



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Senator Young Honors Chautauqua County Hero

CATHARINE YOUNG September 28, 2018

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CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY – Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – Olean) announced that State Route 394 in the Town of Ellicott will be renamed the “Sergeant James C. Matteson Memorial Highway.”

Senator Young sponsored legislation in the state Senate and Assemblyman Andrew Goodell, (R,C,I – Jamestown) sponsored legislation in the state Assembly renaming the highway in Sergeant Matteson’s honor. Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed the legislation today.

Sergeant Matteson, a native of Chautauqua County, served in the United States Army’s 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, and 1st Infantry Division. Sergeant Matteson tragically lost his life in service to our country on November 12, 2004. He was killed in action during the Battle of Fallujah. He was 23 years old.

“Sergeant Matteson made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of freedom,” Senator Young said. “It is appropriate that we rename this highway in his hometown in his name as a tribute to his courage and patriotism. His sacrifice is a reminder that freedom is not free. It is earned through the courageous sacrifice of heroic patriots like Sergeant Matteson.”

Sergeant Matteson was a 1998 graduate of Southwestern Central School, where he had been on the football team, wrestling squad and track team. He was inducted in the U.S. Army on

August 5, 1998.

“Army Sergeant Matteson made the ultimate sacrifice to our Country when he lost his life in 2004 during a ground assault in Iraq. By unanimous vote, the Chautauqua County Legislature and County Executive George Borrello supported this legislation to honor this brave Chautauqua County native,” Assemblyman Goodell said. “Along with Senator Young, I am pleased to sponsor this bill, which is but one small way to honor and remember this American hero.”

As an Army scout, he was among the first U.S. soldiers leading the drive to capture Fallujah.

On the night of November 11, 2004, three of Sergeant Matteson’s fellow scouts, using the cover of darkness, assaulted a building held by insurgents. All three scouts were hit by enemy fire the moment they entered the building.

Sergeant Matteson threw a smoke grenade to provide concealment as he helped evacuate the wounded scouts. He then engaged the enemy and provided covering fire, allowing members of his unit to launch a counterattack on the building. The attack collapsed the structure, killing all the insurgents inside.

Sergeant Matteson was killed the following morning in an ambush while leading a task force convoy.

At the start of the ambush, he left the safety of his vehicle to return enemy fire, giving other vehicles in the convoy time to take up better firing positions.

For his heroic actions, he was awarded the Silver Star. A barracks at Fort Benning, Georgia, was also named in his honor.

Senator Young said, “every day, people will travel along the highway and be reminded that the freedom they enjoy is only made possible by the sacrifice of military men and women like Sergeant Matteson.”