Huntington, NY— On Monday, Rep. Steve Israel (D – Huntington) and Huntington Town Supervisor Frank Petrone presented Huntington Resident Mary Occhiogrosso with her overdue WWII medals honoring her service as an Army Corps Nurse. Mary served at Iwo Jima where she helped open a hospital.

“During WWII, Mary went above and beyond the call of duty. She was one of ten nurses who helped open a hospital at Iwo Jima and she sang in a band when the USO wasn’t able to provide entertainment. Mary has waited 67 years too long to be honored for her service. I’m humbled to be able to present her with her service medals today,” said Rep. Israel.

“Looking back, it is clear that Mary’s efforts during World War II established the framework for a distinguished, lifelong career helping others.” Supervisor Petrone said. “I am thrilled that my office and Congressman Israel were able to unite Mary with the medals she earned so many years ago and which she so richly deserves."

Congressman Israel’s office worked with the National Personnel Records Center to verify Mary’s service so that the Department of the Army could issue her medals. She will receive the following medals: Meritorious Unit Commendation, American Campaign Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with one Bronze Service Star, World War II Victory Medal, and the Honorable Service Lapel Button.

Mary graduated from nursing school in 1943 and joined the U.S. Army Nurse Corps.  Mary

completed basic training in Hawaii and then was shipped off to Cypan. Due to her outstanding work as a nurse Mary was chosen to be one of the ten nurses who would be sent off to Iwo Jima to open a hospital on the base there.

After the war was over Mary was discharged at the age of 24 years old. From there she took a job with the Red Cross as a Disaster Nurse, later worked at Bellevue in the operating room, then went to the French Poly Clinic as an Operating Room Supervisor, and she spent 10 years at Huntington Hospital as the Supervisor for Orthopedics. She later went back to work at Birchwood Nursing Home and worked there for another 10 years.