



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 6, 2020

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The Goodness of America

The violent backlash and destructive riots in response to the in-custody death of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25 would have even the most optimistic among us questioning humanity, but, thankfully, there are good people all across America who continue to prove that good will always defeat evil.



Communities Band Together to Clean Up

Peaceful protests have turned into violent demonstrations in cities throughout the country as outside agitators and criminal opportunists have used Floyd's death as an excuse to loot businesses and attack innocent civilians and police officers.

But while the criminal element overruns the cities at night in the purported name of "justice," good people have come out during the day to try and undo some of the damage caused by the violent demonstrations.

Following destructive riots in downtown Reno, Nevada, on May 30, community members and local officials came together to paint over graffiti, board up buildings after windows were smashed, and clean up the trash that was thrown about the area, KOLO 8 News Now reported.

"You want to see the real Reno, it's right there," said Governor Steve Sisolak at a noon press conference. "It's those folks painting the building, cleaning the curbs, picking up the trash, that's what Reno's about, that's what Nevada's about, that's what really matters."

WMUR 9 reported that an "army of helpers" came out in Kansas City after a night of violent protests.

"When we look at the people that are cleaning up the debris this morning, the folks that are saying we want to bring our community together, you're seeing the essence and the spirit of Kansas City," Kansas City Mayor Quinton Lucas said.

Dozens of volunteers took to the streets of Atlanta after demonstrators rioted and clashed with police. Atlanta resident G.J. Hawkins said he took to social media to organize a cleanup and received a number of responses.

"We feel like it's our duty as Christ followers to not only stand up for justice but to also stand up for our city," Hawkins said. "One of the ways we get to express that is by helping to clean up and rebuilding."

A group of volunteers came together on June 1 to clean up parts of downtown Indianapolis, where more than 100 businesses experienced some type of vandalism. Downtown Indy, an organization that represents the downtown merchants, focused on the state monuments that were vandalized during the protests, RTV6 Indianapolis reported.

Volunteers in Seattle came out to scrub graffiti off buildings, pressure wash paint off of various structures, and help board up smashed storefronts, KIRO 7 reported.



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“I was crying probably most of the night watching the news, seeing the streets that I walk nearly every day and knowing that there’s some people out there willing to destroy that. That really broke my heart,” said volunteer Carly Birkey.

One volunteer, Zach Daniels, brought his five-year-old daughter Mia to assist with the cleanup. He said he wants her to understand that they can support the idea that black lives matter without destroying property or businesses.

“We’re here to support our community,” he said.

These are just a handful of the many stories to have come out of the violent protests and looting that followed Floyd’s death.

High-school Student Rewarded for His Cleanup Efforts

Eighteen-year-old Antonio Gwynn of Buffalo, New York, was moved to act after he saw destructive protests ravage his community on Facebook Live on the evening of June 1.

“I felt disgusted. My nerves were bad. They’re destroying a city that could actually be very beautiful,” Gwynn said.

Gwynn decided to leave his home at 2 in the morning to head to the protest areas and begin cleanup efforts. Before he knew it, 10 hours had passed.

As other residents began to arrive the following morning to clean up the area, they were shocked to discover much of the work had already been done by Gwynn. It was then they decided to turn their attention to helping the young man who gave so much of himself to help their community.

When Buffalo resident Matt Block caught wind of it, he decided to gift Gwynn his 2004 red convertible Mustang. “This was a good way for me to get rid of it and know someone that gets it is going to appreciate it, I think,” Block said.

Bob Briceland of Briceland Insurance Agency then volunteered to cover Gwynn’s insurance for one year. “I just felt compelled to help him out. We just need to get together our whole city and show people how there’s so many good people here,” he said.

Perhaps best of all, Medaille College in Buffalo offered him a full scholarship to attend school after hearing his story. Until recently, Gwynn had planned to attend trade school until he could save up for college. Now, he has decided to study business in the fall at Medaille.

Gwynn was shocked by Block’s and Briceland’s incredible generosity, and was ecstatic over the scholarship. “It doesn’t feel real,” he told CNN. “It feels like this is a movie going on.”

Gwynn said his motivation to help his community was inspired by his mother, who died in 2018. He said he only did what she would have done.



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