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Caregiver Shares the Untold Children's Story: Hero At Home
New book explains physical injuries of wounded Veterans to children

WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 12, 2018) – For the three young daughters of wounded veteran, Michael Verardo, his missing limb is a symbol of heroism. After Verardo's oldest daughter informed her mother, Sarah, before bed one evening that, "Someone told me Daddy is gross. He isn't gross he is a hero," the family realized there was no book that explained these types of wounds to children. Sarah Verardo is the wife and Caregiver to Michael, and also Executive Director for [The Independence Fund](http://TheIndependenceFund.org). She decided they had to do something to help all children understand the serious injuries of war, so she authored and published a first of its kind children's book, *Hero At Home*. Complete with captivating imagery and illustrations of a wounded Veteran, *Hero at Home* is an educational and heart-warming story that normalizes these catastrophic conditions and teaches even very young readers how to welcome, understand, and support these resilient veterans and their families.

"There are many military families who struggle with explaining the complex injuries to their own children, and even more so with children who are not exposed to this life on a daily basis," said Sarah. "Our goal with this book is to be able to describe this in a way that allows these children to understand the sacrifices made by our Nation's wounded Veterans; and to see that they are truly heroes."

Michael is one of the most severely wounded Veterans from the Global War on Terror. While serving as an infantryman with the 82nd Airborne in Afghanistan, he sustained catastrophic and life changing injuries in 2010. His long road home has included more than 100 surgeries and years of speech, visual, physical and occupational therapies. Sarah has dedicated her life to the care and recovery of her husband, and to Veterans and Caregivers nationwide in addition to raising their family. Sarah and Michael live outside Charlotte, North Carolina with their three young daughters and three golden labs. They know that for the severely wounded, the fight never truly ends. They proudly continue their service on the home front by supporting the

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enactment of policies, programs, and changes to improve the lives and the future for severely wounded Veterans and their families.

Sarah Verardo will travel to Washington, Los Angeles, San Antonio, and Salt Lake City in the coming weeks to share the story of *Hero At Home*.

About The Independence Fund

Founded in 2007, The Independence Fund is committed to empowering our nation's severely wounded, injured, or ill Veterans to overcome physical, mental, and emotional wounds incurred in the line of duty. We are dedicated to improving the lives of both our Veterans and their families. Through four distinct pillars of support, the Mobility, Caregiver, Adaptive Sports, and Advocacy programs, The Independence Fund bridges the gap of unmet needs for Veterans and their Caregivers.

For more details regarding the Independence Fund's mission, how to get involved, or to make a donation, please visit www.independencefund.org or call (888)-851-7996.

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