

YTI helps local veteran

Alyssa Pressler, 505-5438/@AlyssaPressYD 8:51 a.m. EST November 11, 2016



(Photo: Submitted)

Rob Bessemer and his fiancée, Ashley DeMarzo, have been through a lot lately. Bessemer is a U.S. Army veteran who now serves in the Army Reserves. On May 2, DeMarzo gave birth to their daughter, Brinley, at only 25 weeks.

Weighing 1 pound, 12 ounces, Brinley spent four months in the hospital in a neonatal intensive care unit before heading home to Springettsbury Township with her parents. Though she's a healthy, happy baby now, she came as quite a surprise to her parents, who didn't have time to do the work in their finished basement to complete her bedroom.

DeMarzo said she and Bessemer have been scrambling to try to find a contractor, plumber and electrician on a budget. The basement, Fullscreen where she and Bessemer sleep, needed all new electrical wiring due to some safety concerns. They wanted to make sure the area would be safe for their daughter, but didn't have the means to do so.



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DeMarzo's aunt, Lynne Barrow, reached out to Dan Reed, an independent contractor she had worked with in the past. Reed would like to do in the basement and contacted YTI Career Institute to see if they would be needed to be done.

Allen Stonebreaker, a teacher with the Electrical Technology program, told his class about it and they were interested.

"When I told them about this, they all jumped right in and wanted to help," Stonebreaker said. "(We're) glad that we can give back to them."

Bessemer has served in the Army since 1999 when he first enlisted. Since then, he's served in the Army Reserves. He has done three tours overseas: in 2000 he went to Kosovo for six months, in 2005 he went to Iraq for a year.

Not only do the students in the program get to give back to the community through their schoolwork, but the charitable projects they undertake also give them real-world experience in the field they will eventually work in. The class working on Bessemer's basement will graduate in April, so being able to practice now on a real house is valuable.

"It's real-world, hands-on experience," said Kevin Kleinosky, a 59-year-old West York resident who is a student in the program.

Stonebreaker explained that this isn't the first time one of his classes has been involved with volunteer work that also furthers the students' education. YTI Career Institute has worked with Habitat for Humanity among other charitable organizations and has helped other members of the York community.



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PHOTOS: YTI students help veteran family

YTI Career Institute student Kevin Kleinosky watches as he feeds wire for smoke detectors in the home of Ashley DeMarzo and Rob Bessemer, Monday, November 7, 2016.

DeMarzo and Bessemer, a veteran, are facing large medical bills following the premature birth of their daughter Brinley six months ago and the

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"It gives us experience, but we get to give back," said Ryan McMaster, a 19-year-old student in the program. The Hanover resident said the program allows him to learn by doing rather than by reading or listening to a lecture. "I like being able to use my hands. I hate sitting in class."

For DeMarzo, this was the break she and her fiance needed after a few months of turmoil. She explained that they had planned on having the entire summer to work on the baby's room, but their plans changed abruptly and they were at the hospital for every spare second during the four months Brinley stayed there.

In addition to having four other children in sports and other activities, there was little time and little money to complete the project. YTI Career Institute is doing the project for free and also had all of the supplies necessary donated by [CapitalTristate](https://www.capitaltristate.com/c/VgnContentWrapperView?langId=-1&storeId=11701&catalogId=10151&landingPage=true&fromPage=BranchLocator&contentManagementId=6d388f8ac8aa6310VgnVCM1000007) (<https://www.capitaltristate.com/c/VgnContentWrapperView?langId=-1&storeId=11701&catalogId=10151&landingPage=true&fromPage=BranchLocator&contentManagementId=6d388f8ac8aa6310VgnVCM1000007>) a local electrical distributor, and [Yale Electric Supply Co.](http://yaleelectricsupply.com/locations.html) (<http://yaleelectricsupply.com/locations.html>)

The electric is just one component of what needs to be done to keep the baby's room safe. Reed said he plans on putting doors in all of the rooms within the basement, a working bathroom (which requires plumbing work) and fire escapes in case of emergencies. YTI Career Institute worked two days this week, but the entire project will take about a month, Reed estimated.

"It's a really big help," DeMarzo said. "It's a really big blessing. We needed the help ... I'm just so thankful they could make it safe for her."

Bessmer said he was grateful for the help, explaining that with the children and his work, he and his fiancée don't have much free time to take care of a big project like this.

"I'm proud. People go out of their way to help people out that are in the military," Bessemer said. "It's nice to know that people want to thank you for the stuff you did."

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