

NEWS FROM

Senator Chris Jacobs

REPRESENTING THE 60TH NEW YORK SENATE DISTRICT



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JACOBS PRESENTS LIBERTY MEDAL TO CITY OF TONAWANDA RESIDENT

High school student awarded state's highest civilian honor for life-saving heroics

(Tonawanda, NY) – In a ceremony before her fellow Tonawanda High School classmates, 18 year-old City of Tonawanda resident Cassandra Butzer was presented with the New York State Liberty Medal by Senator Chris Jacobs (60th SD). The Senator pointed to Cassandra's life-saving actions earlier this month in making the presentation.

"I am honored to present the Liberty Medal to Cassandra Butzer, whose awareness and self-sacrificing actions saved the life of a neighbor and prevented even greater property damage from occurring," said Senator Jacobs. "What Cassandra did that night represents the best of New Yorkers and is the epitome of what this medal stands for."

The Liberty Medal is the highest civilian honor that can be awarded to a New York State resident, and is a special commendation for exceptional heroic, selfless and noble acts performed on behalf of one's community and fellow citizens.

On the evening of May 10th Butzer was returning home and noticed smoke coming from the home of 68 year-old Dennis Alviti. Without any fear or regard for her own well-being, Butzer approached the burning home and alerted Mr. Alviti, who was home alone at the time. Her quick and selfless actions enabled Mr. Alviti to escape unharmed despite significant damage to his home.

"I am very humbled by this great honor and want to thank the many community leaders who have recognized and thanked me for what I did that night," Cassandra said in front of family members and fellow students. "I really wasn't thinking I was doing anything heroic, I just wanted to make sure that anyone inside had a chance to get out and I am very happy that Mr. Alviti got out of the house safely," Ms. Butzer added.

"I don't know how I could ever thank her enough," said Mr. Alviti who attended the presentation. "I am grateful to be here, and I am happy that my home was saved in spite of the significant damage that was caused by the fire," Alviti said.

City of Tonawanda Mayor Rick Davis and Fire Chief Charles Stuart also attended the ceremony to express their gratitude for the teenager's conduct in the face of such a dangerous situation. "Had it not been for Cassandra's alertness and willingness to stop and help, that fire could have travelled much farther and had much more severe consequences," Chief Stuart said.

In his closing comments, Senator Jacobs emphasized the great example Cassandra set for young people all across the state.

“I want Cassandra to know that my Senate colleagues from all across the state are aware of her exploits and voted in favor of a resolution to present her with this Liberty Medal,” said Jacobs. “What Cassandra did on the night of May 10th is an inspiration to us all, and I am pleased to join her family and friends in telling her how proud we are of her,” Jacobs concluded.

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