

OP FH HOME FRONT

2024 // WINTER

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR OUR SUPPORTERS

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Since 2005, Operation Finally Home has been focused on building hope by providing or improving homes for America's veterans, first responders and their families. From new home builds to home modifications and tiny homes used for transitional housing, Operation Finally Home exists to make a difference in the lives of America's heroes.

"We couldn't fulfill our mission without the support of our partners and the generosity of our faithful donors," said Rusty Carroll, president of Operation Finally Home. "2023 was an amazing year for us, during which we completed 50 projects. It truly is remarkable the difference the Operation Finally Home family can make when we work together."

For Operation Finally Home, success isn't only defined by the bottom line, but by the lives we're able to touch. Since 2005, Operation Finally Home has served more than 363 deserving veteran and first responder families. Our partners make these projects possible, providing the labor and supplies, such as building materials, fixtures, appliances and more—everything that's needed to transform a house into a home.

"We are blessed to do the work we do, but we couldn't do any of that without the help of the greater Operation Finally Home family," Carroll said. "Over the past 19 years, we've built relationships with like-minded partners across the industry who want to help provide homes, home modifications and transitional housing for America's heroes, and we're excited to continue that work long into the future."

In 2024, Operation Finally Home will continue to provide mortgage-free, personalized homes for our heroes, but we'll also lean into home modifications, helping recipients continue to live in the homes they love by completing vital repairs or



TORO, Houston Texans mascot, joins U.S. Army SGT Joanna Ellenbeck and daughter at a special Groundbreaking event in The Woodland Hills®

Credit: Houston Texans

upgrades that make the home more accessible, safe or structurally sound, as well as creating more tiny homes for veterans in need of transitional housing.

"There's so much for us to celebrate in 2023, but we're even more excited about what lies before us in 2024," Carroll said. "There are so many deserving veteran and first responder families, and with the help of the Operation Finally Home family, we can continue to build hope and honor these heroes by giving them a safe place to call home."



The Mendoza family with members of the project team at the groundbreaking event for their new home.

Credit: Normandy Homes



U.S. Marine Corps Corporal Neftali "Nef" Mendoza and his family received the keys to their newly completed and personalized home in Celina.

Credit: Normandy Homes



A FEW WORDS FROM DAN

Since Operation Finally Home was founded in 2005, our mission has been clear: honor America's heroes by building hope. We do that by providing mortgage-free homes, transitional housing and home modifications to veterans, first responders and their families. While life may look a little different than it did in 2005, our commitment to our mission and vision remains unchanged.

The relationships we've forged with builders and other industry partners from across the country are vital to the work we do. Without them, we'd be hard-pressed to achieve our goal. As this year's NAHB International Builders' Show (IBS) kicks off, I've been reflecting on the important role IBS has played in helping to forge and develop those relationships.

In 2011, I met our now Operation Finally Home president, Rusty Carroll, at the International Builders Show after I spoke during the opening ceremonies. That introduction led to a partnership with LP Building Products, a Kix Brooks concert benefitting Operation Finally Home and, eventually, relationships with many builders who continue to help us fulfill our mission to this day.

As I reflect on these memories and pivotal moments, it's clear to me that fulfilling Operation Finally Home's mission would be impossible without our partners. From builders to contractors, partners to donors, suppliers and neighbors and communities that get behind our projects and celebrate each milestone with us, Operation Finally Home is blessed to serve alongside a team that strives to complete every project at the highest level, from building a home to building a ramp. Thank you for all you do to help us continue to fulfill our mission.

With your help and support, we're dedicated to providing our veterans, first responders and their families a safe, comfortable place to call home for years to come. We're so thankful and blessed that you've joined us in this mission.

God Bless,

Dan Wallrath

Founder of Operation Finally Home

THANK YOU, LOWE'S!

We're grateful to our partner Lowe's Home Improvement for their support of our work, including this recent deck that Gail Builders LLC built for U.S. Navy veteran William Jackson.



CRAIG MORGAN MARKS PINNING CEREMONY

Craig Morgan promoted to Warrant Officer 1 during special pinning ceremony.

Country music star, soldier and Operation Finally Home Ambassador Craig Morgan received his appointment to Warrant Officer 1 in the Army Reserve. The swearing-in took place at Huntsville, Alabama's Redstone Arsenal with Chief Warrant Officer 3 William R. Green, along with John Clement (Deputy State Director/Military Advisor), U.S. Senator Marsha Blackburn, and Craig's wife, Karen. Representing Operation Finally Home were Molly Halliday, SVP Marketing, and retired USMC Lt General Willie Williams, Board Member.



Credit: Courtesy Craig Morgan

Credit: Nate Griffin

OPERATION FINALLY HOME UPDATES

We're excited for the work ahead of us in 2024, and the opportunities we'll have to honor veterans, first responders and their families. As we head into the new year, here are a few updates about the Operation Finally Home team:

- James Gaylord** has joined the Operation Finally Home team as operations manager. James, who has previous experience in the building industry and most recently helped to develop the Humble Independent School District's Big Heroes, Tiny Homes project, will work closely with David Drew on Operation Finally Home's modification and transitional housing programs.
- Ronnie Lyles** has retired but will continue to manage some home projects in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. He and his wife, Andrea, are looking forward to spending more time with family in the Fairfield, Texas, area. Both Ronnie and Andrea have joined the Operation Finally Home Board of Directors.
- Ruth Coffman** has officially retired and will transition to the Operation Finally Home Board of Directors. Please keep Ruthie and her family in your prayers as she continues to battle cancer.





U.S. Marine Corporal Neftali Mendoza, Celina, Texas

Credit: Normandy Homes



U.S. Army Captain J.D. Roberts, New Braunfels, Texas

Credit: Chesmar Homes



U.S. Air Force Master Sergeant Miguel Olvera, Smithville, Texas

Credit: Texas Veterans Commission



Kingwood Park High School, Tiny Homes Notes of Love, Houston, Texas

Credit: Operation Finally Home



U.S. Marine Corporal Neftali Mendoza, Celina, Texas

Credit: Seig Images

PILLAR EVENTS:
SURPRISES, GROUNDBREAKINGS,
NOTES OF LOVE & DEDICATIONS



Sept. 22	Neftali Mendoza	Notes of Love	Celina, Texas
Nov. 14	J.D. Roberts	Dedication	New Braunfels, Texas
Nov. 17	Miguel Olvera	Housewarming	Smithville, Texas
Dec. 6	Joanna Ellenbeck	Notes of Love	Willis, Texas
Dec. 7	Summer Creek High School	Notes of Love	Houston, Texas
Jan. 11	Kingwood Park High School	Notes of Love	Houston, Texas
Jan. 29	Neftali Mendoza	Dedication	Celina, Texas
Jan. 31	Kingwood High School	Notes of Love	Houston, Texas

AN UNIMAGINABLE GIFT

Leslie Hutcheson recently shared the following reflection of her family's eighth anniversary in their home, made possible by Operation Finally Home, Portico Builders and Southern Living. The family moved into their home in Ball Ground, Georgia, in 2016.

I cannot believe it's been eight years since we cut the ribbon to our forever home. It has provided so much more than a house. The stability and opportunities this home has brought our family are unimaginable. If you would've told me we would be doing the thing in life that we are right now, I would've told you that you were crazy and there was no way. But there was a way, and it did happen! These walls hold so many memories, and I can't wait to see what memories are yet to be made. Here's to many more years!



Credit: Southern Living

CELEBRATING THE SEASON



Frewerd Family - Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin (Belman Homes)



Jantz Family - Watauga, Texas
(Cameron Classic Homes, Gateway Church)



Ashby Family - Fort Worth, Texas (Pulte Group's Built to Honor)



Veros Family - Jacksonville, Florida (Pulte Group's Built to Honor)



Sweger Family - Bixby, Oklahoma (Castlerock Builders, New Gulf Resources)

SCAN THIS QR CODE WITH YOUR PHONE TO DONATE TO OPERATION FINALLY HOME.



THANK YOU

Jose Jimenez and his family shared a note with us, reflecting on their first year in their new home. Lennar partnered with Operation Finally Home to build the Jimenez family's home in Wellington, Florida.

December 16 marked a year since we received our home from Operation Finally Home. This has been such a blessing. You guys have not only changed my family's life in many ways, but you've also changed the life of everyone involved in ours. To see the relationship that my son and my mother-in-law have developed is amazing. I find it very difficult to find the words but from the bottom of my heart, thank you.



THE PERFECT HOME


The Honda Family (Windsor, Wisconsin | Tim O'Brien Homes, SBCA) recently shared a beautiful letter with us reflecting on the gift of their home. Here's a brief excerpt:


In Building Hope by Mr. Wallrath, he wrote, "This was their home - the place they would spend the vast majority of their time, the space they would call their own, and the environment they'd come to wear like a favorite sweatshirt. I wanted it to be utterly right." You did get it right! You built the perfect home modified just right physically and mentally for my wounded vet and our family.





Visit OperationFinallyHome.org or call 615-732-6143 to help a hero!

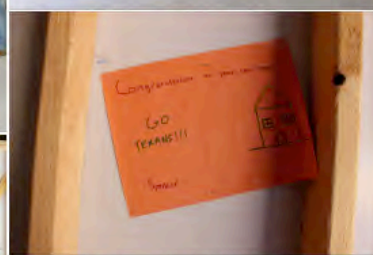
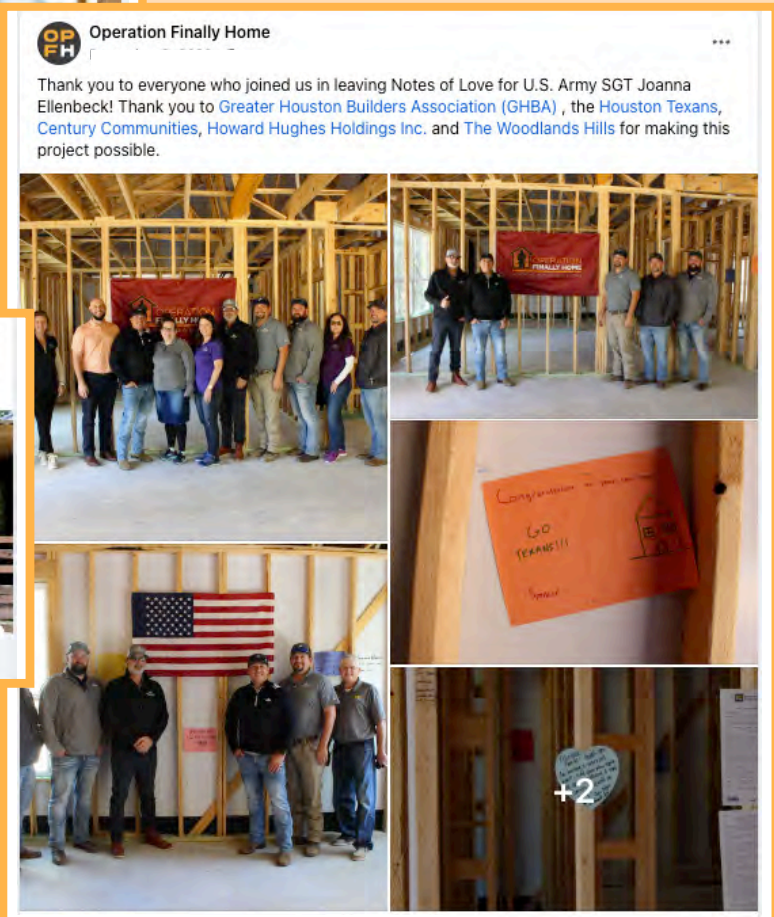
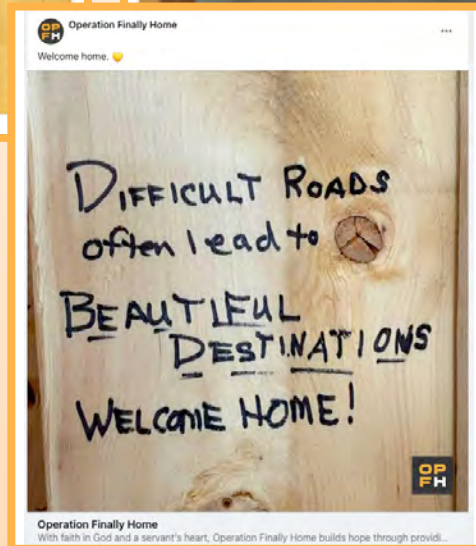
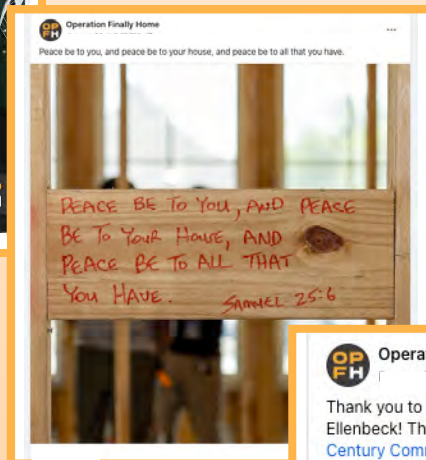
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FACES, PLACES & SPACES

HOME MODIFICATION GRANT

Operation Finally Home recently received a \$500,000 grant from the Texas Veterans Commission as part of the state's Fund for Veterans Service (FVA) grants. The grant will be used for home modifications, and Operation Finally Home is honored to be among the 19 organizations recognized.

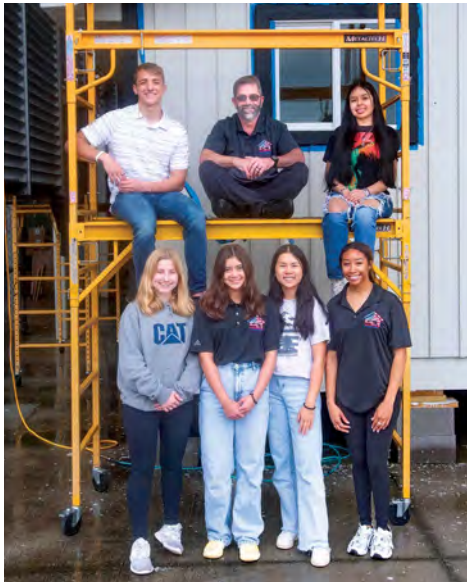


Credit: Texas Fund for Veterans Services

Dan Wallrath, Operation Finally Home founder, receives a \$500,000 check from Texas' Fund for Veterans Services.

TINY HOMES IN THE NEWS

Through our partnership with Lowe's Home Improvement and the Big Heroes, Tiny Homes project of the Humble Independent School District in Houston, Texas, Operation Finally Home has played a part in constructing more than 35 tiny homes for veterans. Recently, Texas Co-Op Power shared the story behind the project and the work that the students, school district and community members are doing to ensure the tiny home community becomes a place of healing and restoration for the veterans who live there. Read the story at texascoopower.com/dreaming-big.



Credit: Laura Jenkins, Texas Co-Op Power



Credit: Laura Jenkins, Texas Co-Op Power

James Gaylord and his Humble students in front of a tiny home project.

Kingwood Park High School students working on a tiny home.

MAC TRAILER WORLD NATIONALS PULLING CHAMPIONSHIP



MAC Trailer has graciously selected Operation Finally Home as the charity beneficiary of their upcoming 2024 MAC Trailer World Nationals Pulling Championship, set for March 21-23 in Louisville, Kentucky. We're honored to have been chosen and grateful for their help in making our mission a reality.

REMINDERS OF LOVE

We love it when previous Operation Finally Home recipients help us celebrate milestones in current projects, like when U.S. Army SGT Roland and Anne Sengstock stopped by the Notes of Love event for U.S. Army SGT Joanna Ellenbeck in Willis, Texas, on Dec. 6, 2023.



HERE TO HELP

Would you or someone you know benefit from a mortgage-free home, transitional housing 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

It takes hands to build a house, but only hearts can build a home.

— Anonymous

Visit OperationFinallyHome.org or call 615-732-6143 to help a hero!