



# CITY OF MUSCATINE PRESS RELEASE

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## **CITY OF MUSCATINE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **MUSCATINE 7-YEAR-OLD PRESENTED MERITORIOUS AWARD**

*Lessons learned results in grandson saving grandmother from house fire*

**MUSCATINE, Iowa** – A seven-year-old Muscatine youth was credited with saving his grandmother’s life during a 2017 house fire and the Muscatine Fire Department honored the young man Thursday (May 17) by presenting him the Meritorious Civilian Award.

“This is only the second time we have presented this award and this young man truly deserves this recognition,” Fire Chief Jerry Ewers said during the presentation at the Muscatine Fire Station No. 1.

Kaiden Herlein had asked his grandfather if he could stay at his great-grandmother’s (Oma Hoppe) house following a family Thanksgiving meal on November 23, 2017, while his grandfather attended to some errands. Little did anyone know at the time but just staying behind for a short period of time saved his grandmother’s life.



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The Muscatine Fire Department responded to a structure fire at 1116 East 4th Street at around 7:30 p.m. Thanksgiving night in 2017. As crews attacked the fire, they found Kaiden and his legally blind grandmother standing off to the side, safe and sound.

“Kaiden saw the smoke and fire coming from one of the light fixtures,” one of his uncles proudly stated. “He took his grandmother’s hand and told her they had to get out because of the fire. He grabbed the phone, led her outside, and called 911.”

Ewers said that after the fire was extinguished, family members were interviewed and it was determined that Kaiden was the one who observed the fire dripping from the ceiling light fixture at about the same time a smoke detector was activated. The youth assisted his grandmother outside and instructed her not to re-enter the house.

Ewers noted that Kaiden learned these critical fire safety skills during a fire department public education training program at Colorado School.

“Also, the working smoke detector was installed by the fire department just a few months ago,” Ewers said, “which was part of our department’s smoke detector program.”

The Meritorious Civilian Award is presented for actions termed “Outstanding Performance” in the course of action where a civilian demonstrates remarkable performance relating to the protection of life and/or property.



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“On behalf of the City of Muscatine and the Muscatine Fire Department we would like to recognize Kaiden Herlein with the Muscatine Fire Department “Meritorious Civilian Award,” Ewers said during the presentation ceremony on the apparatus floor.

Herlein received a wooden plaque and a letter describing the incident that ensured the safety of himself and his grandmother.