

Marine, family given keys to 'smart' home

Posted by [Jacqui Atkielski](#) On 06/07/2016

LEONARDTOWN, MD – A sea of waving Old Glories watched over as one of America's bravest was given the keys to his new customized smart home, designed to help him and his family live more independently.

The Steven Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation hosted a Home Dedication ceremony to honor Maryland native and United States Marine Corps Lance Corporal Caleb Getscher.

With the tap of a touchscreen, he now has the freedom to control elements within his smart house such as air conditioning, lighting and other features.

He had served only two years before losing both legs and an arm in an improvised explosive device explosion while serving in Afghanistan, said Getscher.

"This home will give me more opportunities to be free than I have had in a while," said Getscher.

Echoing the television show Extreme Home Makeover, a large American flag was draped like a curtain behind the ceremony stage to block the view of the house.

Getscher, his wife Emily and daughter Camily were surrounded by family, friends, members of the Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation and children from Camily's class at Benjamin Banneker Elementary School. They opened the ceremony by hoisting American flags and singing the National Anthem.

Men and women like Getscher volunteer to get into harm's way so the community and nation can be free, according to guest speaker Jack Oehm, a retired New York Fire Department battalion commander who participated in the events of September 11, 2001.

"With their sacrifices, we can take advantage of the freedoms they earn for us. I feel that this is the least we can do, as Americans, to give and provide for those great men and women a smart home, such as (the one) Caleb will be getting today. Thank you for your sacrifices, and thank you for sharing your lives with us today," said Oehm.

Among those who attended was Frank Siller, one of the founders of the Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation.

"Thank you for your sacrifice, Caleb. Thank you. God bless you for your service and God bless America," said Siller.

The Virginia Patriot Guard, complete with a flag line, and the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Department Color Guard also participated in the event. Sponsors, contributors and business representatives from Debra Bowling, principal of Benjamin Banneker Elementary School; Hunter Douglas, who provided the window treatments; United Rentals, Leonardtown Fire Department, Commissioners of St. Mary's County, Marcus Foundation, Home Depot, Carpet One, Glidden, Master Brand, Reliance Fire Protection, GMC, Johnson and Johnson, The Semper Fi Fund, Bassett Furniture, and more were on site to give their thanks to Getscher for his service and sacrifice.

"Pull back that flag!" Oehm shouted as Emily approached the podium for her remarks.

"This is a beautiful house. I want to thank God for bringing every single one of you into our lives. Thank you for all of your hard work, time and dedication to make this day possible for our family. It's such a wonderful day," said Emily. "I just want to let you know that you all are all honorary members of the Getscher family now. Thank you making this one of the best days possible."

After a solemn prayer was held, Getscher was able to hoist up an American flag flown in Afghanistan over his new home. The flag and flagpole were given by Four Star General John. F Campbell and the Adopt-A-Soldier Foundation.

A long driveway led uphill to the home, where guests were greeted with a large front porch area to take in the Maryland countryside view. The smart home consisted of an open plan main floor and basement area. A large garage and back porch area housed items such as a new lawnmower, patio furniture, and barbeque. Fully furnished with patriotic wares and stocked with fresh food, the smart house featured a customized kitchen with lower counters, and pull-out cabinet storage for ease of use.

His family had not been able to view the interior of their new home prior to the ceremony, said Getscher.

"I love it here, it smells great," Getscher remarked.

Jumping around her new room, Camily was ecstatic to have her own purple themed bedroom. The room was stocked with new toys to aid her imagination during playtime.

"This is the best day ever!" Camily exclaimed.

Check out the photo gallery from the event at [this link](#).

About the Tunnel to Towers Foundation: The mission of the Stephen Siller Tunnel to Tower's Foundation is to honor the sacrifice of Stephen Siller, who laid down his life to save others on September 11, 2001. Best known for its annual Tunnel to Towers 5K Walk/Run in New York City, the Tunnel to Towers Foundation honors our military and first responders who continue to make the supreme sacrifice of life and limb for the country through its various programs, such as Building for America's Bravest, which builds specially adapted, customized "smart homes" for our nation's most catastrophically injured service members.

For more information, check out their [website](#).

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