

The Legacy of a Hero

Every individual has a story. It is a legacy that they have been building their entire lives. It is something that contains both the blessings and hardships in life, often exposing itself as an open book that many will read. After working for over twenty years as a truck driver, my grandfather has recently gone into retirement. Although he is a man of few words, his legacy as a truck driver serves as a powerful testament to the life I want to pursue and a legacy I wish to pass on. He stands as the hero in my life and the person who I draw my strength and inspiration from.

Through his time as a truck driver, my grandfather has passed down important lessons and advice that have become sacred truths to me. He has demonstrated that the life of a truck driver is one of a leader. It is full of sacrifices in order to provide for loved ones even though it is often at the expense of one's own happiness and well-being. Through this, I have come to realize that leadership is about serving others instead of yourself. Although he was serving his family by making a living, he also understood that he was serving his country that he loved as well. Furthermore, it is a position that takes great responsibility, commitment, and perseverance. Much of a truck driver's life consists of having to stay readily available for their next load and adapting to the demands and responsibility of making sure that it arrives at its desired location on time. It is a job that requires great attentiveness for the sake of his safety and others. It also requires the skills to control thousands of pounds of cargo and react to unexpected events at a moment's notice. Therefore, to say that these men and women are brave is an understatement. In fact, I can recall multiple times when my grandfather had to make difficult decisions and battle unexpected weather and unfortunate circumstances in order to keep his commitments and promises.

Truck driving is not a leisurely occupation, but it is one that can take a physical and mental toll on a person. In fact, it is a very demanding occupation for an individual that requires them to sit behind the wheel for long hours and adapt to a diet that consists of fast food instead of home cooked meals. Along with this lifestyle, truck drivers must cope with the loneliness that is experienced on the road when they are away from their families. They soon learn to cherish the daily and brief phone calls to their families and find themselves recalling fond memories spent with the ones they love. At the end of the day, they are counting down the hours until they will arrive home to see their spouses and hug their children. Despite all of the hardships, they are still able to see the beauty and positive aspects of driving a truck for a living. My grandfather's eyes would light up every time he told us a story of the beautiful rare sights he would see and the humorous events he would experience while driving. No matter what, he was always able to find good where others may only see the bad.

One important lesson, my grandfather has taught me, is the importance of looking at reality rather than being caught up in the moment. Today, many people turn toward sports figures or celebrities for advice or as a role model; however, the best heroes can be found in the people who are in our daily lives and continually support and care about us. Even though my grandfather was not home, I always understood that he loved me and cared about me. It is his loving nature that has inspired me to make everyone I meet in my lifetime feel as important and cared for as he made me feel. For example, I remember when he would drive extra hours, or go out of his way, to be home in time to see his family on

their birthday or attend an event that was special to them. Despite the fact that he was busy working, he remained a selfless individual who always put others before himself.

Although my grandfather enjoys retirement, there is still a little part of him that holds onto the idea of being a truck driver. I can still tell that he misses not driving around the country delivering loads and seeing new places and people. Even with all of the challenges that it brought, he still relishes the fond memories of his traveling days. Every truck driver holds a special place in my heart because within every one of those individuals is a person who does not allow fear or worry to dictate their lives. In my eyes, truck drivers are heroes and deserve respect and recognition. They lead a difficult life for the sake of not only their families and communities, but also their country. They are the backbone of our daily lives and without them we would not have the economy or resources that we are currently blessed to have. I am proud that my grandfather is my hero and I know that the families of truck drivers feel the same way.