



NEWS RELEASE

Carnegie Hero Fund COMMISSION

A CENTURY of HEROES 1904-2004

FOR RELEASE:
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CARNEGIE HERO FUND COMMISSION CITES 18 FOR EXTRAORDINARY HEROISM IN U.S., CANADA

PITTSBURGH, PA, DECEMBER 15, 2005—In its fifth and final award announcement of 2005, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission today named 18 individuals as recipients of the CARNEGIE MEDAL. The medal is given throughout the United States and Canada to those who risk their lives to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others.

One of the awardees, Del'Trone D. Gomillia of Wilbur by the Sea, Fla., died in the performance of his heroic act. Gomillia, 21, a new father, was at an Atlantic Ocean beach when he rushed into the surf to help save a man and his son from drowning in September 2004. The victims were recovered by others, as was Gomillia, but he could not be revived.

The heroes announced today bring to 92 the number of persons who have been recognized by the Commission in 2005 and to 8,961 the total number since the Pittsburgh-based Fund's inception in 1904. Commission President Mark Laskow stated that each of the awardees or their survivors will also receive a grant of \$3,500. Throughout the 101 years since the Fund was established by industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, \$28.2 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance. The awardees are:

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|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Eugene Barrett, Jr. | Charlotte, N. C. |
| Robert Lee Hanson | Triadelphia, W. Va. |
| Robert L. Slyder | Wheeling, W. Va. |
| Colin Morgan | Vancouver, B.C. |
| Samuel Justin Johnson | Las Vegas, Nev. |
| Robyn S. Boggs | Fairfax, Va. |
| Jon Kitamura | Woodland, Calif. |
| Andrew A. Kindred, now deceased | Portage, Wis. |
| Elnora Denmark | Dallas, Texas |
| Scot Smithee | Hollister, Calif. |
| Del'Trone D. Gomillia, deceased | Wilbur by the Sea, Fla. |
| Normand Boucher | Manotick, Ont. |
| Dale L. Saylor | Hebron, N.D. |
| Matthew James Wilson | Imperial Beach, Calif. |
| Maria Christine Ericson | Swiftwater, Pa. |
| Earl E. Cummins | Fairhope, Pa. |
| Albert Ybarra | Dublin, Calif. |
| Salvador B. Agustin, Jr. | San Jose, Calif. |

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). Fuller information on the CARNEGIE MEDAL and the history of the CARNEGIE HERO FUND COMMISSION can be found at www.carnegiehero.org

EUGENE BARRETT, JR.
Charlotte, North Carolina

Eugene Barrett, Jr., rescued Amber A. and helped to rescue Mark E. Moose from burning, Charlotte, North Carolina, June 18, 2004. Amber, 3, and her father, Moose, 38, were inside their family's one-story house after fire broke out in a room at one end of the structure before dawn. Barrett, 47, carpenter, who lived nearby, discovered the fire. After reporting it, he ran to the scene, where he kicked in the house's front door, which was near the opposite end of the structure. Dense smoke issued through the doorway, forcing Barrett to his hands and knees. Taking his flashlight, Barrett crawled into the house, finding there to be no visibility in the smoke, which extended almost to the floor. He found Amber, unconscious and not breathing, on the living room floor about six feet from the door. Barrett pulled Amber to himself and backed out of the house with her, then handed her over to another. Barrett re-entered the house and crawled through the living room into an adjoining room. He found Moose there, also unconscious. Barrett grasped Moose and was able to pull him a few feet before he had to leave the house for air. Barrett entered the house a third time and crawled to Moose. An arriving firefighter also entered the house, and Barrett and he removed Moose through the front door to safety. Moose and Amber were hospitalized for treatment of smoke inhalation and minor burns; they recovered. Amber's younger sister was recovered from the house by firefighters, but she could not be revived. 77748-8944

ROBERT LEE HANSON
Triadelphia, West Virginia

ROBERT L. SLYDER
Wheeling, West Virginia

Robert Lee Hanson and Robert L. Snyder saved Mildred M. Thompson, Jamie L. Holeczy, and others from drowning, Wheeling, West Virginia, September 17, 2004. Thompson, 80, and her great-niece, Holeczy, 22, were in Thompson's house, on the bank of Middle Wheeling Creek, after the creek flooded as the result of heavy rain from the remnants of a hurricane. Floodwater overtook the houses along that side of the street, trapping Thompson, Holeczy, and others, and it inundated the street, flowing swiftly there. Hanson, 42, railroad engineer, and Snyder, 42, radio producer, were visiting in the vicinity when they learned of the stranded residents. As they started to wade across the street to Thompson's house, they were swept downstream about 115 feet by the current, or to the point at which each stopped himself by grabbing a tree. Hanson and Snyder resumed wading to Thompson's house, where they forced open the front door. They picked Thompson up and, carrying her, waded through the neighboring properties along the street toward an office building, which, 300 feet away, was not significantly affected by flooding. En route, they set her down to allow Hanson to return to the house for Holeczy. The men then resumed their course through the floodwaters toward the office building with Thompson and Holeczy and once there forced entry for refuge. With other means of rescue not available for the remaining stranded residents, Hanson and Snyder returned to the flooded houses, from which they helped two women to safety in the office building. After Snyder made a third trip to the flooded houses, to aid a man stranded there, the victims were removed from the office building to safety by means of a military truck. Holeczy sustained a cut to her left foot. Hanson suffered bruises to his legs, and Snyder sustained a cut knee, along with bruises and scrapes. They recovered. 78174-8945 / 78175-8946

COLIN MORGAN
Vancouver, British Columbia

Colin Morgan rescued Tex Daw from assault, Vancouver, British Columbia, December 29, 2003. At night, Daw, 46, was inside the video rental shop he operated when a man entered, pushed him against a shelf, and, holding a knife to his throat, demanded money. A friend of Daw's who was in the shop, Morgan, 29, construction supervisor, immediately approached the assailant, pulled him away from Daw, and pushed him to the floor. The two men struggled for control of the knife, which had a six-inch blade, and Morgan succeeded in disarming the assailant. Police arrived shortly and arrested him. Morgan sustained a cut on his right hand, which was sutured at the hospital. He recovered. 78021-8959

SAMUEL JUSTIN JOHNSON
Las Vegas, Nevada

Samuel Justin Johnson saved Jeffrey H. Richards from burning, North Las Vegas, Nevada, September 23, 2003. Richards, 60, was the pilot of a single-engine airplane that was preparing to land on an airport runway. Johnson, 51, retired air traffic controller, was the pilot of another small plane, which was about to take off from an intersecting runway. The planes collided, creating an explosive burst of flame. Richards's plane came to a stop upside down and aflame at its front, one of its wings in contact with a wing of Johnson's plane. Although sustaining significant lacerations, and a burn on one arm, Johnson was able to exit his plane. He started to run from the scene but returned to the wreckage on not seeing anyone else emerge from it. Despite flames and leaking fuel there, Johnson knelt at the left side of Richards's plane. He extended his arms through a window opening and assisted Richards, who was semiconscious, in removing his restraints. Johnson then grasped Richards and pulled him through the window to safety. Airport personnel responded within minutes and extinguished the flames. Both Richards and Johnson were taken to the hospital, where they were treated for injuries, Johnson's including a second-degree burn to his left arm, several lacerations to his face, and permanent damage to an eye. 77232-8947

ROBYN S. BOGGS
Fairfax, Virginia

Robyn S. Boggs saved Sarah J. Planakis from being struck by a motorboat, Stafford, Virginia, August 17, 2003. Using floatable seat cushions, Sarah, 11, and her aunt, Boggs, 45, bartender, were floating and swimming in the Potomac River about 2,000 feet from the nearer bank while other family members were water skiing from an 18-foot motorboat in the vicinity. As the boat headed toward Sarah and Boggs, it made an abrupt turn and proceeded directly toward Sarah. Boggs, who was about 12 feet away from Sarah, immediately swam to her. She pounced on Sarah and submerged her but was then struck by the boat herself. The boat's propeller caught her along her left side, inflicting cuts from shoulder to knee and almost severing her arm. Boggs then became caught in the boat's ski tether and was dragged a short distance before the tether broke. The operator of the boat took the craft to a stop, and Sarah, uninjured, swam to it. Other family members entered the water to aid Boggs, who was eventually returned to the bank by boat. She was flown to a hospital, where she was detained for treatment of severe injuries, including the loss of her arm, which left her disabled. 77827-8948

JON KITAMURA
Woodland, California

Jon Kitamura saved Desiree O. Lopez, Melvin Miller, and two others from burning, Grimes, California, August 28, 2004. Lopez, 18, and two men were rear-seat passengers, and Miller, 21, was the front-seat passenger, in a sport utility vehicle that left the highway, struck a tree, and caught fire at its front end. Off duty, Kitamura, 45, highway patrol officer, was driving on the same highway and came upon the scene shortly after the accident. Finding the vehicle's doors jammed but the window of the driver's door broken out, he leaned through the window opening, grasped Lopez, and pulled her from the vehicle as flames began to enter its passenger compartment. Another man who responded broke out the vehicle's back window. Kitamura climbed through that window, grasped one of the men in the back seat, and removed him from the vehicle, then he re-entered the vehicle and rescued the other man in similar fashion. A third time Kitamura entered the vehicle through the rear window. He made his way to the front seat, where he unfastened Miller's safety belt. He grasped Miller and pulled him to the back of the vehicle, then exited with him. The vehicle was shortly filled with flame. Lopez, Miller, and the two other men all required hospital treatment for their injuries, but they were not burned. Kitamura recovered from minor smoke inhalation and cuts. 77939-8949

ANDREW A. KINDRED, now deceased
Portage, Wisconsin

Andrew A. Kindred rescued Desmond N. Julson from burning, Portage, Wisconsin, October 19, 2004. Desmond, 3, was in the bathroom of an apartment, which was contained within a large barn structure, after fire broke out in the adjoining kitchen. Asleep in one of the apartment's bedrooms, Kindred, 22, process technician, was alerted to the fire by Desmond's mother. He fled the building to learn that Desmond was still inside. Despite flames growing rapidly in the kitchen and living room, Kindred, barefoot, re-entered the building and made his way through those rooms to the bathroom. He returned outside carrying Desmond; both were severely burned. Flames engulfed the apartment and spread to much of the barn. Desmond and Kindred required extensive hospitalization for treatment, including skin grafting, of their burns, Kindred's being to 40 percent of his body. 78061-8950

ELNORA DENMARK
Dallas, Texas

Elnora Denmark saved L. S. Thompson, Jr., from burning, Dallas, Texas, January 1, 2004. Thompson, 79, who was unable to walk, was in bed in a bedroom at one end of his one-story house when a small airplane crashed into the house's integral garage, which was at the opposite end. Flames broke out in the garage and grew to issue high above it. Denmark, 51, who was Thompson's caregiver, was in the kitchen at the time of the crash and was knocked to the floor. Dazed, she regained her footing and went to the front door, which she propped open. She then turned and made her way through thick smoke and intense heat to Thompson's bedroom as flames spread into the house. Shouting to Thompson that they had to get out of the house, Denmark placed a blanket over him, then lifted him from the bed. She carried Thompson through the house to the front door, where she was aided in getting him to safety outside. The house was destroyed in the accident and fire, which claimed the lives of the plane's pilot and his passenger. Denmark sustained neck and back injury that required therapy. 77432-8951

SCOT SMITHEE
Hollister, California

Scot Smithee saved Craig A. and Andrea D. Hilty and five others from drowning, Lanai, Hawaii, March 8, 2004. Hilty, 23, and his wife, 22, were aboard a 47-foot catamaran with three other couples, including Smithee, 39, police officer, and his wife, and the boat's two-man crew. All but Smithee and the crewmen were in the craft's cabin, as inclement weather was fostering nine-foot-high swells. At a point about two miles from Lanai, the closest land, the catamaran abruptly flipped up from the side and overturned, trapping the cabin occupants inside with only a 1.5-foot airspace overhead. Fumes from leaking fuel tainted the airspace, in which visibility was limited, and lines and other debris in the water blocked the only exit course. The catamaran began to settle in the water, reducing the airspace, and the victims shouted for help. Meanwhile, Smithee and the crewmen, who had been thrown into the water, surfaced and mounted the overturned craft. Smithee scanned the sea for any survivors, then he assembled a line from shorter lengths of rope to use in a rescue attempt. With one end of the line tied to stern and Smithee holding the free end, he entered the water at stern. Diving to avoid the debris nearer the surface, he swam to the cabin entry, finding that his line was fully extended. He surfaced in the cabin, the airspace in which was reduced to about six inches. Smithee told the seven passengers to make their way along his extended arm to the rope, then to follow the rope beneath the debris and up to the surface. Beginning with Hilty and his wife, each did so, surfacing to mount the vessel. Smithee was the last to leave the cabin. He huddled atop the craft with the others for more than two hours, or until they were spotted by a helicopter. A fishing boat responded, and again Smithee effected the rescue of the catamaran's occupants, taking them one at a time through rough water to a point from which each was pulled aboard the fishing boat. The boat returned all to shore safely. Smithee sustained multiple bruises about his body and a swollen arm, but he recovered. 77603-8953

DEL'TRONE D. GOMILLIA, deceased
Wilbur by the Sea, Florida

Del'Trone D. Gomillia died attempting to save Cody G. and Terrance N. Szafraniec, Jr., from drowning, Wilbur by the Sea, Florida, September 18, 2004. While playing in wadable water of the Atlantic Ocean near shore, Cody, 9, and his father, 28, lost their footing and were pulled a distance seaward by a strong current. Clinging to a child's boogie board, they shouted for help. Others at the beach, including Gomillia, 21, assistant manager, who was wading near shore, heard their shouts. Gomillia immediately started to swim toward Szafraniec and his son but about halfway there was himself caught in the current and also taken far out. Responding lifeguards took Szafraniec and Cody to shore, where Szafraniec received hospital treatment. He recovered. Gomillia was found by rescue personnel and returned to shore, but he could not be revived. 77934-8952

NORMAND BOUCHER
Manotick, Ontario

Normand Boucher saved Mary E. J. Burt from drowning and helped attempt to save Garry Burt, Manotick, Ontario, January 12, 2003. Burt and his wife, both 48, were riding a snowmobile at night on the ice-covered Rideau River when the machine broke through and sank, spilling them into the frigid water at a point about 90 feet from the closer bank. They surfaced. Ms. Burt held to the ice and yelled for help, but her husband was inert. In his nearby home on the closer bank, Boucher, 45, police officer, was alerted to the situation. He obtained an aluminum stepladder from his shed and went out onto the ice. To distribute his weight more evenly, he lay on the stepladder, then he propelled himself to the eight-foot hole containing the victims. At the edge of the hole, Boucher grasped Ms. Burt by her attire and pulled her onto solid ice. In repeated attempts he tried to pull Burt out in a similar manner, in the process losing use of the ladder and finding himself unable to move backward. Lying in three inches of water, Boucher retained his hold on Burt to keep his head above water. A neighbor approached and threw one end of a rope to Boucher, but he could not manipulate it. A responding police constable crawled out to Boucher, tied the rope around him, then pulled Boucher backward, resulting in Boucher pulling Burt from the water and onto the ice. Burt and his wife were taken to the hospital, where Burt succumbed to effects of his ordeal. Ms. Burt was treated for hypothermia, and she recovered. Boucher also showed the effects of hypothermia and recovered. 78163-8954

DALE L. SAYLER
Hebron, North Dakota

Dale L. Sayler saved Robert S. Taylor from being struck by a train, Hebron, North Dakota, November 9, 2004. Taylor, 48, remained in the driver's seat of a van that was stuck on a railroad track at night. Sayler, 45, bank executive, was alerted to the situation while driving nearby. Responding to the scene, he saw that a freight train was approaching, from about a quarter-mile away. Sayler ran to the driver's door of the van and opened it, then grasped Taylor around the chest and pulled him out of the van. Taylor fell to the track, and again Sayler grasped him about the chest. He dragged Taylor off the track just seconds before the train, in emergency braking, struck the van and pushed it 165 feet away. When the train stopped, its front was about a half-mile from the point of impact. Neither Sayler nor Taylor was injured. 78129-8960

MATTHEW JAMES WILSON
Imperial Beach, California

Matthew James Wilson saved Helen N. Sylvia and two others from drowning, Imperial Beach, California, January 18, 2004. In evening darkness, Helen, 13, and two friends struggled to stay afloat in the extremely rough surf of the Pacific Ocean at a point about 300 feet from shore. Beneath a pier that extended several hundred feet into the ocean, they clung to the pier's piling as eight-foot breakers battered them. The tide was near high, and currents in the frigid water were strong. Wilson, 31, was on the beach in the vicinity when he was alerted to the situation. A municipal lifeguard in season, he called for help from a nearby lifeguard station, then assembled gear, including a wet suit, fins, and rescue tubes. He responded to a point on the pier from which he saw, by flashlight, one of Helen's friends clinging to a pile. Although tired from having worked that day as a diver, Wilson jumped 20 feet from the pier into the water, swam to the youth, 13, and, using a rescue tube, towed him to wadable water near shore. Returning to the pier, he saw Helen, likewise clinging to a pile beneath the structure. A second time Wilson jumped into the surf; he swam to Helen, who was entangled in an electrical cord that had been lowered to her as an aid. Wilson too became entangled in the cord, by his feet, and was temporarily hampered. Again using a rescue tube, he took Helen to wadable water. He returned to the pier a second time and looked for the third youth, 12, spotting her after a few minutes at a point about 45 feet from the pier. Wilson jumped a third time from the pier, then swam to the girl, secured her with a tube, and towed her to safety. All three youths received hospital treatment for minor injuries, including abrasions, and they recovered. Wilson recovered from fatigue and minor cuts and bruises. 78464-8955

MARIA CHRISTINE ERICSON
Swiftwater, Pennsylvania

Maria Christine Ericson saved Evan J. Moore from burning, Swiftwater, Pennsylvania, December 7, 2004. Evan, 1, was in his crib in a bedroom of his family's single-story house after fire broke out in a nearby bedroom and filled the house with dense smoke. Alerted to the fire, neighbors, including Ericson, 42, human resources director, responded to the scene. Ericson climbed a ladder at the window to Evan's room, then broke out the window and entered the house. Heat was intense in the bedroom, and dense smoke kept her from seeing. Walking with outstretched hands, Ericson located the crib, then found Evan. She picked him up, took him to the window, and handed him outside to safety, then she climbed through the window to safety. Flames spread inside the house and claimed the lives of his two sisters, but Evan was not injured. 78187-8958

EARL E. CUMMINS
Fairhope, Pennsylvania

Earl E. Cummins saved Mary E. Shaffer from burning, Hyndman, Pennsylvania, September 29, 2004. At night, Shaffer, 76, was in the kitchen of the single-story house in which she lived after fire broke out at the rear exterior of the structure. Driving nearby, Cummins, 72, retired steelworker, saw flames issuing high above the house. Acquainted with Shaffer, he parked at the scene, positioning his car so that its headlights shined into the house through a large front window. He then approached the house, opened the front door, and shouted for Shaffer. Hearing her response, Cummins entered the house and, crouched over in the dense smoke and intense heat, followed her voice. He found Shaffer about 20 feet away, in the kitchen. She was hesitant to leave without her pets, but Cummins pushed her along as he retraced his course to the front door. They exited to safety. Flames spread quickly into the house. Both Shaffer and Cummins inhaled smoke, Cummins requiring hospital treatment. They recovered. 78022-8961

ALBERT YBARRA
Dublin, California

SALVADOR B. AGUSTIN, JR.
San Jose, California

Albert Ybarra and Salvador B. Agustin, Jr., saved Everardo Meza and Jorge Lopez from drowning, Hayward, California, September 7, 2004. In a highway accident on a bridge, Everardo, 4, and another boy were thrown from a van over the bridge railing and 20 feet down into San Francisco Bay. Another passenger from the van, Lopez, 31, who was Everardo's father, jumped into the water from the bridge and held onto Everardo. The water was cold and, because of the incoming tide, was moving swiftly away from that side of the bridge. Ybarra, 33, field technician, came upon the scene while driving on the bridge. Seeing Lopez and Everardo struggling at a point about 100 feet from the bridge, Ybarra removed his shoes and, not knowing the depth of the water, jumped from the bridge. He swam to Lopez and grasped the back of his shirt, then began to return to the bridge, towing him and Everardo. Meanwhile, Agustin, 28, registered nurse, came upon the scene while driving on the bridge. Concluding that Ybarra needed help with Everardo and Lopez, Agustin removed his outer attire and, also not knowing the depth of the water, jumped from the bridge. He swam about 50 feet to where he relieved Ybarra of Everardo, then he swam back to the bridge as Ybarra continued with Lopez. Those on the bridge had lowered a cable and rope from a tow truck, and by means of those lines all four were pulled from the water. Lopez and Everardo received hospital treatment for abrasions. Ybarra bruised his thigh, and Agustin sustained abrasions to his hands and wrists. They recovered. The other boy was not found.

78119-8956 / 78120-8957

CARNEGIE MEDAL



ANDREW CARNEGIE

