

News and stories

World War II hero to help break ground for Sampson Gold Star memorial

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Steve Buchiere | [Finger Lakes Times](#)

ROMULUS — Hershel “Woody” Williams knew firsthand the profound effect of war on families at back home.

He is the last living Medal of Honor recipient from Iwo Jima, one of the bloodiest battles in World War II. But the Marine was also a cab driver at one time, and one of his duties was to deliver the dreaded Western Union telegram death notices to families that had lost a loved one in battle.

Those deaths in service of country have left thousands of families in mourning, many for the rest of their lives.

Gold Star Mothers was formed in 1928 to provide recognition — and mutual support — for those mothers who lost sons and daughters in battle.

Tim Young, pastor of Heritage Baptist Church on Route 21 in Palmyra, said the importance of the Gold Star Mothers organization has not been fully recognized, that we need to remember and honor those who were left behind.

Working with a foundation founded by Williams, Young is leading a local effort to make sure that happens.