

# New home a labor of love for VT band

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**BLACKSBURG** - After a month of work, members of Virginia Tech's Marching Virginians, and officials from the Town of Blacksburg and Community Housing Partners celebrated the completion of "Structurally Sound," a house built in memory of former band member Ryan "Stack" Clark, who was killed in the April 16, 2007 shootings at Virginia Tech.

Officials from all three organizations, residents, Ryan's mother, Lettie Clark, and family, were present at the dedication ceremony Saturday.

"Today is about celebrating the lessons we learned and continue to learn from this extraordinary young man, who touched so many of our lives," said Marching Virginians Band Director David McKee.

Clark entered Tech in fall 2002. He maintained a 4.0 GPA in his triple major of psychology, biology, and English, while playing baritone in the band, acting as a resident advisor in West Ambler Johnston Hall, advising in the Imaginarium programming resource center, and working at West End Market. Fellow band members said they remember him as kind, fun to be around, and some one who took a genuine interest in getting to know people.

Marching Virginians Executive Officer Steven Rich said Clark's friendly and helpful nature clinched his decision to attend Tech and join the marching band. While trying to decide on a college, Rich visited the music department at Tech, and Clark was his tour guide.

"I cannot recall a single thing he said to me that day, but one thing sticks right in my head: I could not get over the fact



**Above, Virginia Tech's Marching Virginians celebrated the completion of "Structurally Sound" Saturday, a house built in memory of former band member Ryan "Stack" Clark. Left, Director David McKee presents Ryan's mother, Lettie Clark with a commemorative photo of her son during the dedication ceremony.**

Photos by Lauren Page

that some one I did not know could possibly be this nice to me," Rich said. "To this day, no one has rivaled that friendliness."

Marching Virginians Service Office and Baritone Section Member Alison Wood said she remembers Clark as friendly to his fellow-students, and generous to those who were less fortunate. Over his lifetime, Clark spent much of his free time doing service projects, such as working with the underprivileged in Atlanta, and building homes for migrant workers in Virginia's Northern Neck, Wood said. She and other students also

worked on the homes at Northern Neck. The weather was freezing, and the work was tough, but Clark's stories and jokes made the project fun, Wood said. Her memories of Clark helped make the building of Structurally Sound easier, Wood said.

"For the two weeks that we worked on this house, Stack was with me," Wood said. "Knowing that every nail, and drop of paint, and bead of caulk was to honor him, made the work easy."

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