



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on August 23, 2022

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## **The Goodness of America**

### **Returned Purse**

When 17-year-old Adrian Rodriguez found a purse in a grocery store parking lot, he did the right thing and was rewarded handsomely for it.

Rodriguez found a green handbag in the parking lot of a Ralph's grocery store in Chula Vista, California, in July and decided to return it to the woman himself using the address he found inside her wallet. The owner, Eliana Martin, was not home at the time, but Rodriguez left the purse with Martin's roommates.

When Martin realized her purse was returned with everything still inside, she and her roommates decided they wanted to track down the young man and show him their gratitude for his good deed.

Using the image that they pulled from their Ring camera, the women posted on social media and managed to track Rodriguez down.

Rodriguez was humble and explained that his mother always taught him to "do the right thing when nobody's around" without the expectation of anything in return.

"If someone found my stuff, I'd want them to bring it back to me," he told NBC News.

But Martin and her friends wanted to do something more for Rodriguez. They set up a GoFundMe campaign to raise money to reward Rodriguez for his honesty. And with the help of nearly 800 donors, the page raised \$17,000.

Martin's roommate, Melina Marquez, is hopeful that Rodriguez's story will inspire other young people to act kindly toward others.

### **Beloved Employer, Faithful Employees**

Tony Philiou is a McDonald's franchise owner in Mayfield Heights, Ohio, and everyone's dream employer.

When Philiou decided to close, remodel, and rebuild one of his restaurants, his workers were concerned about being out of work for too long. As it turned out, their fears were unfounded. Philiou had already intended to pay all 90 of his employees throughout the duration of the renovations.

In a speech to his employees prior to closing the restaurant on March 28, he said, "You're going to sit home. You're going to get paid."

According to the store's general manager, Ed Kocsis, employees were in a state of disbelief.

But for Philiou, the decision was a no-brainer.

"I have people here that make a living here and go from week-to-week pay," he told WKYC News. "How can I tolerate for them to not have a paycheck?"

Philiou immigrated to the United States from Greece as a child and enlisted in the U.S. Army as an infantryman during the Korean War, the *New York Post* reported. He began working at McDonald's in 1962 as a part-time fry cook at the very same Mayfield Heights location he now owns. It was meant to be supplemental income while he worked full-time at an area automotive- and aerospace-parts



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manufacturer. By 1977, he owned the McDonald's.

Over the years, Philiou owned and operated multiple McDonald's restaurants, but eventually decided to put his focus on the Mayfield Heights location.

On July 6, Philiou's McDonald's reopened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. News coverage of the ceremony showed Philiou surrounded by happy employees and restaurant patrons who were thrilled to see him again. Philiou's McDonald's was flooded with flowers from faithful customers who looked forward to seeing him during their visits to their favorite fast-food place.

When Emma Henderson of WKYC News asked Philiou how he manages to retain so many "dedicated employees" at a time when there is an abundance of open jobs available, his answer was simple. "After 60 years in the business, this has been the hardest time, but if you do the right thing, word gets out and people stick around," he said.

Philiou told Fox Business that he could not say how much he spent to keep the employees on his payroll during the renovations, but he joked that he would "need to sell a lot of cheeseburgers to make it up."

Still, he does not regret his decision.

"Our employees are extremely grateful," Philiou said. "As for the community here, which I'm blessed to be working with, they've been very supportive of us."

## **Officer and Chauffeur**

Video footage captured the kindness of a Tennessee police officer who stopped to help an elderly woman who needed a ride to her salon appointment.

Murfreesboro Police Officer Lance Hofmeister was driving his patrol route when he noticed 84-year-old Elizabeth Goode walking along a busy highway and decided to stop and ask if she needed help.

Goode told Hofmeister she was on her way to her salon appointment at Paul Mitchell Studio and took a 45-minute bus ride from Nashville. Once she got off her bus, she had a mile walk to reach the studio. Hofmeister, concerned that Goode was walking along a busy road prone to accidents, offered to give her a ride the rest of the way.

Goode accepted with gratitude. Hofmeister joked, "You do have to sit in the back, but I won't handcuff you, okay?" to which Goode joked back, "I've never been handcuffed. First time for everything."

Though the interaction took place in April, it gained a lot of attention after a video by a local bystander of the interaction was shared on TikTok. By August, the story had been picked up by local news outlets.

Hofmeister, who told Fox 5 he was not used to so much attention, was surprised by all of the positive feedback he received because of the video, but is happy that it spreads the message of kindness and brings joy to people.

"That's why I became a police officer," he said. "I truly do enjoy helping people and I don't need anything from it. I just want to spread that and make sure that other people have that as well."

Hofmeister and his wife have reportedly stayed in contact with Goode and even have dinners with her. And though Goode is planning to move to North Carolina, Hofmeister said that he plans to stay in touch.



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