



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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***“MODELLO” STATUE DEPICTING VIETNAM WAR HERO  
PRESENTED TO SEA ISLE CITY***

**SEA ISLE CITY, NJ** – During Sea Isle City’s August 23 City Council meeting, Veteran Bill Crean entered Council Chambers carrying a 40-pound replica of a statue depicting U.S. Army Corporal Michael Crescenz, a former summer resident of Sea Isle City, who was the only Philadelphian to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War. Sadly, Corporal Crescenz received that honor posthumously.

Just prior to his death in 1968, Corporal Crescenz’s unit was pinned-down by enemy machine gun fire in the Hiep Duc Valley region of the Republic of Vietnam. During the fierce battle that ensued, the Cardinal Dougherty High School graduate charged 100-meters uphill toward the enemy stronghold that had his brothers-in-arms scrambling for cover, and he effectively silenced several enemy bunkers before being fatally wounded, falling 5-meters away from the machine gun that took his life. Corporal Crescenz’s heroic actions saved many American soldiers that day, and his bravery allowed his unit to maneuver freely and complete their mission.

In 2015, Bill Crean, Treasurer of the Michael Crescenz Medal of Honor Statue Committee, came to Sea Isle City with the goal of raising money for a 1900-pound, larger-than-life statue of Corporal Crescenz, which he and his fellow committee members planned to erect at The Philadelphia Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Penn’s Landing. Fifteen months later, they had collected over \$100,000, which covered the cost of commissioning the bronze statue, purchasing the statue’s granite base, and paying for other expenses related to a monument of this scale.

According to Mr. Crean, his committee is very grateful for the many donations from Sea Isle’s residents and visitors.

“I can’t say enough about the support we received from Sea Isle City and how the town has treated Michael’s story – and all veterans,” said the Air Force Veteran, who served in Vietnam in 1968-69. “We placed donation jugs in local businesses throughout town and we received other donations as well. Everyone was very supportive, including Mayor Desiderio, City Council, the Chamber of Commerce and local business owners.”

To show their gratitude, the Michael Crescenz Medal of Honor Statue Committee is presenting supporters with miniature “modellos” of the completed statue. The first modello was recently given to the Crescenz family and the second went to Cardinal Dougherty High School. Sea Isle City received the third of seventeen modellos ear-marked for distribution.

“It was an honor to be part of this fund raising committee – it was a very good mission and a fine team effort,” added Mr. Crean, who is also a Cardinal Dougherty graduate. “During the dedication of the statue in Penn’s Landing, we had the pleasure of speaking with some of the men who Michael saved in Vietnam. Many of them told us that without Michael, they would not be alive today. For a 19-year-old kid to stand up and do what Michael did was phenomenal.”

“Our committee asks everyone to visit [www.michaelcrescenzmoh.org](http://www.michaelcrescenzmoh.org) to read the citation attached to Michael’s Medal of Honor and better understand what he did – and what other veterans have done.”

### **PHOTOS & CAPTIONS:**

Treasurer Bill Crean, of the Michael Crescenz Medal of Honor Statue Committee (front, center) presented a miniature version of the Corporal Crescenz statue to the City of Sea Isle City during the August 23 City Council meeting. He is shown with (back, from left) Council members Mary Tighe, Bill Kehner, John Divney and Jack Gibson, and Mayor Leonard Desiderio. Also shown are local veterans (front, from left) Joe Griffies, Allen Fisher, John Szramiak and Ron Delorefice.

