

Our Fallen Hero



SPC. Deon Taylor Portland

Deon L. Taylor, of New York City, went to Maine as an 8-year-old participant in the Fresh Air Fund program, which brings city youths to rural towns.

"I could see things differently through his eyes. He had never seen stars like ours, never wild animals. He wanted to know who let them out of the zoo. I always missed him when he left and was glad to see him when he came back," said Rose Church, whose family hosted Taylor.

Taylor, 30, of New York City, died Oct. 22 in Bela Beluk, Afghanistan, of wounds from a roadside explosion.

He was on his second deployment to Afghanistan and was assigned to Syracuse, N.Y. He graduated from Old Westbury College in Long Island with a degree in sociology and criminology. He joined the NYPD in 2005 as a transit cop and then was promoted to the narcotics division in Brooklyn.

He is survived by his 8-year-old son, DaRue, and fiancée, Caitlin Casey.

He was a huge fan of the Yankees, the Knicks and the Giants.

"Deon was the apple of my eye," said his grandmother, Shirley Taylor. "I'm going to miss that big smile and that big bear hug he used to give me. But no more, no more."