



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Senator Young, AT&T and Blue Star Mothers of New York Announce Successful Cell Phone Drive

CATHARINE YOUNG January 11, 2016



OLEAN – Residents of the Southern Tier and Livingston County stepped forward to help soldiers in need during the holiday season.

Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I- 57th District), AT&T and the Lake Erie Chapter of the Blue Star Mothers of New York announced today that area residents donated more than 300 used mobile devices to [Cell Phones For Soldiers](#).

“Our community members are known for their generous spirit, especially during the holiday season, and this year has been no exception,” said Senator Young. “Our service personnel around the globe will be thankful for phones collected, because it will help them stay in touch with loved ones during a deployment without having to bear a huge financial burden. A phone call home can boost a soldier’s morale, or improve the spirits of someone receiving treatment in a VA hospital. I am proud to have partnered with AT&T, the Blue Star Mothers of New York, and Cell Phones For Soldiers to honor the members of our nation’s armed forces and show them our continued support.”

This joint effort will provide troops and injured veterans with more than 40,500 minutes of free calls to their loved ones back home. Proceeds from the recycled devices will be used to buy long distance calling cards for troops abroad and veterans at home. Donated phones valued at even \$5 allow for Cell Phones For Soldiers to provide two and a half hours of free talk time to deployed troops through calling cards.

“At AT&T we provide solutions to better connect the world, but nothing brings us more pride and joy than being able to connect our active military and veterans with their loved ones,” said Marissa Shorenstein, New York President, AT&T. “I applaud Senator Young and the Blue Star Mothers for leading this community collection drive with AT&T and I thank everyone that donated a mobile device. Their generosity will make 2016 more enjoyable for some of America’s bravest men and women and their families.”

“Once again our wonderful community has reached out and shown their support for our service men and women serving around the world, and we Blue Star families are so very grateful. With all the cell phones that were donated from Western New York, many deployed military personnel will be able to be in contact through a phone conversation with their loved ones here at home. There is nothing more uplifting for the morale of the deployed or their families than to hear one another’s voice, to be comforted knowing they are safe, and to

spend a few moments sharing with one another over a phone conversation. We wish to thank everyone who donated a device that will bring a few of those special moments to some of our heroes and their families. I can assure you that each and every service member, along with their families who receive this gift, thanks you deeply for your generosity. We are so proud to live in a community that so strongly supports those who support us,” said Susan Rowley, President, Lake Erie New York Chapter 4 of the Blue Star Mothers of America Inc.

The collection drive – which began November 9 and lasted until January 1 – spanned Senator Young’s district, where the public was able to drop off any used mobile devices at collection bins in AT&T stores throughout the region, as well as more than six public locations.

Cell Phones For Soldiers, which was founded in 2004, has provided more than 216 million minutes of free talk time to servicemen and women stationed around the world through its calling card program, Minutes That Matter. Funds raised from the recycling of cellular phones are used to purchase prepaid international calling cards. On average, Cell Phones For Soldiers distributes 1,500 calling cards each week to bases around the world, care package programs, deployment ceremonies and VA hospitals.

More than 11.7 million phones have been recycled or repurposed through the program. Approximately half of the phones processed are reconditioned and reused. Phones and components that cannot be refurbished are dismantled and responsibly recycled to reclaim materials, including:

- Gold, silver and platinum from circuit boards;
- Copper wiring from phone chargers; and
- Nickel, iron, cadmium and lead from battery packs

Anyone who was not able to participate but would still like to make a donation can find more information at www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com.