

Helping a Hero Hosts Salute to Heroes and Leaders Brunch Honoring Secretary of Defense Nominee Pete Hegseth

Hegseth Receives Helping a Hero's First-Ever "Champion of Freedom Award"

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, January 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Helping a Hero](#), a Texas-based nonprofit dedicated to providing specially adapted homes for severely wounded veterans hosted its Salute to Heroes and Leaders Brunch on the Saturday preceding the presidential inauguration. The event was co-chaired by Jack Brewer, Paula Deen, and Retired Staff Sergeant Shilo Harris. The event recognized the extraordinary contributions of veterans and leaders who have championed the cause of our warfighters, culminating in the presentation of the inaugural "Champion of Freedom Award" to Secretary of Defense nominee Pete Hegseth.



Join the Helping a Hero 100 Home Challenge

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Meredith Iler

The event featured more than a dozen Congressmen and Senators, several entertainers and professional athletes that came together to support Helping a Hero's mission of building adapted homes for the most critically wounded heroes who fought in the Global War on Terror. Freshman Senator Bernie Moreno was so inspired by our heroes that he is helping the charity secure builders for two Ohio amputees who need an adapted home.

Hegseth, a decorated veteran and longtime advocate for service members and their families, was introduced by Retired Army Staff Sergeant Shilo Harris and Retired

Marine Corporal Sebastian Gallegos. Both veterans wear the scars of war and credited Hegseth's tireless leadership and advocacy for transforming the lives of warfighters and their families.

As he approached the stage, Hegseth was saluted by combat-wounded veterans of Helping a

Hero, a poignant moment underscoring their unwavering support for his nomination as Secretary of Defense.

“The warriors’ love and respect for Pete runs deep,” said Shilo Harris. “Active military service members and veterans know he fights for America and for the warfighters.”

Sebastian Gallegos shared his personal connection to Hegseth, highlighting the life-changing impact of the adapted home provided to his family through Helping a Hero’s mission. “Pete’s work with Helping a Hero contributed to my family receiving a home that allows me to be the father I want to be,” Gallegos said. “He’s highly decorated but humble, like only the greatest among us are.”

Meredith Iler, Founder of Helping a Hero, emphasized Hegseth’s deep commitment to veterans. “Pete has been the voice for the warfighter. A champion for active duty, veterans and the severely wounded, since he came home from war. He understands the challenges on and off the battlefield and wants to ensure America understands the warfighter is an American willing to place themselves in harm’s way to preserve and protect our freedom. And if a warfighter is injured, America must not forget their service and sacrifice. Pete championed the cause of Helping a Hero because we committed to help these wounded warfighters receive an adapted home where they once again have freedom inside their homes. Our wounded warriors wanted to honor Pete for his love of country and his passion for the warfighters.”

The Champion of Freedom Award, presented by Harris and Gallegos, was described as a one-of-a-kind honor bestowed upon Hegseth by veterans who have witnessed his dedication to warfighters firsthand.



L to R Cpl Sebastian Gallegos, USMC (Ret), Paula Deen, Jenn Hegseth, Pete Hegseth, Meredith Iler, Jack Brewer, SSG Shilo Harris, USA (Ret)



Pete Hegseth - Helping a Hero Champion of Freedom Award Recipient

"We call ourselves heroes," said Harris, "but today, we salute the heroes' hero, Pete Hegseth."

The event also featured [a tribute video showcasing Hegseth's unwavering commitment](#) to service members and their families, followed by heartfelt applause from the gathered audience of legislators, veterans, and supporters. (link to video)

[ABOUT HELPING A HERO:](#)

Helping A Hero is one of the top national charities leading a coalition of builders, suppliers, patriots, and veterans to provide specially adapted homes for catastrophically wounded warriors injured in the Global War on Terror. Helping A Hero also provides support programs such as marriage retreats, caregiver retreats, recreational activities, and emergency needs grants for those accepted into the Helping a Hero program to help them thrive and not just survive.

JOIN THE 100 HOMES CHALLENGE:

Johnny Morris, founder of Bass Pro Shops and Lead Outfitter has pledged to fund 25% of the cost of the next 100 Helping a Hero Homes and invites the American people and companies alike to help fund the other 75% of the cost of these homes. To date, we have awarded 51 of the 100 homes to deserving wounded warriors in 16 states. We are still accepting applications. If you know a wounded warrior injured in the post 9-11 Global War on Terror who needs an adapted home, we invite the public to "Nominate a Hero." And if you are a post 9-11 combat wounded warrior and would like to apply, please complete the "Home Application" for consideration. Both online forms for our "Nominate a Hero" and our "Home Application" are available on our homepage at HelpingaHero.org.

For more information, or to schedule an interview with a Helping a Hero spokesperson, please contact Dan Rene at 202-329-8357 or dan@danrene.com

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