

## Altmire Presents WWII Hero with Purple Heart and Bronze Star

(Brighton Township, PA) - U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-4) today awarded Private First Class William P. Evans, age 92, with a Purple Heart and Bronze Star at a ceremony at Beaver Meadows Assisted Living Facility in Brighton Township. PFC Evans earned the Purple Heart in December 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge. The Bronze Star was awarded for heroic or meritorious achievement or service in connection with operations against the enemy. Both of these awards are the second PFC Evans has earned of each.

"I am proud to be here today on behalf of a grateful community and nation to salute PFC Evans for his distinguished service to our country," said Congressman Altmire. "Because of the chaotic conditions of World War II, it was not uncommon for paperwork related to awards to be lost or left incomplete. It has been an honor and a privilege to assist PFC Evans in securing the awards he earned so long ago as the result of his extraordinary bravery and commitment to our nation."

In September, PFC Evans contacted Congressman Altmire for assistance in receiving the Purple Heart he had earned nearly 63 years ago. After a request by Congressman Altmire for a review of PFC Evans's military service record, the Department of the Army discovered that PFC Evans was entitled to receive a second Purple Heart, as well as a second Bronze Star, the Army of Occupation Medal, and the French Croix de Guerre. PFC Evans was presented with each of these medals today.

PFC Evans entered military service on January 27, 1942 in the Army of the United States. He served with Company G, 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division and parachuted into Normandy in June 1944 as part of the D-Day Invasion. He soon after fought at the Battle for Carentan where he received his first Purple Heart. In September 1944, his unit parachuted into Holland during the Rhineland Campaign, where near the town of Best, Holland, PFC Evans's heroism earned him the Distinguished Service Cross, the second highest military award in the nation. According to a War Department document, PFC Evans received the award:

"For extraordinary heroism in action on 19 September 1944 near Best, Holland. During an attack that reached within thirty feet of his platoon, Private First Class Evans killed three Germans, wounded one and fired on many others. Then, in an attempt to reach an enemy-held house, he charged and crawled across an open field under heavy fire and through icy water with a fixed bayonet. Nearing his objective, he observed enemy soldiers, leaving the building and others firing on a comrade, Private First Class Evans opened fire, later bayoneted a German who rushed him, and forced the surrender of many. In the course of the action, he and a comrade captured ninety-three and wounded approximately thirty of the

enemy."

"I believe PFC Evans's actions on September 19, 1944 go above and beyond the call of duty and rise to the greatest levels of bravery and courage," said Congressman Altmire. "PFC Evans is an American hero of the highest caliber, and I plan to recommend him for the Medal of Honor, our nation's top military award."

The Medal of Honor is awarded by the President of the United States in the name of Congress to a person who, while a member of the Armed Services, "distinguishes himself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life"

while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States. Since its establishment in 1862, fewer than 400 Medals of Honor have been awarded to Pennsylvanians.

PFC Evans also served in the Central European Campaign and during the Occupation of Germany until September 1945. He received an honorable discharge on September 22, 1945. A complete list of PFC Evans' military honors include:

Distinguished Service Cross

2 Bronze Star Medals

2 Purple Heart Medals

Good Conduct Medal

2 Presidential Unit Citations

2 Distinguished Unit Badges

American Theater Service Medal

European African Middle Eastern Service Medal with 4 Bronze Stars and 1 Bronze Arrowhead

Army of Occupation Medal with Germany clasp

Combat Infantryman Badge

Parachutist Badge with 2 Bronze Service Stars

French Croix de Guerre

Belgian Fourragere

Netherlands Orange Lanyard