



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Sean M. Ryan

Senator Sean Ryan Awards New York State Senate Liberty Medal To Tonawanda Sixth-Grader Jayden Gersitz

SEAN M. RYAN November 15, 2023

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Senator Sean Ryan presents New York State Senate Liberty Medal to Jayden Gersitz and poses with Jayden's parents, Jeremiah and Kristen Gersitz, Nov. 14, 2023

Franklin Middle School Student Receives New York Senate's Highest Civilian Honor for His Quick-Thinking Heroics

KENMORE, N.Y. – On Tuesday, November 14, 2023, New York State Senator Sean Ryan hosted a ceremony at the Kenilworth Volunteer Fire Co. #1 to present Jayden Gersitz with the New York State Senate Liberty Medal for his role in aiding a spectator who was having a

medical emergency at a high school baseball game in May. The Liberty Medal is the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a civilian by a member of the New York State Senate.

In May, Gersitz, then a fifth-grader at Franklin Middle School, was riding his bicycle to a Kenmore East High School baseball game. Upon arrival, he was met by his cousin, who was rushing to retrieve an emergency fire department radio from his father's truck. A spectator had fainted and collapsed due to a diabetic episode, and the radio was needed in order to call paramedics.

After securing the radio, Gersitz delivered it by bicycle to his uncle, a Kenilworth volunteer firefighter, who in turn called emergency responders. Paramedics soon arrived, but parked in the wrong parking area. Gersitz, thinking quickly, hopped back on his bike, rode the quarter-mile to where the ambulance was located, and directed the paramedics to the correct location. The man was taken by ambulance to the hospital, where he received further care.

Senator Sean Ryan said, "Jayden's quick-thinking heroics would be impressive for anyone, but to have a fifth-grader show that kind of presence of mind in an emergency situation is beyond admirable. He has clearly learned well from his father, uncle, and other mentors at the Kenilworth Volunteer Fire Company. I am proud to have Jayden as a constituent, and I am especially honored to present him with the New York State Senate Liberty Medal."

Assemblymember Bill Conrad said, "Jayden is a remarkable kid whose helping spirit and grace under pressure are beyond his years. He has clearly been watching and learning from his dad, uncle, and their fellow firefighters. The Tonawandas are fortunate to be rich with volunteers, but those who fight fires, render emergency aid, and tend to our safety while risking their own - their brand of service is truly extraordinary. And Jayden, as a fifth-grader, proved himself to be among these most special and courageous of our community servants."