

What we owe essential workers

Vitalina Williams worked in a grocery store in Massachusetts. Jason Hargrove drove a bus in Michigan. Vianna Thompson was a nurse in Nevada hospitals. And Agustin Rodriguez cut meat in a South Dakota pork processing plant. But these four Americans tragically had something in common: All worked in essential industries during the COVID-19 pandemic — and died of COVID-19.

Behind each week's grim coronavirus statistics are people like Williams, Hargrove, Thompson and Rodriguez and the bereaved loved ones they leave behind. Countless other essential workers go to jobs every day in places like warehouses, trucks, hospitals, grocery stores and pharmacies worried that they, too, may become ill.

Today we are grateful to all who put their lives and families at risk to do work essential to our collective welfare. Tomorrow, we need to pay the enormous debt we owe them for doing these jobs...

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