



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Bridge Honoring Westfield Native Sergeant Kevin White Posthumously Dedicated

CATHARINE YOUNG December 19, 2016

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WESTFIED – In a ceremony complete with full military honors, Sergeant Kevin W. White was posthumously remembered today with the dedication of the bridge on U.S. Route 20, between Oak Street and South Portage Street in the Town of Westfield, as the “Sergeant Kevin W. White Memorial Bridge.”

Legislation sponsored and passed by Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I- 57th District) and Assemblyman Andrew Goodell (R,C,I – Jamestown) memorialized the bridge in recognition of the Bronze Star and Purple Heart recipient, who was killed in Afghanistan in 2011, when his vehicle was hit by an improvised explosive device. The honor was bestowed upon Sergeant White at the request of other local veterans.

“Sergeant White is a true American hero. He felt called to duty by his country, and he took his oath to protect our country and its citizens, no matter the cost. He fought and died to protect the freedoms we hold so dear, and we are humbled by his bravery and valor. This bridge will now stand as a testament to Sergeant White’s patriotism, and help others reflect upon the true costs of living in our free nation,” said Senator Young.

In 2015, Westfield resident Bill Perrine contacted Senator Young about exploring the possibility of dedicating the bridge in honor of the late Sergeant White. After obtaining the blessing of Sergeant White’s family, Senator Young and Assemblyman Goodell introduced the legislation to memorialize the bridge, and the law was signed by Governor Cuomo on September 29, 2016.

“With the naming of this bridge on Route 20 in Westfield, the memory of Sgt. Kevin White and his sacrifice to our Country will be honored forever into the future, providing inspiration to residents and visitors for generations to come,” noted Assemblyman Goodell. “It is important that we always remember our veterans and their incredibly important role in preserving the freedoms that make the United State the greatest country in the world.”

“We have been blessed during this ongoing journey to have extraordinary support from family, friends, the local communities, and most importantly from our Savior Jesus Christ. It is not a road anyone would choose to travel, but you have all carried us through some really rough times and we appreciate that from the depths of our hearts,” stated Paul and Patricia

White.

Born on May 20, 1988, Sgt. Kevin White later graduated from Westfield Academy in 2006 and enlisted in the US Army. After completing basic training and advanced infantry training at Fort Benning, Georgia, he was stationed in Baumholder, Germany, as a Bradley Armored Personnel Carrier Driver with the First Armored Division.

Sergeant White deployed to Iraq in April 2008, serving as Lead Driver in over 200 patrols in a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle. During a patrol in January 2009, Sergeant White's MRAP was struck by an explosive device, causing devastating damage to the vehicle. Sergeant White and his fellow soldiers escaped unharmed and each was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge for their actions.

While still serving in Iraq, Sergeant White re-enlisted in the U.S. Army. He completed his tour of duty in June 2009, and was re-assigned to Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, with the 25th Infantry Division. Subsequently, Sergeant White volunteered for and earned his Air Assault Badge at the Sabalauski Air Assault School with the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. He trained over 20 gunners on the Improved Target Acquisition System (ITAS), a vital piece of equipment for their upcoming deployment. Sergeant White also attended the Warrior Leader Course earning a position on the Commandant's List.

In April 2011, Sergeant White deployed to the Pech River Valley, Kunar Province, Afghanistan – less than a mile from the border of Pakistan. At 22 years old, and less than one month into his deployment, Sergeant White was killed in action on May 2, 2011, by an improvised explosive device that hit the lead vehicle he volunteered to command.

As stated by those he served with, Sergeant White was a proven warrior, a common-sense leader with technical and tactical expertise who led by example. Fellow soldiers often noted

he was trustworthy, respected, always prepared, and demonstrated maturity far beyond his years. They also noted that Sergeant White had a great sense of humor and was a friend loved by many.

Prior to his death, Sergeant White had earned, but had not yet had the opportunity to be awarded, the rank of Sergeant. The promotion was awarded posthumously. Sergeant White also was awarded the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, two Army Commendation Medals, the New York State Conspicuous Service Cross with two silver devices and the Hawaii Medal of Honor.

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RELATED LEGISLATION

2015-S6368

- Introduced

- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate

- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Designates the bridge on U.S. route 20, between Oak street and South Portage street, in the town of Westfield, county of Chautauqua, as the "Sergeant Kevin W. White Memorial Bridge"

January 07, 2016

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by **Catharine Young**

Do you support this bill?