

## Golden Bricks, Sarah Grace Corr

Veterans are golden bricks in the path to bettering society. We must remember their past sacrifice with thankfulness so we can appreciate and embrace our present freedom which enables us to follow their example to forge a brighter future.

Courageous acts of veterans laid bricks of honor and sacrifice in the path of freedom for future generations. My grandfather was a paratrooper in World War II. Possessing a brilliant mind, he skipped many grades in school and had great academic potential. However, he chose to put his education on hold for the sake of protecting his country. He fought as a paratrooper not only for our freedom, but the freedom of the Filipino people. His unselfish fervor led him to three near death experiences, but thankfully he was spared. Much more recently, my cousin served as a Marine in the Middle East during the War on Terror. We spent many prayers and anxious thoughts on him during his deployment, as we rarely knew his whereabouts. He diligently served four years of active duty in honorable defense of American democracy. The people of the United States must treat veterans such as my grandfather and cousin with utmost respect out of thankfulness for their noble service.

Their past actions made possible the path of freedom on which we currently walk. Because of their selflessness, myself and my fellow Americans exercise ingrained freedoms that we often take for granted such as the rights to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, free speech, free expression of religion, and countless more. Also, we must not forget that the work of veterans does not stop when they return home. My grandfather and cousin came home and took advantage of the liberty-filled present they had made for themselves and placed bricks of service as civilians. My grandfather graduated from Stanford Medical School and went on to be a resident at the Mayo Clinic. There, he engaged in pioneering cholesterol research which eventually led to the betterment of thousands of lives. My cousin came home and started a career in law enforcement. He currently protects his community by serving in the local jail where he uses his gift of calming even the most aggressive prisoners. In addition to serving their present societies through their careers, both sought to raise their children to better their world. My grandfather married my grandmother, and they raised my aunts and my father, whom I adore. My cousin and his wife are currently rearing their young boys with traditional American values in mind.

Veterans' sacrifices, both in past and present, inspire us to follow their example in order to lay the foundation for future generations. Previous soldiers constantly inspire new generations of young people willing to lay down their lives in defense of our country. The golden bricks these new service people will place will indeed begin anew the cycle of thankfulness and inspiration. In addition, we can apply their passion, diligence, and honor to any profession. Thoughts of my grandfather's and cousin's dedication will inspire me to study for long hours while I work to attain my nursing degree. I dream of serving my country with their same fervor, only I feel called to serve women and children in the medical field. I hope to place bricks of hope as I assist with the preparation for and the delivery of babies. As I journey through life, I am excited to observe all the bricks placed by hardworking men and women while giving close attention and gratitude to the golden bricks placed by veterans.