



*L-R NCOA President Vincent Patton, TSgt Levi Owen, Giada Stival (Owen), CCMSgt Juliet C. Gudel, and NCOA Chairman of the Board Terry Haines.*

The NCOA Air Force Vanguard Award is presented in honor and recognition of Medal of Honor recipient Sergeant John L. Levitow. The recipient of the 2019 NCOA Air Force Vanguard Award, sponsored Southern New Hampshire University, is Technical Sergeant Levi T. Owen.

On Christmas Eve 2018, while delivering holiday gifts in his village of Schallodenbach, Germany, Technical Sergeant Owen noticed his neighbor, a local German national, had collapsed. It appeared his neighbor was suffering from cardiac arrest.

Without hesitation, Sergeant Owen took control of the situation. He eliminated safety hazards and removed panicked family members from the area.

Sergeant Owen, a trained professional, evaluated vital signs and determined CPR was needed. He started chest compressions and rescue breathing actions. Smart under pressure, he identified and ordered another person to call an ambulance immediately. Sergeant Owen cleared the victim's airway of his own vomit and continued CPR and rescue breathing procedures non-stop for 22 minutes before a solo paramedic arrived. The two heroically alternated life-sustaining CPR efforts for an additional 10 minutes while awaiting an automated external defibrillator and the ambulance.

Once the ambulance arrived, though exhausted, Sergeant Owen continued to assist by setting up oxygen and the automated external defibrillator. The medical team administered shock and after several more minutes restored the victim's breathing and vital signs.

Once the victim was stabilized, the responding medical team recognized and lauded Staff Sergeant Owen's 40-minute life-saving effort and claimed the "victim would have died" without his help. A true international hero!

Technical Sergeant Owen's unwavering hesitation and total commitment saved his neighbor's life and reflected credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.