

News and stories

Medal of Honor recipient calls for national holiday to honor Gold Star Families

Sep 30, 2017

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BAY CITY, MI—As a crisp fall breeze swirled through town, Michigan's first Gold Star Families Memorial was dedicated in Bay City, the first monument of its kind in the state to honor those who lost loved ones at war.

More than 200 people attended the ceremony on Saturday, Sept. 30, in Battery Park, the city's oldest park that has been revitalized by the Bay Veterans Foundation over the past year to honor veterans and their service to country.

The monument is part of a program that reflects the vision of Hershel Woody Williams, the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient of the Battle of Iwo Jima during World War II. Williams was the keynote speaker for Saturday's ceremony.

He used his speech to challenge state legislators and the U.S. Congress to recognize Gold Star Family Day—the last Sunday in September—as a national holiday.

"We have Memorial Day, where we remember our veterans and pay tribute to them," he said. "This day—the last Sunday of September—should be a national holiday for America.

"We will not ever forget the sacrifice these loved ones have made so we can be free in America."