



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

Harckham Awards Liberty Medals to Two Putnam Sheriff's Deputies for Heroism

PETE HARCKHAM September 9, 2020

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Carmel, NY – New York State Senator Pete Harckham awarded today two Putnam County Sheriff's Department Deputies, Benjamin Levine and Kevin Osika, each a Liberty Medal for heroic, lifesaving actions during a special ceremony held here at the Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services headquarters.

“It is my great honor to award the Liberty Medal to Deputy Levine and Deputy Osika for their quick-thinking and empathetic efforts, both of which resulted in saving a life,” said Harckham. “The call of duty for our first responders is often varied, intense and profound. Proper action requires every facet of their training. In two instances, Putnam deputies showed exemplary and poised judgment in helping two distraught residents, for which we are entirely grateful.”

On May 27, 2019, Deputy Osika responded to a scene with a man who was standing on the side of the Veterans Memorial Bridge in Brewster over Interstate 84. Without hesitation and risking his own safety, Deputy Osika approached the man, who appeared ready to jump, and pulled him off the edge of the bridge. Later, the man was taken safely to the Putnam Hospital for evaluation.

Deputy Levine was the first officer to respond on the scene at the Bear Mountain Bridge on July 14, 2019, when he similarly found a man about to jump off the bridge. While engaging the man in a dialogue for over 25 minutes, Deputy Levine provided him reassurance and directed his focus from the bridge. After other officers and an ambulance arrived, Deputy Levine was able to take the man’s hand and escort him off the edge of the bridge and towards the ambulance.

At the ceremony, Investigator Ryan McMahon and Deputies Levine and Osika also received the National Sheriff’s Association Medal of Valor.

The Liberty Medal is the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate. Along with their medals, Harckham presented the deputies with Senate resolutions thanking them for their heroism.

“This is the finest group of officers I have ever worked with,” said Putnam County Sheriff Robert L. Langley, Jr. “The pride I have in them is unmatched. They are true representatives of professional law enforcement and fulfill their duties with the utmost integrity and compassion.”

Harckham also presented a Senate Memorial Resolution to Sheriff Langley in honor of his father, Robert Langley, Sr., who served in the U. S. Air National Guard of Texas and U. S. Coast Guard. In 1962, Langley, Sr. moved with his family to Carmel, NY, and worked for the New York State Power Authority as a Sergeant with the security force at the Indian Point Energy Center in Buchanan, NY.