

Eric Gegenheimer

### My Responsibility to American

On his first bombing mission during World War Two, my uncle Jim's plane was split in half by another plane that was shot down near it. As the plane careened out of control, my uncle saved four fellow airmen, three of which were unconscious and the fourth not being able to be revived. He put their masks on and pulled their parachute as he pushed them out of the plane. He then jumped out with the un-revivable man deploying that man's parachute before his own. As the men landed they were all captured and brought to a POW camp where they survived off nothing but rotten potatoes. For these actions he received the Bronze Star of Valor. He fought for his country and risked his life for others, only at the age of nineteen. It is hard to imagine the ordeal he experienced, including, becoming a prisoner of war at such an early age. Myself being a teenager makes me wonder what kind of impact I can have on my country. Though I may never be able to affect the entire country, I can still live up to the responsibilities bestowed upon me as an American citizen.

It is my responsibility uphold the laws and freedoms that he and so many others have fought for. In short, It is my responsibility to be a good citizen. This can be done in our homes, our schools, our community, and even our entire country. Being respectful to those people, like our parents, who sacrifice and give up so much to us, is an easy way to be a good citizen. While at school, learning what our forefathers and ancestors have worked so diligently to provide us with the freedoms that we are gifted with today is vital to our understanding of the laws and rights we are given at birth. We can also

give back to our community through service projects, such as feeding the homeless, cleaning a park, participating at community events. Finally, even a single person can change his country. For instance a single voter can change the outcome of the election, or they can become a leading figure for their nation themselves.

It is through these steps that I can honor those who came before and live up to the responsibilities that were passed down to me. The men and women on the front line do not fight to come back to an unlawful and uncivil country, so in closing, living up to our duties as American citizens is the absolute least we can do for them.