



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Owen H. Johnson

Senator Johnson & Senator Fuschillo Award Senate Liberty Medal to 5-Year-Old Hero From Amityville

OWEN H. JOHNSON June 1, 2012

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Senator Owen H. Johnson (R-Babylon) and Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick) today awarded the New York State Senate Liberty Medal to Grace Varley, a five-year-old girl from Amityville, for heroically helping to save her younger brother's life.

"I am honored to present Grace Varley with the New York State Senate Liberty Medal for her bravery. Grace reminds us that there is no age requirement for an individual to perform

an act of heroism. At age five, her fortitude and quick action make her a fine example to all of us and deserving of the highest civilian honor that a New Yorker can receive,” said Senator Johnson.

“In a situation which could be very frightening for a young child, Grace showed remarkable poise, calm, and maturity. As a result of her quick thinking, she was able to get help for her brother and save his life. Grace is a true hero and I’m pleased to present her with this much deserved honor,” said Senator Fuschillo.

On May 16th, Grace and her siblings were eating dinner with their grandmother when her younger brother Myles started choking and passed out. Grace’s grandmother performed the Heimlich maneuver and tried slapping his back but could not dislodge the piece of food blocking his airway. Unable to get through to 911, she took the boy outside and yelled for help.

Having learned about 911 in her pre-kindergarten class at St. Martin of Tours School, Grace called 911 again, this time getting through, and informed the operator about her brother’s condition, and answered questions. Grace’s quick thinking gave the 911 operator the information needed to dispatch emergency personnel to the house.

Senator Johnson and Senator Fuschillo presented the award to Grace at her school surrounded by her family, classmates, and teachers.

The New York State Senate Liberty Medal is one of the highest civilian honors that a New Yorker can receive. Similar to the national Congressional Gold Medal, the award is given to individuals who have merited special commendation for exceptional, heroic, or humanitarian acts and achievements on behalf of their fellow New Yorkers.

Photograph: Senator Owen H. Johnson (left) and Senator Charles J. Fuschillo (right) present five year old Grace Varley of Amityville with the New York State Senate Liberty Medal for her heroic actions in helping to save her younger brother's life.