Hero who saved two girls from drowning to receive Liberty Medal from Senator Murphy

TERRENCE MURPHY   November 21, 2016

| ISSUE: **MAHOPAC**, **CARMEL**, **CULLEN MALZO**, **NEW YORK STATE LIBERTY MEDAL**

Mahopac, NY – Cullen Malzo doesn't feel like a hero. He's often said that what he did the night of November 10, 2016 was just a case of being in the right place at the right time. But it was Cullen's quick-thinking and bravery that saved the lives of two 17-year old girls.

Cullen's extraordinary, selfless act caught the attention of many appreciative supporters, including Senator Terrence Murphy, who was impressed with the courage and poise Cullen

displayed when two people's lives were hanging in the balance.

In recognition of Cullen's courageous act, Senator Murphy will present him with a New York State Liberty Medal at a Mahopac Town Board meeting. The ceremony will be held on Wednesday December 7th at 7:00 p.m at the Carmel Town Hall, 60 McAlpin Avenue in Mahopac,

"What Cullen did was extraordinary. He could have stood by and waited for someone else to act, but he knew whoever was in that car was in danger. He focused on saving those two girls and was willing to go to whatever extent it took to help them," said Senator Murphy.

Cullen Malzo grew up in Yorktown, graduating from Lakeland High School in 2015. His family moved to North Lake Boulevard in Mahopac 18 months ago. He had been a student at the University of Rhode Island but came home last January with the intention of transferring to Montana State University.

Cullen was standing in his driveway when he heard a crash. Two 17-year-old girls had been speeding down North Lake Boulevard, traveling 50 mph in a 30 mph zone, when the driver lost control of the car. It had hit a utility pole and flipped over, landing upside down in Lake Mahopac.

Running toward the car, the quick-thinking 19-year-old called 911, then jumped into the muddy water, intent on helping whoever was trapped inside.

Standing in mud and freezing water up to his chin, Cullen tried to open the door, but couldn't pull it open. Cullen got out of the water looking for a rock to break open the window. Wading back through the water he put the rock on the overturned car, then reached for the door again. Feeling broken glass, he realized the window had shattered on impact. Reaching in, he felt an arm, pulling until the passenger came to the surface. Gasping

for air, the passenger begged Cullen to help her friend. Cullen reached back into the murky water a second time. He felt the other girl's foot and pulled her out through the window.

The trio huddled together in the muck until police and firefights arrived.

"Cullen is a brave young man. His quick actions and fortitude saved those girl?s lives," said Carmel Town Supervisor Kenneth Schmitt. "He displayed nerves of steel. He acted without hesitation or concern for his own safety. He had the presence of mind to call 911 while he was running toward the accident and thought about picking up a rock to break open the window. I know our community appreciates what Cullen did. I hope everyone will come out and show their support on December seventh."

The New York State Senate Liberty Medal is one of the highest civilian honors that 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 and is the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the New York State Senate.