



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo, Walczyk present New York State Senate Liberty Medals to Whitesboro High School students

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO June 16, 2025



New York State Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-C-Rome, and Sen. Mark Walczyk, R-C-Watertown, today presented New York State Senate Liberty Medals to [Aiden Kane](#), [Donato Jellencich](#) and [Tyler Sojda](#), all [Whitesboro High School students](#), and Morgan Randall, a student at [Dolgeville Jr./Sr. High School](#), in recognition of their [actions to help a family whose garage was on fire](#).

The Liberty Medal is one of the highest civilian honors a New Yorker can receive. The award is given to individuals who have merited special commendation for exceptional, heroic or humanitarian acts and achievements on behalf of their fellow New Yorkers.

On Saturday, May 17, Kane, Jellencich, Sojda and Randall were traveling to a friend's house after leaving their junior prom when they spotted a garage on fire just before 11 p.m.

Kane rushed to the front door of the residence, alerted those inside to the fire and helped two children and their father evacuate to a safe location. Sojda checked to ensure no one was inside the burning garage, while Jellencich called 911. Randall initially spotted the fire and stayed with the family to help comfort the children.

The Maynard Fire Department credited the teens with potentially preventing a far more serious situation, as the flames were dangerously close to reaching the house, while the family said that they are grateful for the actions the teens took that night.

Whitesboro Board of Education President Brian McQueen and other board members, Whitesboro Superintendent Brian Bellair and other school officials, Assemblywoman Marianne Buttenschon, Oneida County Sheriff Rob Maciol, Maynard Fire Department Chief Jared Pearl and other department representatives and members of the New York State Police also attended the ceremony.

"Aiden Kane, Donato Jellencich, Tyler Sojda and Morgan Randall are very deserving of this recognition," **Sen. Griffo said.** "Each is to be commended for their fast response, quick thinking and the courageous actions they took to help a family whose garage was on fire. They are heroes and inspirational to many."

"The bravery and quick actions demonstrated by Morgan Randall, Donato Jellencich, Tyler Sojda, and Aiden Kane exemplify the true spirit of heroism," **said Sen. Walczyk.** "Their willingness to act in the face of danger not only saved lives but also inspired their community. These young individuals have shown us all what it means to be responsible citizens, and it is an honor to recognize their extraordinary courage with the New York State Senate Liberty Medals."