



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on May 21, 2018

Published in the May 21, 2018 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 34, No. 10

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## Goodness of America

### Engagement-ring Contest

Steven Crocker of Virginia Beach, Virginia, turned a heartbreaking moment in his life into something positive for someone else.

Crocker planned to propose to his longtime girlfriend and bought a \$1,700 engagement ring. But in November, just one month before he planned to propose, the relationship ended.

"I was very sad," Crocker told today.com. "My mom knew that, so when I was at work, she took the ring and put it somewhere I wouldn't be able to look at it."

For months, Crocker couldn't bear to look at the ring, but by March, he knew he had to unload it so that the breakup would not continue to haunt him.

He tried to sell the ring, but learned that it had already depreciated in value, despite having never been worn.

Rather than accept a low-ball offer for the ring, he decided he would do something that would benefit one lucky couple. He started a contest on his Facebook page on March 5:

I don't want to give it away to just anyone. I want to give it to a guy or girl who is so in love with their significant other and wants to take the next step but cannot afford a ring. I don't think that anyone on MY friends list falls in that category, but someone out there does, which is why sharing this post is very much appreciated. I'll send it anywhere in the US where someone is head-over-heels.

I am very aware of the possibility of being scammed for a free ring, but since this is about love I'm going to try to look past that.

Anyone who fits the above description of who I'm looking to give the ring to can email a video telling me why you deserve it ([stevenmcrocker46@gmail.com](mailto:stevenmcrocker46@gmail.com)). Show me pictures of you and your significant other, tell me how you fell in love, tell me their favorite color; whatever you think will convince me of sending this ring to you. I'll sit down with some friends one day and we'll pick a lucky person.

The response was enormous. Within a few days, Crocker received nearly 1,000 e-mails and over 100 Facebook messages from all over the world. In an effort to be fair, Crocker announced he was not going to pick a winner until he read all of the responses. To make things a bit easier, he later made March 16 the deadline for submission.

"I would love to receive love stories forever, but at some point I have to pick someone to win the ring!" he posted on his Facebook page.

By April 6, Crocker e-mailed 60 finalists out of over 1,800 submissions, asking them to submit more information to help him make his final choice.

On April 23, Crocker posted on his Facebook page that a winner had been selected, but that no announcement would be made until after the proposal took place. After all, Crocker did not want to blow the big surprise for the lucky couple. Crocker did contact the winner privately and let him know, since he would need the ring before the proposal. Here's hoping the winner gets a "yes."

"It's not the fanciest ring in the world but it can potentially make someone very happy for the rest of



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their life,” Crocker told the *Virginian-Pilot*.

What a great way to turn a sorrowful situation into something positive for someone else.

## **Home Is Where the Heart Is — Specifically Hawaii**

Nearly six years ago, Mary Keulana-Riotutar left her family in Hawaii to attend Laredo Community College in Laredo, Texas, on a volleyball scholarship, and had not seen them since.

Waitressing at Cheddar’s Scratch Kitchen in Laredo to support herself, she found herself missing her family more than ever but without the means to purchase a plane ticket to travel back to Hawaii. Fortunately, she’s surrounded by co-workers with hearts of gold.

Employees at the restaurant bought Riotutar a plane ticket and captured the entire moment in which they presented her with the gift in a video that has gone viral on Facebook, Spotlight Stories reported.

The video shows the whole Cheddar’s team gathered in the kitchen to make the announcement, and Riotutar’s co-workers can be seen reading speeches praising her hard work and positive spirit.

“Mary, you do so much for this company and for all of us as a family. You pull doubles and dedicate yourself to this place,” one employee read.

Another co-worker read, “You’ve been a great friend to all of us.... Thank you for being there with the smiles and the support. I wish you the very best. Good luck in your trip home.”

At first, Riotutar was confused, because she had not planned a trip home. But when the employees presented her with a white envelope, she knew instantly what they’d done.

The video shows an emotional Riotutar, clearly in a state of disbelief at the fortune that just befell her. “I don’t even know what to say,” she told her colleagues. “I love you all. Thank you guys so much.”

Riotutar later took to Facebook to express her gratitude for the gift, and attached the video capturing all of it.

“There are no words to express my gratitude,” she wrote. “I’ll start by saying if you all know me I’m not from Laredo, I’m from Hawaii & well I haven’t been home in about 5 or 6 years. I miss my mom, my family, the food, the aloha, EVERYTHING & well i talk about it like ALL THE TIME.”

“As I’m typing this I can’t even find the words to describe how I feel or how to thank each & every person who pitched in for ME,” she added.

Riotutar explained that if it weren’t for the support of her co-workers, she would not have been able to survive so long without seeing her family. “To me my job isn’t just a plain & boring job. I’ve always loved working here,” she wrote on Facebook. “I guess the only reason why i survived this long without my blood family, my momma is because of these blessed souls & my best friends out of work.”

— Raven Clabough



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