

News Release

U.S. Army Veteran Received a Mortgage-Free Home in Boiling Springs

Boiling Springs, S.C. (March 2, 2018) – U.S. Bank, in conjunction with Freedom Alliance, presented the keys to a newly-renovated, mortgage-free home to medically retired Army Sgt. Aaron Hillis. Located at 426 Portifino Court, this marked the eleventh home donated jointly by U.S. Bank and Freedom Alliance, a charitable organization which provides support to injured service members and military families.

Hillis, 28, was born and raised in Inverness, Florida. In 2010, Hillis enlisted in the U.S. Army and attended Basic Training and Airborne School in Fort Benning, Georgia. He then spent two years stationed with the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Germany.

In June 2012, Hillis deployed to Afghanistan for nine months. While on patrol with his squad, he drove over an improvised explosive device (IED), which went off under his feet. The blast left Hillis unconscious and caused a traumatic brain injury (TBI). This was also the beginning of his battle with post-traumatic stress (PTS), which he still suffers from today. Hillis was awarded a Purple Heart for the injuries he sustained during that incident. He has also received multiple other honors, including five Army Commendation Medals and an Army Achievement Medal.

Hillis medically retired from the U.S. Army in February 2017. He is rated 100 percent disabled by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Hillis and his wife of four years, Elizabeth, moved from Olympia, Washington.

"I'm so grateful to U.S. Bank and Freedom Alliance for this amazing gift," said Hillis. "This house will definitely help ease a lot of financial stress, as well as allow me to better focus on my health and wellbeing."

This renovated three-bedroom, two-bath house was donated by U.S. Bank through its Housing Opportunities after Military Engagement (H.O.M.E.) program, in conjunction with Freedom Alliance's Heroes to Homeowners program. Chronos Solutions, a real estate services provider, also contributed to the cost of the repairs made to the home.

Several U.S. Bank and Freedom Alliance representatives welcomed the Hillis Family to their new home, including John Elmore, Vice Chairman Community Banking and Branch Delivery; Tim Welsh, Vice Chairman Consumer Banking Sales and Support; Mike Ott, president of U.S. Bank Private Wealth Management; and Tom Kilgannon, President of Freedom Alliance.

"At U.S. Bank, we are committed to supporting military veterans and their families," said Ott, who is a U.S. Air Force veteran. "It is a privilege to give back to someone who gave so much to our country. Welcome to your new home, Sgt. Hillis."



Freedom Alliance President Tom Kilgannon presented a mortgage-free home in medically retired Army Sgt. Aaron Hillis in Boiling Springs on Friday, March 2. Hillis is pictured with wife Elizabeth.



In addition to partnering with military service organizations such as Freedom Alliance, U.S. Bank supports veterans and military family members through [Proud to Serve](#), an employee-led business resource group. Through Proud to Serve, each new veteran is personally welcomed by leaders who are also veterans. Employees are also encouraged to use internal social networking forums to connect, network and share stories. The bank employs more than 2,000 veterans, including National Guard and Reserve members.

“Aaron Hillis is a perfect example of a true American hero. He, along with his wife, have sacrificed so much for our country and Aaron is still facing challenges as he continues his rehabilitation. This mortgage-free home will put the Hillis family on a good track toward reaching their goals,” said Kilgannon. “We are grateful for our partnership with U.S. Bank,” he added, “without them, these life-changing donations would not be possible.”

About U.S. Bank

U.S. Bancorp, with 73,000 employees and \$462 billion in assets as of December 31, 2017, is the parent company of U.S. Bank, the fifth-largest bank in the United States. The Minneapolis-based bank blends its branch and ATM network with mobile and online tools that allow customers to bank how, when and where they prefer. U.S. Bank is committed to serving its millions of retail, business, wealth management, payment, commercial and corporate, and investment services customers across the country and around the world as a trusted financial partner, a commitment recognized by the Ethisphere Institute naming the bank a [2017 World’s Most Ethical Company](#). Visit U.S. Bank [online](#) or follow on [social media](#) to stay up to date with company news.

About Freedom Alliance

Freedom Alliance is a charitable organization which provides help and support to wounded troops and military families. Freedom Alliance has awarded \$13 million in college scholarships to the children of military heroes killed or disabled in military service and spent millions more helping injured veterans and military families with outdoor recreational therapy trips, Heroes Vacations, care packages for deployed troops, mortgage-free homes, all-terrain wheel chairs and much more. You can learn more about Freedom Alliance at [FreedomAlliance.org](#) and [Facebook.com/FreedomAlliance](#).

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