



Senator presents family of fallen Jackson Police Officer James Bonneau with Badge of Bravery

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In the 21 months since **Jackson Police Officer James Bonneau** died, Chief Matthew Heins said he has asked himself, "Why?"

"I've come up with various answers that never really eased my mind," he said.

His focus now is on the hero Bonneau is, Heins told a crowd gathered to honor Bonneau today at Jackson City Hall.

For the 26-year-old's "exceptional acts of bravery and presence of mind while in the line of duty," **U.S. Sen. Debbie**

Stabenow presented Bonneau's parents, Marc and Amy Bonneau, with the **Law Enforcement Congressional Badge of Bravery**.

"We are so grateful he seemed to have a positive influence on the citizens of Jackson," Marc Bonneau said, standing at the podium.

He and his wife called the badge a nice recognition worthy of a place of honor.

Only 20 of the awards have been given around the country since an act created the accolade in 2008, Stabenow said.

"On that fateful night March 9, (2010), he answered a call for help and it cost him his life," Stabenow said, facing a group of police officers, city employees, politicians and journalists. Sitting around her at the room's front were **U.S. Rep. Tim Walberg**, Mayor Martin Griffin and Heins.



Katie Rausch | Jackson Citizen Patriot

Amy Bonneau, center, and her husband Marc, center, speak with U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow, left, and U.S. Rep. Tim Walberg, right, after receiving the Law Enforcement Congressional Badge of Bravery for their son, Jackson Police Officer James Bonneau.



JAMES BONNEAU

She called Bonneau's the "ultimate sacrifice for the safety of his fellow officers and community," and quoted Albert Einstein. "Only a life lived for others is worth living."

Elvin Potts, 63, of Jackson shot Bonneau in the chest as Bonneau assisted **Blackman-Leoni Township Public Safety Officer Darin McIntosh**. McIntosh had gone to Potts' house to follow-up on a complaint Potts was making threats at the Blackman Township apartment of his estranged wife.



Katie Rausch | Jackson Citizen Patriot

The Law Enforcement Congressional Badge of Bravery was awarded to Jackson Police Officer James Bonneau.

"Though mortally wounded, Bonneau showed bravery and determination while he relayed critical information to central dispatch regarding the incident. His actions ensured that the responding officers knew what to expect upon entering the home," according to a statement from Stabenow's office. She read part of it today and presented a formal declaration to Marc and Amy Bonneau.

McIntosh, shot in the leg, fired at and killed Potts.

He has since returned to work and was at the ceremony. As people were filing out of

the City Council chambers, Heins introduced him to the senator and McIntosh greeted and hugged Bonneau's parents.

"No one is more worthy of the award than him," McIntosh said.

He says Bonneau saved his life.

Without him, McIntosh said he would have been alone in the house. "Had he not acted the way he did, who knows how many lives would be lost," he said.

He had a strong moral code, his mother said.

Heins called him a polite and professional officer with a bright smile.

Sometimes in such circumstances, people embellish the truth of a person, said Jackson police Sgt. Kevin Hiller, who attended to show support. "Not in this case."

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