

# America's pride and passion

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America's Pride and Passion Memorial Day represents American pride—The pride of the soldiers who fought for our independence and freedom. As I walk through downtown Hartland, each Memorial Day, I am honored to meet veterans who served our country. It's heartbreaking to see a soldier limping with a prosthetic leg as he struggles in the parade next to his fellow soldiers. Staring in awe, I wonder, why someone would sacrifice their own life for mine? I searched for an answer. Walking up to a soldier, I asked, "Is it hard to do what you do?" He said, "I would die for this country and its people a hundred times over.

"A prideful rush of adrenaline jolted my spine. Memorial Day represents courage—It takes a brave and passionate individual to die for our country. A perfect example of this is a man named Travis Williams. Williams and his team were sent to Iraq on a rescue mission. Getting out of his team's humvee, he said, "Catch you on the flip side.

"Moments later, he heard an explosion. Then, he saw his team's humvee ripped apart by shrapnel. His heart sank. What surprised me the most was when he said his biggest accomplishment was not blowing his head off (he said he felt guilty he was the only surviving member of his team). Williams represents what Memorial Day means. Memorial Day represents sacrifice—Giving up one's own life to save another is the ultimate sacrifice.

Knowing that each soldier has a family, career, and dream, inspires me. America has freedom and liberty because of their sacrifice. We wouldn't be a free country if it's not for the pride, courage, and sacrifice of our servicemen and women. I am honored to live in this great country called The United

States of America. Memorial Day is the time to honor American soldiers, their pride, their courage and their sacrifice.