

For Immediate Release
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CHAIRMAN JOSE MENENDEZ TO JOIN HELPINGAHERO.ORG TO BREAK GROUND ON AN ADAPTED HOME FOR ARMY SSG ED MATAYKA

HelpingaHero.org is the 2nd largest national homebuilding organization for our wounded warriors and has built more custom adapted homes in TEXAS than the other top 5 national homebuilding groups combined.

WHEN: Thursday, August 14, 2014
10:30 a.m.

WHERE: Bridlegate Ranch Community
3099 Bottle Springs Road (This address is for GPS...follow signs to lot)
Bandera, TX 78003
(Look for Flags and follow HelpingaHero signs to lot)

WHO: SSG Ed Matayka (Ret)— Home Recipient
Rep. Jose Menendez—Chairman, TX House Defense and Military Affairs Comm.
Jay Patterson—Bridlegate Ranch and Southerland Communities
Kenny Mantor—HMC--Huband-Mantor Construction, Inc.
COL (Ret) Jeff Ragland, USA-- President and Executive Director, HelpingaHero
Meredith Iler, National Chairman, HelpingaHero.org Home Program

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED AND ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

HelpingaHero.org has partnered with HMC and Bridlegate Ranch to build an accessible home for SSG (Ret) Ed Matayka, USA who lost both legs in an IED blast in Afghanistan. Many wounded warriors will join neighbors and other patriotic Americans to cheer on SSG Ed Matayka, his wife Karen and their 16 month old twins.

This beautiful 2 acre lot will be the perfect setting for the Matayka's home. Bridlegate Ranch offers a life of elegance in a setting that hosts the most breathtaking views in Bandera, Texas and beyond! The community will be the perfect setting for the Matayka's dream home surrounded by beautiful, live oaks and the best Hill Country view. This meticulously planned community has city amenities—central water supply, underground utilities, paved roads, clubhouse, equestrian facilities, hiking & riding trails, and recreation facilities—while maintaining the Unbridled Spirit of the open range.

Kenny Mantor and HMC Construction will lead the build to make this 4 bedroom, 3 bath home that will allow Ed to be independent and do daily tasks on his own. The home will feature a roll in shower, a roll under sink, flush thresholds, and many other adaptations to make day to day life easier for SSG Matayka.

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SSG Ed Matayka grew up enjoying computers, soccer, target pistol and rifle shooting, and a variety of outdoor activities. Ed was working two dead-end jobs and feeling directionless when he met a recruiter at a 7-11. A day later, he enlisted in the Army, and by August of 1999, he graduated basic training and began medical training where he met his wife, Karen. They were married by her mother, a Justice of the Peace, in 2004. Karen, a service member in the National Guard, was one of the first five females assigned to the Calvary in Combat. At the time of Edward's accident, she was a shooter, backup medic, and a member of the Female Engagement Team.

On July 2, 2010, Ed's company went out for evening patrol of the Bagram security zone in Afghanistan and an IED exploded underneath the MATV, hitting a seam in the under armor. The driver was killed instantly. As a result of the blast, Ed's left leg was traumatically amputated, and the right was badly damaged. Since he was the medic and the most severely wounded survivor, it was up to the rest of his team to use the skills they had learned from the many tourniquet drills SSG Matayka had made them do. A gunner from the truck in front of theirs, SPC David Schwerer, came back to pull security, prevent counter-attack, and put two of Ed's five tourniquets onto his legs.

The National Guard rushed Karen to him within four hours of the blast, and she never left his side. After over 23 surgeries, Ed is now a double amputee, with traumatic brain injury, Cauda Equina syndrome, multiple lumbar fractures resulting in a spinal fusion, left upper arm spasticity, and left side visual neglect.

Ed and Karen were the first couple approved to undergo InVitro Fertilization provided by TriCare. They are the proud parents of 16 month old twins and are advocates to ensure InVitro is available for other wounded warriors.

Houston based, Helping a Hero is a 501(c)(3) non profit, non-partisan organization providing support for military personnel, severely injured in the war on terror. Thanks to the **HelpingaHero.org Home Program**, 100 severely wounded heroes from 22 states have been awarded a new adapted home. HelpingaHero.org is the 2nd largest 501(c)(3) organization building homes for our severely wounded heroes in the nation.

We are currently accepting applications for our 2015 homes that will be awarded at our National Gala on November 17, 2014 at the Hilton America's in Houston, TX.

For more information on the HelpingaHero.org's Home Program, visit the website at www.helpingahero.org. **PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

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