



## NOT JUST A DAD

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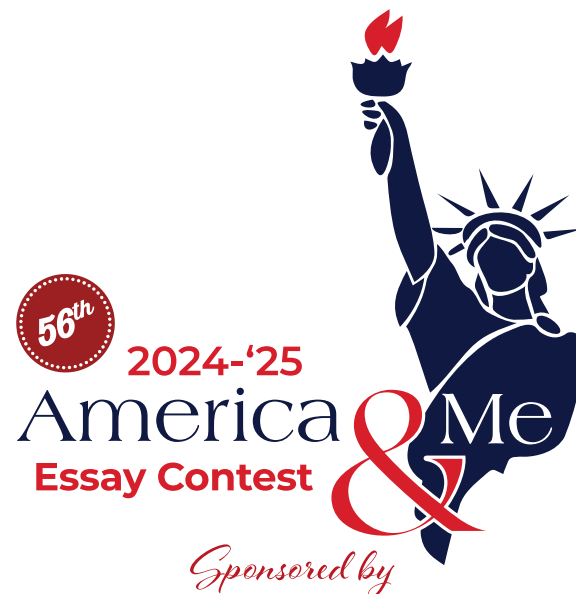
My dad grew up on a farm on Janes Road in Saginaw, Michigan. He has three siblings, Tina, Karla, and Mark. My dad went to Immanuel Lutheran school and church. For high school he went to Valley Lutheran, and this is where he met my mom. He played many sports but was most proud to be on the first football team. He wanted to be just like my grandpa and farm so after high school he became a full-time farmer. For almost 30 years he has contributed to feeding the state of Michigan and beyond with sugar, pickling cucumbers, soybeans, edible beans, wheat, and supplying corn for feeding cattle and the ethanol plant.

My dad is always there for me. Running his own farm is not a 9-5 job, but he manages to come to most of my sporting events. He is my biggest cheerleader, even if he comes straight from the fields to a game. He may be the dirtiest one there but always has a huge smile on his face. He finds a way to help me through my frustrations and never fails to make me laugh. We have created a lot of memories together and he has taught me so much.

My dad teaches me life lessons every day. He has shown and taught me the importance of going to church, praying every night, and being faithful in God. He has also taught me how to treat others. Watching him have a conversation with others, whether it's a close friend or someone he just met, he makes everyone feel important and loved. For example, when I farm with him he takes time to explain details of equipment, crops, and managing his business. It blows my mind how much my dad knows besides farming. He taught me how to build walls, run electrical wires, and put down flooring in our new finished basement. I can laugh now, but I learned a stapler gun is dangerous, and my dad's thumb is ok. Another project we are currently working on is our woods, cleaning it up and improving the habitat for the deer. Since I was four years old he has taken me to his family's deer camp and now we are creating our own. After his work is complete, he still has energy for fun

competition. He taught me how to shoot a basketball properly, kick a soccer ball his way, and work on volleyball hits.

I chose my dad because he has been a big impact in my life not just by being my dad, but also as a farmer, friend, boss, coach, builder, lumberjack, counselor, and a faithful mentor. My relationship with him is one you would have with a friend, easy to talk to and receive advice from. He lifts me up when I don't feel good enough. I look up to him with his strong faith in God. He makes the state of Michigan a better place by taking care of the land, feeding our world, and teaching me, the next generation, how to work hard and be kind. This is why I chose him as My Michigan Hero!



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