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News Release

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CARNEGIE MEDALS AWARDED TO 23 FOR EXTRAORDINARY HEROISM IN U.S., CANADA

PITTSBURGH, PA, OCTOBER 3, 2002—In its fourth award announcement of 2002, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission today named 23 individuals from throughout the United States and Canada as recipients of the CARNEGIE MEDAL. The bronze medal is given to persons who risk their lives to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others. Five of the awardees died in the performance of their heroic acts.

The heroes announced today bring to 86 the number of persons who have been recognized in 2002 to date, and to 8,644 the total number honored by the Commission since the Pittsburgh-based Fund's inception in 1904. Commission President Mark Laskow stated that each of the awardees or their survivors will receive also a grant of \$3,500. Throughout the 98 years since the Fund was established by industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, \$26 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance. The awardees are:

Hipolito Hernandez	Union City, N.J.
Ezra Kidder	Otis, Maine
Cheryl-Ann Moriarity	Hudson, N.H.
Steven Crosby	Sherwood Park, Alta.
Dab Umey	Palm Coast, Fla.
Christopher S. Leonard, deceased	Bayou Vista, La.
Theodore Sheets	Winamac, Ind.
Robert E. Evans	Macon, Ga.
Randall K. Burris, deceased	Athens, Ga.
Shane Michael Garneau	Dracut, Mass.
Brian Michael Carter	Dracut, Mass.
Paul A. Landry	Iqaluit, Nun.
Peter J. Gladden	Hudson, Ohio
Derek Robert Vitale	Chester, N.H.
Eugene Brown	Manahawkin, N.J.
Kenneth W. Marrero	Hershey, Pa.
James Martin Fletcher	Ellensburg, Wash.
Edward S. Sandstrom	Elma, Wash.
Garabed M. Torosian	Spokane, Wash.
Lawrence Griffin III, deceased	Lafayette, La.
Robert E. Staff, deceased	Avalon, Calif.
Robert John Feczko	Redmond, Wash.
Carlos Weber, deceased	Jeromesville, Ohio

Resumes of the acts follow. To nominate someone for the CARNEGIE MEDAL, write the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, 425 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1640, Pittsburgh, PA 15219, or call 1-800-447-8900 (toll free).

HIPOLITO HERNANDEZ
Union City, New Jersey

Hipolito Hernandez saved Roberto Juban from burning, Union City, New Jersey, May 5, 2001. Juban, 87, collapsed in the smoke-filled hall outside his apartment, in the basement of a four-story building, after fire erupted in an adjoining unit. He called for help. The building's superintendent, Hernandez, 51, construction contractor, heard Juban from the first floor. He descended the open stairway, in which smoke rendered visibility nil, and made his way through the basement hall toward the sound of Juban's cries. He found Juban, picked him up, and dragged him to the stairway, then up the stairs to the first floor. He continued to drag Juban, toward the front door, en route receiving aid from a firefighter in taking Juban outside. Juban required hospital treatment for smoke inhalation, and he recovered. The occupant of the burning apartment died in the fire. 75405-8622

EZRA KIDDER
Otis, Maine

Ezra Kidder saved Dakota L. Alley from burning, Otis, Maine, July 13, 2001. Dakota, 5 months old, was in a crib in a bedroom of his family's mobile home after fire broke out in the kitchen and filled the structure with smoke. In the opposite end of the mobile home, Dakota's mother discovered the fire and fled through a nearby door with two other children. Unable to reach Dakota through the dense smoke, she alerted a neighbor, Kidder, 25, tile installer. Barefoot, Kidder immediately responded to the burning mobile home and entered it through the same door, but he was quickly repulsed by the smoke and retreated to the outside. He entered again and, proceeding through a hall toward the fire, followed the sound of Dakota's crying to get to his bedroom. In the increasing heat and smoke that severely restricted visibility, Kidder found Dakota's crib. He grasped Dakota, held him low, then ran back through the hall to the door and exited the mobile home to safety. He handed Dakota to a neighbor, then fell to the ground to catch his breath, but he injured his knee in doing so. Dakota was examined by paramedics but was not injured. The trailer was destroyed by the fire. 75494-8623

CHERYL-ANN MORIARTY
Hudson, New Hampshire

Cheryl-Ann Moriarty helped to rescue Rebecca Q. McKenzie from assault, Nashua, New Hampshire, March 24, 2002. During an argument with a man in her second-floor apartment, Ms. McKenzie, 26, called a friend, Ms. Moriarty, 28, machine operator, and asked her to come to the apartment to pick her up. While Ms. Moriarty drove to the scene, the man began to stab Ms. McKenzie with a large kitchen knife. Upon her arrival, Ms. Moriarty broke through two doors to gain access to the apartment, where she found Ms. McKenzie on the living room floor, the assailant leaning over her. Ms. Moriarty grasped the assailant by the shoulder, and, while she was pulling him away, he turned and stabbed her in the left arm. Ms. Moriarty fled to the kitchen, the assailant following, threatening to kill her. During a struggle, the assailant stabbed Ms. Moriarty twice more in the arm and once in the back before she was able to throw the knife aside. Ms. Moriarty then fled the apartment and notified police. Responding officers apprehended the assailant inside the apartment after a brief struggle. Ms. McKenzie and Ms. Moriarty were taken to the hospital for treatment of their wounds, Ms. McKenzie requiring a two-week stay. Ms. Moriarty was detained overnight for treatment of her four stab wounds and other cuts, all of which required suturing. 75973-8642

STEVEN CROSBY
Sherwood Park, Alberta

Steven Crosby saved Gizelle M. L. Kennedy from burning, Sherwood Park, Alberta, June 23, 2001. Ms. Kennedy, 38, was unconscious in her car after an accident in which the car left the highway, came to rest overturned onto its roof, and caught fire in its engine compartment. Crosby, 41, off-duty police officer, approached the scene in his vehicle and saw the burning car, then saw Ms. Kennedy inside. After flagging down another motorist who then called for help, Crosby went to the burning car and partially entered it through the window of the driver's door. He released Ms. Kennedy's safety belt, then exited the car, pulling her. Finding that Ms. Kennedy's leg was caught in the steering wheel, Crosby re-entered the car and freed it. He then pulled her from the car and dragged her across the highway to safety. The car was shortly engulfed by flames. Ms. Kennedy required hospital treatment for injuries sustained in the accident, but she was not burned. Crosby strained his right shoulder, and he recovered.

75436-8625

DAB UMEH
Palm Coast, Florida

Dab Umeh helped to save Sallie Orman from burning, Daytona Beach, Florida, July 20, 2001. Ms. Orman, 48, was inside her room in an assisted living facility after fire erupted in a closet of that room. Visiting there, Umeh, 21, college student, helped to evacuate residents then learned that Ms. Orman was unaccounted for. After he and others attempted to reach her room but were repulsed by smoke, Umeh went to a window outside the room and broke the glass. Twice he entered the room partially through the window, calling to Ms. Orman. On a third entry, he crawled across a bed below the window, then stood. Dense black smoke prohibited him from seeing Ms. Orman, who lay on the floor, but he brushed against her. He then pulled her to her feet and pushed her across the bed to the window. As he maneuvered her through the window, a police officer who had responded pulled her from the building. Ms. Orman was hospitalized for treatment of smoke inhalation, and she recovered. Umeh also required hospital treatment, for smoke inhalation and cuts. He recovered.

75473-8626

CHRISTOPHER S. LEONARD, deceased
Bayou Vista, Louisiana

Christopher S. Leonard saved Christopher J. and died attempting to save Justin L., Jarred M., and Casey L. Chaisson from burning, Montegut, Louisiana, September 30, 2001. Brothers Christopher, 18; Justin, 10; Jarred, 11, and Casey, 13, were in separate bedrooms of their family's one-story house after fire broke out in the living room late at night. A visiting family friend, Leonard, 26, pipe fitter, was spending the night in Casey's room, as was another of the brothers. Leonard awoke to the fire, then alerted the other brother and ran to the front door with him, that brother exiting to safety. Forbidding the brother to re-enter the house, Leonard turned and ran through the burning living room to Christopher's bedroom. He awakened Christopher, alerting him to the fire, then went to Justin's room, Christopher following. Leonard was last seen taking Justin into Jarred's room, which, across the hall, adjoined Casey's room and opened to it. His course blocked by falling debris, Christopher returned to his room and fled the house through a window. Leonard, Justin, Jarred, and Casey all died of effects of the fire; they were found close together in the adjoining bedrooms. Christopher was hospitalized four days for treatment of smoke inhalation, and he sustained minor burns to a leg. He fully recovered.

75674-8627

THEODORE SHEETS
Winamac, Indiana

Theodore Sheets rescued Brent D. Reutebuch from burning, Winamac, Indiana, September 8, 2001. Badly injured, Reutebuch, 30, remained in his sport utility vehicle after a highway accident at night in which the vehicle overturned onto its passenger side and caught fire. From his nearby residence, Sheets, 49, carpenter and factory worker, heard the accident and responded to the scene with a fire extinguisher. He used the extinguisher against flames at the front of the vehicle, but it had little effect. Sheets then climbed atop the driver's side of the vehicle and through a broken-out window saw Reutebuch lying on the front passenger door. Flames were inside the vehicle, on the dashboard and steering wheel, and melting material was dripping onto Reutebuch. Sheets entered the vehicle through a side window and grasped Reutebuch underneath the arms. Dragging Reutebuch, he backed out of the vehicle through the broken rear window, then moved Reutebuch a short distance away. An arriving sheriff's deputy assisted in taking Reutebuch farther from the vehicle, which was soon engulfed by flames. Reutebuch required hospitalization for treatment of extensive injuries and burns. Sheets was treated at the hospital for second-degree burns to his hands and right forearm; he recovered. 75636-8628

ROBERT E. EVANS
Macon, Georgia

Robert E. Evans saved Zachary W. and helped to save Caleb W. Griffin from drowning, Jekyll Island, Georgia, July 5, 2001. Zachary, 13, and Caleb, 15, were with their father, another man, and that man's teen-aged son on a sandbar that extended into the Atlantic Ocean when the rising tide stranded them in deep water. Apart from the others, Zachary and his father swam toward the beach but experienced difficulty in the tide, a strong current, and three-foot swells. Tiring, they called out for help. Bicycling near the beach, Evans, 34, caterer, saw the victims in the water and immediately responded. Discarding his shirt and shoes, Evans ran into the water, then swam out to Zachary and his father, who were about 600 feet from the beach. He took hold of Zachary and swam him to shore, Zachary's father following. After obtaining a small flotation device, Evans re-entered the water and swam out to Caleb, reaching him also at a point about 600 feet from shore. Evans gave Caleb the flotation device, then remained with him for several minutes, until they were joined by a man with a small, inflatable raft. That man returned Caleb to shore while Evans remained to search for the other man in the victims' party. Unable to locate him after several minutes, Evans returned to shore, tired. Although his son was rescued from the water, that man drowned; his body was found that night. 75465-8629

RANDALL K. BURRIS, deceased
Athens, Georgia

Randall K. Burris died after attempting to save Nyah A. Carlson from being struck by an automobile, Athens, Georgia, November 25, 2001. Nyah, 2 months old, was in a stroller that was stopped along the side of a road in a residential neighborhood while her mother stood there talking to Burris, 39, contract specialist, who lived at the scene. A car being driven erratically sped toward them. Nyah's mother immediately pushed the stroller onto the adjoining lawn, but it became stuck there. With the car bearing down on them, Burris grasped the stroller and began to run farther into the lawn with it. The car left the roadway, entered the lawn, and struck Burris, throwing him and the stroller to the ground. The car then returned to the road and sped from the scene, but its driver was apprehended later. Burris and Nyah were taken to the hospital, where Nyah was detained a day for observation and treatment of bruises. She recovered. Burris died of his injuries two days after the rescue. 75742-8630

SHANE MICHAEL GARNEAU
BRIAN MICHAEL CARTER
Dracut, Massachusetts

Shane Michael Garneau and Brian Michael Carter saved Jonathan D. Roark from burning, Dracut, Massachusetts, August 12, 2001. Roark, 28, was suspended by his safety belt in the driver's seat of an inverted and burning car after an accident at night. Having witnessed the accident while walking nearby, Garneau, 18, landscaper, ran to a house at the scene and told Carter, 23, college student, who lived there, to call for help. As Carter did so, Garneau responded to the car and attempted to dislodge Roark from the wreckage. He was joined by Carter and, as fire conditions worsened, he and Carter stood at the driver's side of the car and worked to free Roark. Garneau lifted the car's frame, which enabled Carter to pull Roark out. Roark walked away from the wreckage. He was not burned, but he required hospital treatment for injuries sustained in the accident. Garneau sustained minor cuts on his hands, and he recovered.

75563-8631 / 75564-8632

PAUL A. LANDRY
Iqaluit, Nunavut

PETER J. GLADDEN
Hudson, Ohio

Paul A. Landry and Peter J. Gladden saved Michael E. Graves from drowning, Pangnirtung, Nunavut, July 31, 2001. Hiking a trail in a national park reserve above the Arctic Circle, Graves, 54, attempted to wade across a channel of the Turner River, a glacial stream that carried meltwater from Turner Glacier into Glacier Lake. He lost his footing and was swept by the swift, turbulent water into the ice-cold lake. During rescue attempts, three other members of his group also lost their footing in the channel and were carried into the lake. Another hiking group, led by Landry, 45, tour guide, was within sight of the scene and witnessed the accident. Accompanied by Gladden, 44, business manager, and another man from his group, Landry responded to the mouth of the river. Having quickly lost feeling, Graves was farther from shore than the three others but was being kept buoyant somewhat by his backpack. Landry and Gladden aided the three others from the water, then, having removed some attire, they waded and swam to Graves, who was about 75 feet into the lake. Grasping Graves by the straps of his backpack, they swam toward shore, pulling him, as the coldness of the water sapped their strength. Reaching shore, they removed Graves from the water with difficulty, then worked to warm him and themselves. Landry put out a call for help, and within hours Graves and his party were evacuated from the scene by a parks service boat, which took them to a ranger station for treatment. Graves suffered effects of exposure to the cold water, but he fully recovered.

75513-8633 / 75514-8634

DEREK ROBERT VITALE
Chester, New Hampshire

Derek Robert Vitale saved Kendra S. Dumont from burning, Farmington, New Hampshire, August 26, 2001. Kendra, 4 months old, was in her parents' apartment, on the second floor of a three-story house, after fire broke out in that unit's bathroom at night. Vitale, 27, construction worker, and a friend discovered the fire while driving by the house. They stopped at the scene, where Vitale learned that Kendra and her parents were unaccounted for. Vitale entered the house and went upstairs to the second floor. Another man opened the apartment's door, and dense smoke poured through the doorway. Vitale got down on his stomach and crawled inside the apartment. Visibility there was nil. Kendra was lying on the floor, unconscious. Vitale felt her leg, then grasped her, pulled her to him, and returned to the door. He stood and, carrying Kendra, went downstairs and exited the building to safety. Kendra was hospitalized for treatment of smoke inhalation. Her parents died in the fire. Vitale inhaled smoke and was given oxygen at the scene by paramedics. He recovered.

75593-8635

EUGENE BROWN
Manahawkin, New Jersey

Eugene Brown attempted to rescue Jennifer C. Missel from assault, Wall, New Jersey, November 28, 2001. While at work in an office on the second floor of a two-story building, Ms. Missel, 31, was approached by a man who then grasped her and held her at gunpoint. At work on the first floor, Brown, 37, service manager, was alerted to the confrontation. He climbed the stairs to the second floor, then approached the assailant, shouting at him. The assailant turned to Brown and at close range shot him in the shoulder. Brown collapsed to the floor and lay there. The assailant shot Ms. Missel also, and as he reloaded the gun, she fled the building through a second-floor exit and descended an external stairway to the ground. The assailant followed her to the stairway, where he shot and killed himself. Brown returned to the first floor, from where he was taken to the hospital for treatment of his wound. Ms. Missel also required hospital treatment for her wound; she was detained overnight, and she recovered. 75750-8636

KENNETH W. MARRERO
Hershey, Pennsylvania

Kenneth W. Marrero saved Michael F. Tomlin from burning, Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, July 30, 2001. Tomlin, 19, was seated inside a pickup truck parked on the shoulder of a highway when another vehicle left the highway and struck it from behind. The impact forced Tomlin's pickup into a drill rig parked in front of it, and fire broke out at both the front and rear ends of Tomlin's pickup. Tomlin, who struck his head during the impact, remained in the driver's seat, dazed. His coworker, Marrero, 41, senior drill operator, who had been driving the drill rig, went to Tomlin's pickup and looked inside, but because of dense smoke in the cab, he could not see Tomlin. Marrero opened the pickup's passenger door and climbed inside. He grasped Tomlin and pulled him across the seat as he backed out of the truck. Finding that Tomlin was caught in the wreckage, Marrero re-entered the cab and freed him, then pulled him out of the cab. The pickup was engulfed by flame soon afterward. Tomlin was hospitalized for treatment of injuries received during the impact, and he recovered. 75535-8637

JAMES MARTIN FLETCHER
Ellensburg, Washington

EDWARD S. SANDSTROM
Elma, Washington

GARABED M. TOROSIAN
Spokane, Washington

James Martin Fletcher rescued Jay P. McCarthy from burning, and Edward S. Sandstrom and Garabed M. Torosian rescued Anthony J. Wade, Goldendale, Washington, August 15, 2000. Jay and Anthony, both 14, remained in the cab of a pickup truck after it was involved in a violent collision on a two-lane highway with a tractor-trailer. Seriously damaged and aflame, the pickup was thrown to the side of the highway. The driver of the tractor-trailer, Fletcher, 51, stunned but uninjured, responded to the passenger side of the pickup, where he saw Jay in the burning wreckage of the cab. Despite intense heat, he repositioned Jay to free him, then pulled him out of the wreckage and dragged him away. Two other truckers who had been driving on the highway, Sandstrom, 38, and Torosian, 36, witnessed the accident and also responded to the passenger side of the burning pickup. Together they pulled Anthony by his arms out of the wreckage and dragged him away from it. The boys were hospitalized for treatment of extensive and severe injuries, including third-degree burns and broken bones. The driver of the pickup was ejected from the vehicle during the accident and died at the scene.

75588-8638 / 75589-8639 / 75590-8640

LAWRENCE GRIFFIN III, deceased
Lafayette, Louisiana

Lawrence Griffin III died attempting to rescue Johnny George from burning, Lafayette, Louisiana, March 3, 2002. George, 47, was in the master bedroom of a mobile home after fire broke out in the kitchen at night. Lawrence, 16, high school student, who also lived in the mobile home, was alerted to the fire and, with others, fled the structure through its front door. With all but George accounted for, Lawrence re-entered the mobile home through the front door. Firefighters arrived shortly and removed George from the master bedroom, and they located Lawrence in a closet off that room. George was hospitalized for treatment of smoke inhalation and burns but died two days later of his injuries. Lawrence could not be revived. He had died of smoke inhalation. 76013-8641

ROBERT E. STAFF, deceased
Avalon, California

Robert E. Staff died attempting to rescue Virginia M. Staff from burning, Avalon, California, October 21, 2001. Ms. Staff, 78, was spending the night in a first-floor room of her and her husband's two-story house when an electrical fire broke out in a wall of that room. Her husband, 83, retired physician, fled the house from its second floor, as did tenants living on that floor. Outside, Staff realized that his wife had not exited the house, and he immediately re-entered it, through the front door. Firefighters arriving within minutes found the room of origin engulfed by flames. Staff and his wife were removed from that room after the fire was extinguished, but they could not be revived. Both had died of effects of the fire. 75679-8624

ROBERT JOHN FECZKO
Redmond, Washington

Robert John Feczko helped to save Heidi L. Wright from drowning, Ocean Shores, Washington, June 26, 2001. Wading in the Pacific Ocean, Ms. Wright, 18, and her sister and brother attempted to return to shore from about 600 feet out, but a seaward current prevented them. Ms. Wright and her sister yelled for help, attracting the attention of people on shore, including Robert, 15, high school student. Discarding his outer attire, Robert immediately waded and swam to Ms. Wright, who was being supported, with difficulty, by her brother. Robert grasped Ms. Wright and attempted to swim to shore with her, but because of the current, he made little progress. He remained with Ms. Wright, supporting her, until surf rescue team members responded shortly and took her and her siblings to shore by means of personal watercraft. Robert swam and waded back to shore. He and the three victims all required hospital treatment for effects of the ordeal, and they recovered. 75466-8643

CARLOS WEBER, deceased
Jeromesville, Ohio

Carlos Weber died attempting to save Todd E. Young from a cave-in, Medina, Ohio, August 3, 2000. Young, 27, was installing sewer pipe in a 16-foot-deep trench at a construction site when a partial cave-in of the trench occurred and pinned him to his knees in earth. A coworker, Weber, 23, equipment operator, was nearby at ground level and became aware of the situation. He entered the trench and dug out Young's legs, freeing him. Weber and Young then ran toward the exit of the trench, but a second cave-in occurred and buried both men. Other workers at the site responded and dug out Young, then removed him from the trench. He required hospitalization for treatment of injuries to his back, neck, and knees. By the time Weber was reached, he was not responsive. He died of asphyxia. 75862-8644

CARNEGIE MEDAL



ANDREW CARNEGIE

