



## Goodness of America

### A Stranger's Gift

Third-grade teacher Jodi Schmidt did not even know student Natasha Fuller when she volunteered to donate something very valuable to the girl: a kidney.

Eight-year-old Fuller was diagnosed with prune belly syndrome at birth, which requires her to have kidney dialysis three times a week. She was placed on a list for a kidney transplant, but because of frequent infections, she was removed from the list. She began experiencing renal failure.

Thankfully, Schmidt stepped up. She volunteered to be a kidney donor and proved to be a match.

"It truly just came to me after I did a lot of thinking and praying," Schmidt said.

According to InsideEdition.com, Schmidt confided in school principal Becky Doyle that she was going to have herself tested as a possible kidney donor.

They "kept it from the staff and family up until February, when she got the call she was a perfect match," Doyle told InsideEdition.com.

Once Schmidt received confirmation that she was indeed a match, she decided to present Fuller and her family with an unforgettable surprise.

Fuller currently lives with her grandparents in Oakfield, Wisconsin, so that she can be closer to medical treatment, FDLReporter noted.

In March, Schmidt and Doyle invited Fuller's grandmother, Chris Burelton, to the school. Schmidt, who reportedly never met Burelton, handed her a box. Inside was a very special message, which read, "It's a match!"

Principal Doyle captured video footage of the exchange, which featured Schmidt and Burelton embracing and crying on one another's shoulders. "I just lost it," Burelton said. "Jodi is an awesome woman, and I was just totally shocked. Speechless."

According to Doyle, it is in Schmidt's nature to be abundantly generous. "Jodi is extremely passionate, full of life and energy, and does everything 150 percent," Doyle said. "She told me that she knows she is here to do more. She is always looking for ways to serve others."

### Love's Love

Quentin Love recently won \$18,000 on a reality television show, and decided to use his winnings to help feed the homeless.

Love is a chef at the Turkey Chop Grill in Chicago, and has used his restaurant to feed the homeless every Monday for the last two years. According to the *Chicago Tribune*, he has paid nearly \$2,000 a month in out-of-pocket expenses to fund over 60,000 free meals. Additionally, Love offers cooking classes on Mondays to educate the community on healthier options.

"With all of the negative things being said right now about Chicago, men in the community need to step up and take responsibility," said Love. "When you give someone a good meal, to show them love, you could be stopping them on the way to do something to hurt themselves or somebody else."



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Love was struggling to continue his weekly soup kitchen program when he received a well-timed phone call from Food Network personality Guy Fieri, who invited Love to compete for a monetary prize on the Food Network reality show *Guy's Grocery Games*.

Love competed and won the prize in December with his entrée, sea bass in vodka sauce. He used his winnings to purchase food and supplies for the weekly soup kitchen program he hosts from his restaurant.

"It's not just about the money," Love said. "It's about making a change in the communities you serve. When I was [on the show], I knew I was going to win. I felt it. I knew what I needed it for. I knew the community needed it. It wasn't for me or to take a vacation. I needed it to make a difference."

## **A Letter of Thanks**

On March 9, a Whole Foods shopper in Superior, Colorado, submitted an open letter to the *Washington Post* addressing fellow Whole Foods shoppers who consoled her on the day she learned of her father's suicide.

Beginning her letter with "Dear Strangers," Deborah Greene writes, "I remember you. Ten months ago, when my cellphone rang with news of my father's suicide, you were walking into Whole Foods prepared to do your grocery shopping, just as I had been only minutes before you."

Greene's letter recalls with utter honesty the horror she experienced the moment she received a call from her brother explaining that their father had taken his life. Greene explains that she had a cart full of groceries at the time, but abandoned them and collapsed to the floor, wailing at the overwhelming pain her brother's phone call brought to her heart.

Greene notes the response from her fellow shoppers: "You could have kept on walking, ignoring my cries, but you didn't. You could have simply stopped and stared at my primal display of pain, but you didn't."

According to Greene, one stranger reached for her phone and contacted Greene's husband for her, while others discussed amongst themselves who would drive Greene home in her vehicle and who would follow the driver so that they could return to the store. Another stranger asked if she could pray for Greene and her family.

"You didn't even know one another, but it didn't seem to matter," Greene recalls in awe.

Finally, once the patrons learned that a friend of Greene's worked at Whole Foods, they retrieved her, and Greene was brought to the back of the store where she was comforted by her friend until her husband arrived. Meanwhile, another stranger sent back a gift card to Whole Foods for Greene. Greene writes that the gift card "helped to feed my family, when the idea of cooking was so far beyond my emotional reach."

Greene closes her letter by telling these strangers that their intervention stopped her from making a mistake like attempting to drive herself home because she "wasn't thinking straight." She writes that when she thinks back to that terrible day, "It is not all darkness" because those kind people "offered a ray of light in the bleakest moment I've ever endured."

— Raven Clabough



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