



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Tedisco

Tedisco Presents NYS Senate Liberty Medal on World War II Battle of Iwo Jima Hero's 95th Birthday

SENATOR JIM TEDISCO August 31, 2020



Senator Jim Tedisco (R,C,I,REF-Glenville) presented the New York State Liberty Medal on Friday, the Senate's highest honor for service and valor, to Ambrose "Cowboy" Anderson of Gloversville, who served during the Battle of Iwo Jima during World War II, and was one of the nation's first African American U.S. Marines. Tedisco joined Mr. Anderson's family and friends to present the Liberty Medal outside his Gloversville home this evening in celebration of the veteran's 95th birthday. **(Photos Attached).**

“Corporal Ambrose ‘Cowboy’ Anderson is a true American hero who served our country in World War II with honor and valor during the Battle of Iwo Jima as a member of that ‘Greatest Generation’ of Americans who saved our world from darkness. Unfortunately, Corporal Anderson, and many of the African Americans who served at the time experienced racism and discrimination and did not get the recognition he and his colleagues deserved. I am proud and honored to help rectify that in some way with this long-overdue heartfelt recognition by the state of New York for Ambrose Anderson’s courageous service,” said Senator Jim Tedisco.

Corporal Anderson, a star football player at Gloversville High School, served in the 8th Ammunition Company. He joined the U.S. Marine Corps in 1943 and was assigned to the segregated Camp Montford Point in Jacksonville, N.C., where about 20,000 African American Marines served from 1942 to 1949, enduring terrible prejudice and racism.

While on a battleship sailing to Iwo Jima, Anderson’s ship was attacked by Japanese kamikaze pilots. Anderson crawled into a hole and started feeding a gunner machine gun ammunition. The next day, he looked out and saw the bodies of Marines floating in the sea and entwined with driftwood on the beach. On Iwo Jima, Anderson hauled ammunition and supplies from incoming ships to the shore and delivered them to white infantry units on the front lines, often amid rounds flying around their heads.

After Iwo Jima, Anderson served in the occupation of Japan at Sasebo.

Sadly, Corporal Anderson received no recognition after World War II and had difficulty finding work. Eventually, he went to work in his brother’s junkyard. Ultimately, he worked as a truck mechanic, retiring from Ryder in 1986.

Fortunately, in recent years our country has begun to recognize and express its deep gratitude and respect for the service and sacrifice of Corporal Anderson and his colleagues as the Montford Point Marines were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal.

Anderson has six children, including four with his second wife, Betty, who he was with for 47 years until her passing in 2004.

