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What it means to me to have my dad involved in securing our community.

Many children dream of being a hero and changing the world. In the mind of a child, there are several typical ways to do this, and they all involve choosing an important profession. These important professions generally include being a famous athlete, the president, a veterinarian, or a nurse or doctor. However, their own hometown heroes are often idolized the most. The police officers that protect their city and the firefighters that carry them out of burning buildings provide inspiration for many dreams in young children. As the daughter of a firefighter, I have a great respect and admiration for the men and women who put their lives on the line to protect their community, but I believe I also have a more realistic view of what the job entails. My father has shown me that being a firefighter is not all about heroism and glory. It is about helping others, and through my dad I have seen that often it is the little things that matter the most.

A firefighter is much more than a person who puts out the blazes in our buildings after carrying our children, pets, and other loved ones to safety. He is someone who saves our homes and livelihoods, our families. He goes on EMS calls and races to the scene of a car accident. He is always ready for an emergency. He gets up in the middle of the night to help people he does not know. He is my father. Whenever I am asked, "What does your dad do?" I always have been and always will be proud to say, "He is a fireman."

Being a firefighter is a very demanding job. Firefighters work in every kind of weather, helping people of every personality type no matter what the situation. They work on holidays and on special family occasions. They sacrifice a great deal to protect their community. I have the greatest admiration and respect for my father, as well as pride for everything that he does for

others because of his job. However, this is not why he is such an outstanding firefighter, citizen, and father. My father has a passion for helping others, and this is what makes him such an outstanding man. He always goes above and beyond what is expected.

My father has worked at the same inner city Toledo neighborhood fire station for over twenty years. He knows many of the people in his district personally, and always does everything in his power to help them. From delivering Thanksgiving dinner to a couple without food on the holiday to fixing bikes for the neighborhood kids, my father has helped many people. He even keeps a supply of dog biscuits in his pocket at all times for the pets in his district. My dad always goes the extra mile.

On top of all this, my father has provided our family with a stable and peaceful life. Not only is he dedicated to the people that it is his job to protect, but he does everything in his power to provide my brother and me with a firm foundation on which we can build successful futures. By working an additional full time job, he has given us more opportunities than we had the right to hope for. Even working eighty plus hours a week, my dad always finds time to spend with the family and our beloved Black Labrador. My dad is truly an incredible person.

While I miss having my dad at home to celebrate every holiday, birthday, and special event with our family, I am extremely proud of what he does. He has taught me a great deal through his career as a firefighter. I have learned from him that one of the greatest joys in life is helping other people. What I think of as a trivial act of kindness may mean the world to someone else. My dad's career as a firefighter has taught me that one deed at a time it is possible to change the world, beginning with our community right here in Toledo, Ohio.