



## Nolan's Story

Nolan has always had great respect and love for the American Flag, it all began on July 24, 2015 when his uncle Justin Foley took Nolan to see the homecoming of Sgt Thomas Sullivan. Sgt Sullivan was killed in a terrorist attack in Chattanooga, TN. This tragedy received national media coverage.

When Sullivan was transported from Bradley International Airport back to Western Massachusetts thousands lined the streets to show their respect and gratitude. When Nolan was standing along Sumner Ave a Military Officer came up and handed both Nolan and his uncle an American Flag. At that time Nolan and his uncle were told to "hold this flag with honor, because when Sgt. Sullivan comes by he should receive the respect due him for devoting his life to our great nation he was a true hero".

Right after that a Newscaster from Boston Ch 5 interviewed Nolan, at that time Nolan was the happiest he has ever been. About a year later Police Officer Ashley Guindon was killed in the line of duty in Virginia. Guindon had ties in West Springfield MA and was laid to rest in a cemetery located there, Nolan asked his grandmother to grab the flag that he used for the home coming of Sgt Sullivan so that he could go and honor another fallen Hero and give her the homecoming she deserves.

Later that year there was a thunderstorm approaching Nolan's home with high wind and heavy rain. The family has always flown an American Flag in the front of their house. Once the thunderstorm started the family moved into the house to stay safe and dry. Nolan was upset that the American Flag was not retrieved, he asked his grandmother to please get the flag. She replied, "no let's wait until the wind and rain dies down a little". Nolan would not take no for an answer, he ran out the front door and retrieved the flag from the storm. Nolan then ran back into the house and said, "okay Gramma now the flag is safe".

Nolan's Grandfather is a retired firefighter for the West Springfield Fire Dept. and when given the chance to participate in a parade and ride in the fire truck he would bring Nolan with him. Nolan would be there with his American Flag sticking out of the window of the fire truck, so everyone could see it. "His

love for his country is like no other love I have ever seen” his uncle stated. “If he could collect every torn flag and bring it to an American Legion for retirement he would”.

On Saturday March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 Nolan was recognized by the American Legion at the Massachusetts District 3 Combined Banquet. It was held at American Legion Post 275 in Chicopee Mass. His story was relayed to the group, and he was then presented an American Flag that was flown over the United States Capitol Building in Washington DC. He was also presented a new membership for the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 185 in Agawam, MA where his uncle is Squadron Commander. He was presented his membership card by the Massachusetts Detachment Commander Ernie Laberge. Nolan was so happy that he was given the flag and membership card that he cried on his ride home that evening.

Ernie Laberge

Member

National Americanism Commission 2017-2018

Commander

The Detachment of Massachusetts

Sons of The American Legion

*“FOLLOWING THEIR FOOTSTEPS..... MAKING HISTORY”*

2017-18 National Commander, Danny Smith

