



## THE GOODNESS OF AMERICA

### Stranger's Quiet Good Deed

Small acts of kindness often have a big impact.

In the pouring rain, Jefferson County Deputy Sheriff Tiffany Dial of Birmingham, Alabama, stood in a salute during the funeral procession of a fallen officer, Sergeant Wytasha Carter, who was killed in the line of duty on January 13. But Deputy Dial was not exposed to the elements for long. Unbeknownst to her, a man whom she did not know stood behind her and held an umbrella over her head.

The moment was witnessed by Meghan Blankenship, who was moved to tears by the man's act of courtesy. He stood there for well over 30 minutes in order to hold the umbrella over Dial.

"It brought tears to my eyes," Blankenship said, for him "to show that much respect and love for another individual."

The stranger did not do it for accolades. In fact, Deputy Dial said she had no idea he was even there.

"I didn't know he was there. My peripheral vision was cut off with my hat, so I didn't know anything was there. I was in my moment," Dial said.

Dial and the stranger did not have the opportunity to interact with one another. He did not say a word to her, did not want to interrupt her show of respect for the funeral procession, and by the time she turned around, he was gone.

The man would have remained anonymous were it not for Blankenship's photo that went viral on Facebook.

The local news station learned that the man is Shawn Allen, an attorney who was at work on January 26 and decided to go outside to watch the procession and pay his respects.

"When it was going by my building at work, I wanted to go outside and pay my respect," Allen said.

When he spotted Dial standing in the rain, he did not think twice to approach her with his umbrella.

"It was raining and I had an umbrella and she didn't," Allen said. "It was just a nice thing to do."

But despite Allen's modesty, Dial asserts that Allen's good deed meant a lot. "It meant a lot, in ways you can't even put into words," Dial told [WBMA](#). "It wasn't just about keeping the rain off of me for that little bit, it meant a lot more than that."

### Man Gives Car to Woman in Need

Wichita businessman Chris Ellis has a big personality, which became evident to Vicki Anderson the first time Ellis ordered at her McDonald's drive-thru window. The two struck up a friendship, and Ellis told the *Wichita Eagle* that he always looked forward to seeing her during his McDonald's visits. Still, Anderson would never have expected the generosity Ellis showed her when she was in need of a new car.

On January 14, Ellis came through Anderson's drive-thru window, and Anderson asked him if he knew anyone who might be selling a cheap vehicle. Her car just died and the \$500 cost to fix it was simply more than the car was worth.



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Ellis really wanted to help. As it turned out, his son had just purchased a new vehicle and was selling his old one — a 2009 Pontiac GS. Ellis spoke with his son, Josh, about Anderson, and Josh offered to sell the vehicle at a significantly discounted rate knowing it was for a good cause.

Ellis paid his son for the vehicle, and Josh got an oil change, had the tires rotated on the car, and had it cleaned. They wanted the car to be in tip-top shape before they presented it to its new owner. The two then went to McDonald's on January 15 to surprise Anderson.

A McDonald's manager filmed the moment the men presented the vehicle to Anderson. She immediately burst into tears and exchanged heartfelt hugs and kind words with the men.

Anderson asked how she could repay Ellis for his kindness, and his response was simply, "Just pay it forward when you can."

Ellis explained his motivation behind the kindness he showed Anderson. "Fate looked me in the eye when she told me that story," Ellis said. "I couldn't stop thinking about it. I said, 'I have to do something.'"

Ellis told the *Wichita Eagle* that the experience of helping Anderson gave him a natural "high." "It was amazing. It's still amazing. I watched the video today and cried twice."

## **Teen Girl Assists Disabled Diner**

Nineteen-year-old Ashley Guzman works at the Chick-fil-A at Palmera Mall in Corpus Christi, Texas. Guzman's supervisor says she has a big heart and enjoys coming to work each day. A photo secretly snapped of Guzman interacting with one of the restaurant's patrons is testimony to that.

A diner named Jessica Gomez at the mall's food court witnessed a lovely scene on January 5 in which Guzman sat with a disabled customer, cut up his food, and fed it to him. Gomez captured a photo and posted it to her Facebook page.

"While eating at the mall with my family I saw this lovely girl help this man out," Gomez wrote on Facebook. "I've seen this man several times here by himself. This employee sat with him and fed him his food. She went above and beyond. The times I've been here everyone just leaves him. She cut his food into pieces and went back several times to get him whatever he needed. May God bless this woman."

The photo received thousands of "likes" and was shared hundreds of times. Facebook users were moved by the girl's kindness.

Guzman said she was surprised when she saw the photo and didn't think anything of sitting down with the man and helping him eat.

Operations Director Melissa Tamez said that Chick-fil-A encourages its employees to help those in need, but Guzman's kindness goes beyond what the restaurant expects of its workers.

"It tells us a lot about her," Tamez told KIII-TV.

And when the brother of the disabled customer learned of Guzman's actions, he told KIII-TV that he was grateful. n

— Raven Clabough



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