



**Fisher House for the Families of the Fallen
Dedication Ceremony, Dover AFB**

Wednesday, 10 November 2010



General Norty Schwartz

**As
Prepared
for Delivery
~10 min.
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Thank you, Mr. Williams, for that kind introduction. Lieutenant Governor Denn, Mayor Carey, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Coker, and distinguished guests, thank you very much for being here today, and for your leadership, commitment, and enduring support of our military families. I would especially like to acknowledge the Gold Star mothers who are here today:

- Mrs. Betsy Beard, author of the book, *Klinger*, who is here with her husband, Randy;
- Ms. Paula Davis;
- Ms. Ami Neiberger-Miller, her husband, Rick, and daughter, Gabrielle; and
- Ms. Xiomara Anderson.

We are all deeply saddened and moved by your sacrifice, and we thank you for your very personal and continuing service, despite your anguish.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is Suzie's and my honor to be a part of today's dedication ceremony. In addition to expressing gratitude for the many efforts and extraordinary philanthropy of the Fisher Foundation, and for the generous donations from patriotic Americans from all across this great Nation, who helped to make this new Fisher House at Dover a reality, we also honor the service and sacrifice of all American veterans. As always—but especially tomorrow—it is entirely fitting that we pay tribute to our men and women in uniform, who, through their service, risk their personal aspirations and life's many rewards, so that we here may all realize our own.

We also must always remember one other essential truth: that for every act of valor from our brave service men and women; for every singular achievement that assures security for our Nation; and, for every ultimate sacrifice or missing-in-action that imposes a profound burden on loved ones, it is our families who provide love and support, giving deeply personal meaning and distinct purpose to the professional efforts of all who serve. They



strengthen us, often sacrificing their own desires, without pomp or pageantry—and often times, without sufficient recognition that is due to them.

Indeed, we must remember that our family members' own sense of patriotism, selflessness, and sacrifice is woven into—and can never be disentangled from—the motivation and service of those who wear the cloth of the United States Armed Forces. We must remember that our family members serve, too—that their efforts enhance our effectiveness in so many, often intangible ways. Therefore, it is appropriate that we pay tribute—and provide loving care, service, and support, in every way that we can—to our families when *their* loved ones have fallen.

Ladies and gentlemen, tomorrow will commemorate the historical event in 1918, when, on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, in a first step toward the negotiations for peace at Versailles, warring parties laid down their weapons after so many years of brutal armed conflict. World War I was supposed to be “the war to end all wars,” but as we know, this did not come to pass. Today, we still require the commitment of very brave, very generous Americans who volunteer to serve.

So tomorrow, as we remember and honor all of our Nation's veterans—especially those who gave their last full measure, and those who remain missing in action—we should continue to aspire to the time when a Fisher House, the Center for the Families of the Fallen, and this solemn campus will no longer be necessary. Until that time when the nations of the world can resolve their disputes without the force of arms, we, as a Nation, will continue to do what is difficult and what is right. Our service men and women and their families bear the enormous burden of war's difficult toll. And, by defending our Nation when our leadership asks, they also do what is right.

So, it is incumbent on us—all of us here today—to also do what is right, by properly honoring our fallen, and making every effort to pay our eternal debt to their remarkable families. We therefore are grateful for thoughtful and giving people who help us to care for our families by providing a comfortable and supportive environment like this Fisher House.



And, on this Veterans Day, let us certainly acknowledge the depth of our gratitude to those who have served, by celebrating the many accounts of valor, patriotism, and sacrifice, like those of Bradley Scott Beard, Justin Ray Davis, Christopher Todd Neiberger, and Andy Anderson; and by ensuring that they remain always resonant in our national consciousness, as they are for each Gold Star mom, wherever they may reside in this great land.

I again wish to thank everyone here today, for your abundant generosity and support—not for credit, but because it is *right*. With our collective efforts, and with this new Fisher House, we can provide an additional measure of comfort and peace of mind—even if incomplete—to our Nation’s most selfless, most giving patriots: the families of our fallen.

Thank you.