

# News and stories

## SC Gold Star Families Monument Unveiled at Patriots Point

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Molly Hamilton | [Patriot's Point](#)

A monument honoring the families who have lost a loved one in service to our country was unveiled on the grounds of Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum on January 27, 2018. The SC Gold Star Families Monument was provided by the Hershel “Woody” Williams Medal of Honor Foundation as part of a nationwide initiative to raise similar monuments across the country. The monument at Patriots Point is the first of its kind in South Carolina, and the 31st such tribute in the country.

A “Gold Star Family” is a wife, husband, mother, father, stepmother, stepfather, parent through adoption, foster parents who stand or stood in loco parentis, children, stepchildren, children through adoption, brothers, sisters, half brothers, half sisters, aunts, uncles, grandchildren and grandparents of a member of the Armed Forces of the United States that sacrificed his or her life for our way of life and the American flag under which they served. The monument recognizes and honors South Carolina Gold Star families who have sacrificed a loved one in support of America’s freedom through every conflict since World War I.

Woody Williams received the Medal of Honor for valor during the World War II Battle of Iwo Jima, and yet he said of the monument

that it “represents those who gave so much more than I ever did.” Williams thinks the location of the new monument on the grounds of a naval and maritime museum, and in the shadow of the historic USS Yorktown CV-10, is perfect. Said Williams, “What a location. What a place, of so much history of sacrifices and love and commitment.”

The South Carolina Gold Star Families Memorial Monument features two sides. One side bears the words: Gold Star Families Memorial Monument, a tribute to Gold Star Families and Relatives who have sacrificed a Loved One for our Freedom. The other side tells a story through the four granite panels: Homeland, Family, Patriot, and Sacrifice. The scenes on each panel are a reflection of each community’s Gold Star Families and their fallen Heroes. At the center of this tribute is the most distinct feature of the monument, a cut out of a soldier standing at attention which represents the Loved One who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the name of Freedom.

Williams hopes to continue to place monuments throughout the country, especially in state capitals. He is working to have one erected on the grounds of the South Carolina Statehouse.

Also attending the ceremony were many gold star families and representatives of state and local organizations including Ms. Debby Whitsitt, president of South Carolina Gold Star Mothers Inc., and Mrs. Sue Pollard, president of American Gold Star Mothers. South Carolina Gold Star families were represented in the program by Mr. & Mrs. Neal Dillon.