Tedisco Presents NYS Senate Liberty Medal to Malta Vietnam War Veteran and Nurse Helene Wallingford

SENATOR JIM TEDISCO   September 22, 2022

MALTA--Senator Jim Tedisco today presented the New York State Senate Liberty Medal, the Senate's highest honor for service, to Vietnam War veteran and former U.S. Navy nurse, Lt. Helene Wallingford of Malta at a ceremony at Malta Town Hall.

Last year, Senator Tedisco presented Helene's husband, Captain David Wallingford with the New York State Senate Liberty Medal. This is the first couple Tedisco has presented with Liberty Medals.

Lt. Helene Wallingford served 5 years of active duty in the U.S. Navy from 1965-1970 as a nurse providing healing care for injured and wounded American service members during the height of the Vietnam War. During this time, Helene's future husband, U.S. Marine Corps Captain David Wallingford, was shot and wounded in Vietnam and was evacuated to a military hospital in Yokosuka, Japan where he met and was treated by Helene, who was stationed there.

For Helene's courageous service and efforts to save lives and heal others during the Vietnam War, Helene Wallingford was awarded the National Defense Service Medal and Navy Commendation.

After Helene's military service, she worked as a nurse at St. Peter's Hospital and Saratoga Hospital and went on to advise and educate many nursing students at Maria College and the Excelsior College Nursing Program. She also has given back to her fellow nurses as the Past President of Sigma Theta Tau International.

Helene and David married and moved to Malta where they raised four children and are now the proud grandparents of eight grandchildren.

"There are many veterans who would not be alive today if it was not for U.S. Navy veteran Lt. Helene Wallingford and the other nurses who served who were there to provide compassionate care for our wounded warriors and truly saved lives during the Vietnam War. Talk about a storybook romance, Helene and David Wallingford met while she treated him for wounds he sustained in combat during the Vietnam War. They fell in love, got married and raised a family. I'm proud to recognize Lt. Helene Wallingford with the Senate's highest honor, the Liberty Medal, and salute both her service to our country and that of her husband, David, who I previously honored with the Liberty Medal," said Senator Jim Tedisco.