Insights: Perspectives

# Kilpatrick Townsend Veterans Day 2020 | Adam Wiley Honors His Grandfather and Great Uncles

**NOVEMBER 10, 2020**

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**Harmon Wiley (Army, 1942-45), Mannie Wiley (Army Ranger, 1942-45) and Adam Wiley (Army Air Corps, purple heart, POW, 1942-56)**

My Grandfather, Harmon Wiley, and his brothers Mannie and Adam were born in this country but spent the first few years of their lives here as foreign citizens. Native Americans were not considered United States citizens and had no voting rights until 1924, with some states restricting voting rights until decades later. Even after obtaining citizenship, my Grandfather and his brothers faced discrimination and racism, as they were unable to use the same restrooms or sit beside their white neighbors in movie theaters, restaurants, or buses. In spite of this, they set aside any resentment they could have harbored and chose to serve in the military during World War II, when we needed them most. They returned from the war as heroes and went on to live long, fulfilling lives.

I am immensely proud of my Grandfather and great uncles for serving their country during the War. Their service is a reminder to me that it is possible to overcome systems of oppression and hatred through diligence and excellence, and that any adversity I face in my own life is small by comparison.

My Grandfather's service has taught me the importance of fighting for those who are less fortunate than I am, even if it is challenging or inconvenient. As an attorney, I am in a position to use my education and societal privilege to advance causes that can meaningfully improve the lives of others. I believe that recognizing this reality provides me with the motivation and purpose to achieve those goals. And I strive to never take my own rights or those of my clients for granted.



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**– Adam Wiley**