



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on September 16, 2019

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The Goodness of America

Two recent mass shootings forced the emergence of several brave heroes who deserve to be honored in this installment of “Goodness of America.” These people serve as reminders that evil can never defeat goodness. They are the purest examples of the “Goodness of America.”

Honoring Heroes in El Paso Shooting

When a gunman opened fire in a Walmart in El Paso, Texas, on August 3, killing 22 people and injuring more than 20 others, at least three heroes emerged who put their own lives at risk to save others.

Glendon Oakley, a 22-year-old automated logistical specialist stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas, was shopping at the Cielo Vista Mall when the shots began, ABC News reported. He recalled a young child approaching him to say there was a shooter at the nearby Walmart. Hearing the gunfire, Oakley immediately ran toward the store with one thing in mind: save as many children as he could.

“We run towards Dillard’s, and it’s like a play pen over there. I see a whole bunch of kids like, without their parents running around screaming and crying, so I grab as many as possible,” Oakley told CBS affiliate WMAZ-TV.

Oakley told reporters he did not want to describe what he witnessed when he entered the store because it was “the worst thing” he’s ever seen.

“I don’t I don’t want to talk about what went on there because I just want to forget about it all. I just want to focus on the people that lost their loved ones.... I’m already suffering from this. I don’t want to continue to suffer from it,” he added.

Oakley has been uncomfortable with the praise and attention he has received following the shooting.

“I know what I did was heroic but I’m more focused on the families that were lost and the kids that died and the people that died,” Oakley said, breaking down in tears. “I want to reach out to the families that were lost and the families that lost their children.”

Walmart employee Gilbert Serna recalled standing at the back of the store when a “code-brown” (active shooter) was announced on his two-way radio, Breitbart News reported. Serna signaled for customers and co-workers to follow him to the back room of the store to safety.

“We were out in the open,” Serna said. “I opened the shipping containers and told everyone to get in.”

Once Serna led them to safety, he went back to look for others in need of help. CNN reported he noticed others standing out in the parking lot, including a group of six members of a girls’ soccer team who had been fundraising in front of Walmart. He led them into another store and told them to wait for police.

“I was scared, I’m not going to lie, but I wasn’t thinking about my own safety,” he recalled. “I was thinking about everybody else’s safety.”

And while Serna was bravely saving strangers at the back of the store, customer Adria Gonzalez, who was shopping for school supplies and groceries with her mother when the shooting began, led approximately 40 shoppers to safety elsewhere.

Gonzalez told CNN she used her pink hat to wave to other customers and get their attention. She then



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led them to the storage area near the meat counter, where they waited in silence until the gunfire stopped.

Gonzalez told CNN she was still in shock after seeing a grade-school-aged boy shot in the leg near the entrance of the store. The carnage she witnessed is not something she will soon forget.

Countless others acted heroically during the shooting to save their loved ones, some of whom died while shielding others.

Heroes Emerge in Dayton, Ohio

Jeremy Ganger is a bouncer at Ned Peppers in Dayton, Ohio, whose bravery likely saved the lives of dozens of people after a gunman wearing body armor and armed with a semi-automatic rifle opened fire in a popular entertainment district in the early morning on April 4, less than 24 hours after the El Paso shooting.

Ganger put himself in harm's way to block the door of the bar to prevent the shooter from entering, video footage shows. Ganger held open the front door to the bar to wave and pull people inside as the shooter got closer. Ganger instructed them to "get down" once inside as he continued to save others, ABC News reported.

"I could see him coming our way and I started getting people as fast as I could," Ganger said, explaining he had to physically throw people into the bar to get them out of danger as he watched people being shot outside. "[I was] grabbing people, telling them to get in, get down, stay safe. Telling them to get all the way in as far as they could. Don't watch the door, don't watch what's coming."

Determined to block the shooter from entering the bar by standing guard at the door, he recalls seeing the gunman staring at him as he approached the bar just before police opened fire and ended the shooter's reign of terror, just 30 seconds after it began.

"Our patrons are more important than one active shooter, so I was going to try to stand my ground the best I could," he said.

Ganger said he "would've died" before he let the gunman into the bar. In fact, Ganger was struck with a piece of shrapnel during the ordeal, putting him among dozens of people who were treated for injuries from the attack. Sadly, nine people died in the incident.

Meanwhile, nurse Kayla Miller was at the scene when gunfire broke out. She began to flee until she noticed a row of people and bodies on the ground and stopped to perform CPR. "I look down the sidewalk and see just a row of bodies. People shot — some alive, some not," Miller recounted on NBC's *Today Show*.

According to the *Daily Mail*, witnesses remember seeing Miller covered in blood as she tried to save approximately five victims. Tragically, none of them survived.

As in El Paso, many others acted heroically during the shooting, some of whom died in the process. Let us remember those people as well.

— Raven Clabough



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