



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on May 20, 2022

Published in the June 13, 2022 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 38, No. 11

The Goodness of America

Sophomores to the Rescue

When a teenage driver crashed into a pond in Bixby, Oklahoma, on May 2, a pair of high-school sophomores immediately sprang into action to rescue her from the water.

Catie Copenhaver, 16, was driving when a medical episode reportedly caused her to veer across four lanes and drive straight into a pond, KOTV reported.

A pair of football and lacrosse players, Joey Toma and Brody Duffel, had just finished football practice and were headed home when they witnessed the scene. Duffel immediately pulled over and began removing his clothes, Toma recalled to KOTV, and told Toma he was going into the water to rescue the driver.

While Toma called 911, Duffel and another bystander jumped into the pond.

"I was able to pull that door open and, luckily, before too much water pressure got on it, so I pulled the door open and she kind of fell out of the car and into the other guy, and we were able to pull her up and get her up on the bank," said Duffel.

Fortunately, Copenhaver did not suffer serious injury.

The boys later used social media to find the driver, whom they discovered to be a junior at Victory Christian School. The teens later met up, and KOTV's video of their reunion showed Copenhaver presenting the boys with cards before hugging them and thanking them for their heroic actions.

"You could have just watched my car go and just been like, 'Oh, that sucks,' but you acted, and that's what's really special," Catie told her rescuers.

Duffel and Toma were honored for their efforts at Bixby Public Schools' Board of Education meeting on May 9.

"Tiny Hugs"

Georgia teen Bryn Hammock made it her mission to create weighted gloves, which she dubbed "Tiny Hugs," for newborns in intensive-care units at her local hospitals.

During the pandemic, Hammock learned that parents were restricted to just two hours daily with their newborns in NICUs because of Covid restrictions. Saddened by this, Hammock spoke with her grandmother, Deanna Simmons, a pediatric nurse, who told her about bead-filled gloves used to comfort newborns in NICUs, and a mission was born.

"I heard they were alone in the hospital," she told *People*, "and I was like, 'wow, they really need this,'" referring to the bead-filled gloves.

"[The weighted glove] basically is like a weighted blanket for the babies in the NICU," she explained to 11Alive. "It feels like they have a hand on them when their parents can't be there with them."

In order to fulfill her mission, Hammock had to learn to use a sewing machine, and with the help of Simmons, she mastered it.

"I could sew by hand, but I had never sewn with a machine before," Hammock told 11Alive.



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Hammock's initial plan was to make 30 "Tiny Hugs," but after creating an instructional video on how to make them and recruiting 18 volunteers, 140 "Tiny Hugs" were manufactured.

Hammock and her mother, Kelly, delivered the weighted gloves to seven Georgia hospitals, earning Hammock not only a Gold Award from her Girl Scout Troop, but also letters of gratitude from appreciative hospital staff, *People* reported.

"The Tiny Hugs you sent us have been greatly used and appreciated by our little ones and staff. Your efforts have warmed a lot of hearts around the TICU, and the world is a better place with people like you in it," wrote Technical Intensive Care Unit nurse Trisha Whitley of Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.

Families have also reached out to Hammock to express their thanks for the "Tiny Hugs," 11Alive reported May 5.

"Something Told Me To"

Maria Balboa, 19, a Texas A&M University student, was working her shift as a bagger at an H-E-B grocery store in Annaville, Texas, on March 28 when an older woman and two children came through the checkout line. When it became clear the woman could not pay \$137 of her grocery bill, Balboa felt compelled to pay for the groceries herself.

Balboa told *The Epoch Times* the woman was prepared to pay for her groceries using a SNAP food stamp card, but learned that there was only \$19 left on it. The woman was shocked and upset, and said she would have to put back most of the items except what she needed for dinner that evening.

It was then that Balboa asked the cashier what the remaining balance for the groceries was. Upon learning the outstanding sum was \$137, she immediately offered to pay the difference.

Initially, the woman was reluctant to accept Balboa's assistance, but Balboa insisted, and the woman ultimately went home with all of the groceries.

Days later, Balboa was called into her supervisor's office. The woman Balboa helped had submitted a survey to the store about Balboa, praising her kindness. She also took the opportunity to explain her situation. Her story moved Balboa and her managers to tears.

"She explained that she had taken in her two grandkids when they were left by their mother," Maria said. "This was why money had been tight for her, and she had to take a lower-paying job so they would not go into the foster care system. She thanked me for my kindness that day, because it really helped her out."

The grandmother wrote, "God put this young lady at [the] bagging area for us."

The managers were moved by Maria's kindness and insisted on reimbursing her for what she spent. They later gifted her with a basket to show their appreciation for her commitment to the customers.

Balboa had every intention of keeping her kind deed to herself, but the wonderful response that she received from the woman she helped and from her supervisors prompted her to share the story in the hopes of inspiring others.

"Hearing her words made me realize that it's small things like paying for groceries that can help people out in ways you don't even know," Balboa wrote in a Facebook post detailing the story and the survey.



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“And with that being said: always be kind and do a good deed for someone when you can.”



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