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**Veterans Unite!! Hero to Hero at
St. Johnland Nursing Center**

Marine Veteran, age 24, unites with WW2 Army Veteran age 98; to share stories of honor and pride in serving our great country on the battlefield.

Kings Park, New York – February 9, 2023- At St. Johnland Nursing Center, they are very proud of residents who are veterans; and they love to hear them share stories of their valor and bravery. They also invite students from colleges and universities to intern in fields such as Social Work.

This year St. Johnland Nursing Center is honored to have a new intern in the Social Work Department who has an amazing story to tell. Maria Daume, USMC, a Trailblazing Marine Veteran, was born in a Siberian prison and later adopted by a Long Island couple. Maria became the first female infantry

marine after graduating at the top of the pack from Infantry school. Maria served as a Mortar Marine and was deployed to combat as a leader who received two deployment medals and a star as well as other achievement medals. Maria is even featured in a monument at the United States Marine Corps Museum for her groundbreaking achievements and efforts.

Resident Eugene Castelli, is a World War II Army Veteran who served on the Italian Front. Mr. Castelli joined the ARMY in 1943 and was assigned to the 3rd infantry division after landing in Italy. Mr. Castelli's unit met resistance, but was able to push up from Salerno to Naples. While gathering intelligence before crossing the Volturmo River, Mr. Castelli's unit came under fire and Mr. Castelli was wounded and had to be sent back to the United States where he finished his Military career. Mr. Castelli received a Bronze Star and Purple Heart, as well as Combat Infantry Badge and New York's highest military award The Conspicuous Service Cross for his bravery.

St. Johnland has recognized the great sacrifices these service members have made for our country. When Maria arrived to start her internship, she was quickly introduced to Mr. Castelli so that they were able to share in their experience and be inspirational; not only to each other but to all staff and residents!!

Maria Daume and Eugene Castelli were very happy to meet with one another and look forward to a great working relationship as Maria learns to be a Social Worker and Mr. Castelli proudly shares his stories.

About St. Johnland

St. Johnland, is a community-based, not-for-profit organization serving the elderly, those with traumatic brain injuries, and individuals with medical and rehabilitation needs. Their mission is to create a caring and supportive environment committed to the highest standards of quality health care. It seeks to uphold the principles of human dignity and worth and affirms the right of every individual to maintain the optimum quality of life.

Founded in 1866, St. Johnland has been providing care and services for the less fortunate in the community. Since the 1970s, it has provided the highest quality nursing care with specialties in Alzheimer's/dementia care, Head Injury Rehabilitation, Subacute Care for Short-Term Rehabilitation and Adult Day Health Care.

The newly-opened Medicaid-funded Assisted Living facility provides a home where Medicaid-eligible individuals can receive the care they need while maintaining their optimal level of function and freedom. It will be serviced by St. Johnland's new Licensed Home Care Service Agency.

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