differ from other charities?***

HFOT is led by a team of retired military leaders, as well as business leaders who are committed to learning about service and sacrifice. The work is fueled by countless volunteers who are all committed to the mission of building homes and rebuilding lives. The team is engaged long before a home is built, and they stay involved for years after the home is finished. There is a lasting impact beyond the move-in day. And the impact extends well beyond the Veteran and his/her family—their service has a lasting impact on all of us.

### ***What is the biggest challenge for HFOT?***

Living the mission. Knowing there are hundreds of Veterans and their families who could benefit from the life-changing impact of an HFOT home. We spend time on the Board talking about the practical challenges of delivering on our commitment—finding the right location for a home, buying land and materials in an inflationary environment, building awareness and growing our circle of donors and volunteers—all so that we can get every qualifying Veteran into a home.



## HFOT at the Indy 500!

It has been said that the Indy 500 is the greatest spectacle in racing, and we were privileged to be a part of this incredible event again in 2023. For the second year in a row, our Platinum National Partner, ABC Supply, gifted the design of their car to Homes For Our Troops. The stars and stripes of the No. 14 AJ Foyt Racing Chevrolet was not only racing in the 107th Running of the Indianapolis 500, but it also raised awareness and donations for HFOT.

ABC Supply Co., Inc., a Platinum National Partner since 2020, is the largest wholesale distributor of roofing and other select exterior and interior building products in North America. Since its founding in 1982, ABC Supply's sole focus has been serving professional contractors and "making it easy" for them to do their jobs by offering the products, support, and services they need. Headquartered in Beloit, Wisconsin, ABC Supply has over 900 locations across the U.S. and Canada.

When you visit ABC Supply's website, it is not surprising that they have partnered with HFOT because their Core Purpose states:

*ABC Supply is dedicated to promoting and preserving the American dream by helping people accomplish the extraordinary based on our fundamental belief that every person has within themselves the ability to do great things.*

*"ABC Supply has supported HFOT since 2020, with their Core Values resonating deeply with who we are as a company," says Mike Jost, chief operating officer of ABC Supply. "We're honored to continue raising awareness for this organization alongside our friends at AJ Foyt Racing during this storied and prestigious race."*

The 2023 Indy 500 was an exciting time for all who attended, including HFOT Home Recipient and Board Director Adam Kisielewski, *"To say this experience was incredible would be one of the biggest understatements I've ever made. I cannot thank ABC Supply enough for allowing me to be a part of this incredible race and for the million-dollar match to help other Veterans just like me. You all are incredible people, and I'm so glad to have gotten the opportunity to spend this weekend with you!"*

Not only was the entire event impressive, but AJ Foyt's driver, Santino Ferrucci, stole our hearts with his support of our mission and his incredible 3rd place finish. His drive to succeed showcased his talent while displaying HFOT on a national stage, and we are proud to call him family.

*"We are thrilled ABC Supply spotlighted Homes For Our Troops for another year during the 2023 Indy 500," says HFOT President and CEO, Brigadier General (Ret) Tom Landwermeyer. "In addition to generating over \$3 million in revenue with a generous \$1 million match, the initiative raised much needed awareness about our mission throughout the country. ABC Supply's incredible enthusiasm and patriotic commitment to our mission enable us to get even more injured Veterans and their families into the specially adapted homes they need and deserve."*

Companies, businesses, and corporations from all over our great nation are helping us to make a difference in the lives of our Veterans and their families. And you can too! For more information on how to become a Corporate Partner, please contact our Corporate Philanthropy Team at: [partnership@hfotusa.org](mailto:partnership@hfotusa.org)



On September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, HFOT Veteran and Future Home Recipient, Army SGT Russell Carter paid it forward by holding a fundraiser to help HFOT's mission.

The "Rollin' With Rusty Beef and Beer" fundraiser was held in Springfield, PA, with over 250 family and friends coming together to wish Rusty a farewell on his exciting new journey to Florida. The event was filled with great food, drinks, raffles, music, and memories to last a lifetime. Rusty raised over \$35k towards his future home build, which will be in Tampa, FL.

A "going away party" is just one example of a fun and exciting FUNdraiser that can help raise awareness for HFOT's mission. As the weather grows warmer, consider hosting your family and friends at a Backyard BBQ, Game Night, Outdoor Movie Night, or Pool Party to help Build Homes and Rebuild Lives!

**Learn more about Rusty and his future build, scan this QR Code.**



If you are interested in hosting a FUNdraiser, please reach out to the Independent Fundraising Team at [ifundraising@hfotusa.org](mailto:ifundraising@hfotusa.org)