



Orange County Government  
Office of the County Executive Steven M. Neuhaus  
**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Orange County 911 Dispatcher meets family of 3-month-old boy that she helped save**

*Courtney Starace instructed Samantha Burke how to perform CPR on her baby, who wasn't breathing*

Goshen, N.Y. – Orange County 911 dispatcher Courtney Starace met the parents of the 3-month-old boy whose life she helped save during a call last month before County Executive Steve Neuhaus' State of the County Address.

Starace, a New Windsor resident, spent about 20 minutes privately with Jordan and Samantha Burke at the County's Emergency Services Center on Thursday night. In a touching scene, the parents each embraced Starace, tearfully thanking her for her heroics on March 10. During the five-minute 911 call, Starace instructed Samantha Burke on how to perform CPR on her baby, Andrew, who wasn't breathing. Starace also met Andrew on Thursday and had the opportunity to hold him.

“After meeting Courtney, I can tell you that she is a special and caring young woman,” said Samantha Burke, who resides in Warwick with her family. “Anyone who meets her will fall in love with her. Orange County is lucky to have her on its team and we can't thank Courtney enough for what she did for us. My family is grateful that we were able to meet her. Courtney is a hero.”

Starace received a frantic call from Samantha Burke at approximately 8:00 a.m. on March 10th. The mom told Starace that her baby wasn't breathing. Starace sent an ambulance to the home right away and kept Burke calm, instructing her how to

administer CPR on the baby. After a few minutes, Andrew began breathing and the Warwick Community Ambulance Service Inc. arrived to the residence.

First responder Frank Cassanite, who also serves as Orange County's Deputy Commissioner of EMS, continued treatment. The baby was transported to St. Anthony Community Hospital in Warwick and later transferred to The Valley Hospital in Ridgewood, N.J. Samantha Burke said that her son was suffering from a respiratory virus and that likely caused him to stop breathing. He spent three days at The Valley Hospital and is now home and healthy.

Along with Starace, Samantha Burke praised Cassanite, EMS first responders, the Warwick Police Department and St. Anthony Community Hospital for their professionalism and help during the incident. Neuhaus acknowledged Starace in front of a capacity crowd during his State of the County address and brought her on stage to introduce her to the audience. She received a standing ovation.

"We are proud of Courtney's heroics and the wonderful work that our 911 dispatchers perform every day," Neuhaus said. "She is a kind and compassionate young woman, and certainly has a bright future ahead of her. As a father, I was touched to be a part of Courtney's meeting with Andrew's parents. It was a truly a special moment and we are all ecstatic that Andrew is healthy."

Starace, 27, started her career as a 911 dispatcher with Orange County last August. She was previously an EMT for nine years.

"It was very special for me to be able to meet the Burke family and hold the baby," Starace said. "It was a very heartwarming moment that I will never forget. I'm happy I could help. I did what I had to do during the 911 call with Mrs. Burke, but she also did a great job. She deserves a lot of credit, too."

For more information, contact Justin Rodriguez, Assistant to the County Executive for Communications and Media Relations at 845.291.3255 or [jrodriguez@orangecountygov.com](mailto:jrodriguez@orangecountygov.com).

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*Orange County 911 Dispatcher Courtney Starace holds Andrew Burke on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017*



*Starace with Jordan and Stephanie Burke*



*(From left to right) Orange County Executive Steven M. Neuhaus with Stephanie Burke, Courtney Starace, Orange County Deputy Commissioner of Emergency Communications Allen Wierzbicki and Jordan Burke.*