



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John W. Mannion

John Mannion honors impaired karate competitor in Fayetteville

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| ISSUE: **PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, MIXED MARTIAL ARTS, SENATE COMMENDATION AWARD**
| COMMITTEE: **DISABILITIES**

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (WSYR-TV) — State Senator John Mannion was in Fayetteville this morning, July 16, to honor Matthew Killian, a blind karate champion who also suffers from epilepsy and autism.

Killian, a 24-year-old student at Lawrence World Class Karate dojo, has been epileptic since he was 3 years old and autistic since he was 10. At 19, he then lost his sight due to a rare disease called Leber Hereditary Optic Neuropathy (LHON).

Despite Killian's challenges, he earned two gold medals for Special Demonstration of Kata and Kumite at the 2023 Niagara Karate Championship.

Killian has been training with Master Rande Lawrence from LWC Karate dojo for over a year where he focuses on his katas, a choreographed pattern of movements.

Mannion presented Killian with an official Senate Commendation and praised his resolve.

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“Matthew’s karate success comes from his hard work, determination and an unwavering spirit to overcome all obstacles,” Mannion said.

Killian thanked Mannion for the award, along with his teacher, Lawrence, and expressed his love for karate.

“Karate has given me so much and it is helping to shape a big part of who I am,” Killian said.

View the article [here](#).