

A Day of Excellence

Hometown Heroes Honored

By Troy Sellers
Sun-Gazette Staff

With the one-year anniversary of Sept. 11 just weeks away, the Hall of Excellence Enshrinement took on added meaning Saturday at the Little League Baseball World Series.

Former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and Michael Cammarata, a firefighter who died after responding to the Twin Towers destruction, were honored.

Giuliani was unable to attend, while Cammarata's parents, older brother and younger sister accepted on his behalf. The family drew the longest and loudest ovations of the day.

"It's a great honor that Little League Baseball did this for my family, my brother," said Joe Cammarata Jr., who also is a New York City firefighter.

"It makes me feel very proud," Linda Cammarata added. "They're really making his spirit live on."

In a letter found after Cammarata's death, he asked his family not to mourn him ("This is the career I chose," he wrote.) and he asked them to make his spirit live on.

Little League President and CEO Stephen D. Keener called Cammarata the inspiration for Little League's "Honoring Our Hometown Heroes" initiative.

Members of Cammarata's Ladder Co. 11 unveiled a "Hometown Heroes" sign on the right field fence.

Cammarata played right field on the Lamade Stadium turf when his team reached the Little League World Series in 1991.

Officials learned Friday that Giuliani would not be able to attend. In a letter to Little League, Giuliani stated, in part, "To be recognized along with a great athlete and a great hero like New York City Firefighter Michael Cammarata, who lost his life saving others on September 11, makes this honor doubly meaningful."

Giuliani, while still mayor at the time, attended last year's U.S. Championship game, which

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Heroes' Recalled



MARK NANCE/Sun-Gazette

LINDA CAMMARATA, WITH HER HUSBAND JOSEPH CAMMARATA SR. LOOKING ON . . . displays the Little League Hall of Excellence Award presented posthumously to their son

Air Force Brigadier Gen. Pays Tribute To Those in Uniform Defending Freedom

By Troy Sellers
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As part of a patriotic day at the Little League World Series Saturday, Air Force Brigadier Gen. Edward A. Rice Jr. threw out the ceremonial first pitch prior to the U.S. Championship game.

While he was introduced as a

so much as the men and women in blue he serves with.

"I don't consider myself a hero, but we have a lot of heroes in our Air Force who are, as we speak, around the world today defending our nation," he said.

A Little Leaguer in Ohio, Rice said this was his first trip to the World Series.

said. "These young men are very, very talented.

"It's quite an event," he added. "It looks like pitching will probably dominate the game."

Rice is a former B-1B and B-52 pilot, but is now stationed at the Randolph Air Force Base in Texas, where he is head of Air Force recruiting.