

Teen Aims to Share the Stories of WWII Vets

His mission is clear: Get out and talk to those veterans of WWII

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Rishi Sharman is on a mission. His message is clear: Get out and talk to those veterans of WWII before it's too late.

That's exactly what the 19-year-old Californian has been doing since his sophomore year of high school. He has put his college career on hold to travel the country to seek out and interview what he considers to be "great heroes."

"The only reason I'm alive is because of them," Sharma said yesterday while visiting VFW National Headquarters in Kansas City, Mo. "I'm so tired of seeing kids my age not even give a crap.

To help further his mission, he started a non-profit called Heroes of the Second World War.

The goal is to film interviews with WWII vets until there are none left. Sharma said he plans to be on the road until the last one has passed on.

"We have a responsibility to document their experiences so that such a devastating war will never happen again and so that those brave men did not die in vain," he said. "I don't want us to be the society where the last WWII vet dies and we all have regrets."

Sharma said that for the most part, he feels like his generation doesn't know about history and really doesn't care much about the sacrifices made by veterans

"I have seen so many veterans in care facilities who are lonely and just waiting to die," Sharma said. "That's really unacceptable. By going in to a home to visit with a veteran, you are giving them a reason to want to live.

Because of his commitment to telling the stories of "The Greatest Generation," VFW

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Programs Director Lynn Rolf presented Sharma with a Certificate of Special Recognition on behalf of VFW Commander-in-Chief Brian Duffy and VFW Adjutant General Bob Wallace

“People ask me why I’m doing this,” Sharma said. “I ask, ‘why are you NOT doing this?’ All of my friends now are WWII vets. I feel more like I’m 91 than 19.

To read more about Sharma and the veterans he interviews or to find out how you can help, visit www.heroesofthesecondworldwar.org.

By [Janie Dyhouse](#), associate editor, *VFW* magazine