



## NEWS RELEASE

### Carnegie Hero Fund COMMISSION

A CENTURY of HEROES 1904-2004

FOR RELEASE:  
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#### CARNEGIE MEDALS FOR HEROISM AWARDED TO 25 THROUGHOUT U.S., CANADA

PITTSBURGH, PA, December 21, 2006—In its fifth and final award announcement of 2006, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission today named 25 individuals from throughout the United States and Canada as recipients of the CARNEGIE MEDAL. The medal is given to those who risk their lives to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others.

The heroes announced today bring to 92 the number of individuals who have been recognized in 2006 and to 9,053 the total number of awards made since the Pittsburgh-based Fund's inception in 1904. Commission President Mark Laskow stated that each of the awardees will also receive a grant of \$5,000. Throughout the 102 years since the Fund was established by industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, \$29.1 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance. The awardees are:

Paul D. Allston	Dover, Del.
Wade McDonald, <i>deceased</i>	Brooklyn, N.Y.
Gary K. Gray	Indianapolis, Ind.
Joseph H. Grayson	Carmel, Ind.
Anthony J. Priami	Indianapolis, Ind.
Jamie D. W. Robertson	Calgary, Alta.
Christopher John Kelsch	Hampton Bays, N.Y.
David S. Parks	Weston, W. Va.
Warren Bennett	Kingsland, Ga.
Jürgen Hapke, <i>deceased</i>	Burbank, Calif.
Jencie Regina Fagan	Reno, Nev.
Michael S. Rucinski	Starkville, Miss.
Cody James Griffin	Bethel, Vt.
Donald C. Wilkinson, Jr., <i>deceased</i>	Lincoln, Neb.
Patrizio Bartolozzi	Gleichen, Alta.
Arthur Thorp	Philadelphia, Pa.
David Michael McCartney	Elwood, Ind.
Lee Pierce	Clayton, Ind.
Kevin Anthony Venn	Richmond, B.C.
James W. Davies II	Sicklerville, N.J.
Lauren D. Hesebeck	Rice Lake, Wis.
Carter L. Crotteau	Haugen, Wis.
Jessica M. Willers, <i>deceased</i>	Green Bay, Wis.
Allan James Laski, <i>deceased</i>	Haugen, Wis.
Dennis L. Roux, <i>now deceased</i>	Rice Lake, Wis.

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](http://www.carnegiehero.org)

**PAUL D. ALLSTON**  
Dover, Delaware

Paul D. Allston helped to save Charles F. Todd from drowning, New Castle, Delaware, August 24, 2005. Todd, 35, experienced difficulty while swimming in the Delaware River and shouted for help while clinging to a jetty that was about 270 feet from the bank. Dispatched to the scene, Allston, 38, police officer, went to the end of a pier that extended into the river near the jetty. As Todd shouted that he could not hold on any longer in the very strong tidal current, Allston removed his outer attire and entered the water. He swam about 90 feet through the current to Todd, then grasped him. To get out of the current, Allston moved Todd to the end of the jetty, then he supported Todd while holding to the jetty himself. A rescue boat arrived several minutes later and removed the men from the water, then took them to safety. They sustained mild hypothermia, and Allston, nearly exhausted, had abrasions to his body. They recovered. 78725-9029

**WADE McDONALD, deceased**  
Brooklyn, New York

Wade McDonald died after attempting to help save Brandon A. Clayton and Jermaine Cohen from drowning, Rockaway Park, New York, June 5, 2005. Brandon, 15, and Jermaine, 16, were in wadable water of the Atlantic Ocean when they were pulled by a strong current away from the beach. People on shore, including McDonald, 40, boilermaker, saw the boys in difficulty. McDonald ran into the water and began to swim toward them, as did a man on a surfboard. Jermaine submerged, and McDonald began to struggle to stay afloat. At a point about 300 feet from the beach, Brandon, exhausted, was secured by the surfer then was returned to shore. McDonald, who had been nearby, submerged. He was pulled, unconscious, from the water by city harbor police and was taken to the hospital, where he was pronounced dead of drowning. Jermaine's body was recovered 21 days later. 78576-9030

**GARY K. GRAY**  
Indianapolis, Indiana

**JOSEPH H. GRAYSON**  
Carmel, Indiana

**ANTHONY J. PRIAMI**  
Indianapolis, Indiana

Gary K. Gray, Joseph H. Grayson, and Anthony J. Priami saved Mark T. Yates from burning, Indianapolis, Indiana, January 4, 2005. Unconscious, Yates, 41, remained in the driver's seat of his automobile after an accident in which the car struck a concrete abutment of an overpass. Fire broke out in the vehicle's engine compartment. Gray, 52, funeral director, was driving the lead car of a procession and came upon the scene. He stopped the procession and with other men from it, including Grayson, 60, hearse driver, and Priami, 36, police officer, approached the burning car. They tried without success to open the driver's door, then responded to the passenger side of the vehicle. Priami opened the front passenger door and, despite flames nearby in the engine compartment and beginning to enter the interior through the dashboard, entered the car for Yates, followed by Grayson. They tried to move Yates, but he was trapped in the wreckage. Gray then opened the car's rear passenger-side door and completely entered the rear-seat area. He moved toward the driver's side, reached over the front seat, and manipulated both the steering wheel and Yates's legs to free him. Grayson and Priami pulled Yates across the seat and out of the vehicle, but while they did so, the rear door was closed, leaving Gray inside the smoke-filled car. Gray felt for the door handle and opened the door, then exited the vehicle safely and helped Grayson, Priami, and another man drag Yates to safety. Within a minute, flames engulfed the car. Yates required lengthy hospitalization for treatment of his injuries, but he was not burned. Priami singed his hair and suffered smoke inhalation, from which he recovered. 79269-9032 / 79268-9033 / 79265-9034

**JAMIE D. W. ROBERTSON**  
Calgary, Alberta

Jamie D. W. Robertson rescued Melanie Strong from assault, Calgary, Alberta, October 31, 2005. Strong, 26, opened the door to her apartment to find a masked man holding a hunting knife. The man entered the apartment foyer and stabbed Strong repeatedly. Strong's next-door neighbor, Robertson, 43, machinist, heard a scuffle and responded to Strong's door. Partially opening it, he heard Strong shout for help. Robertson forced the door open, entered the foyer, and grasped the assailant by the neck. When the assailant raised his knife hand, Robertson grasped him by that wrist, and he forced him from the building. The assailant fell to the ground, then regained his footing and fled. Strong required two weeks' hospitalization for treatment of her wounds. Robertson aggravated a previous back injury.

79293-9031

**CHRISTOPHER JOHN KELSCH**  
Hampton Bays, New York

Christopher John Kelsch attempted to save Richard A. Levin from drowning, Port Jefferson, New York, December 5, 2005. Levin, 60, remained in the driver's seat of his automobile after it entered Port Jefferson Harbor in darkness and began to sink in water 10 feet deep at a point about 60 feet out. In his truck nearby, Kelsch, 45, plant mechanic, witnessed the accident. He reported it, and, taking a copper pipe with him, ran to the end of a dock at the scene. After removing his coat and shoes, Kelsch jumped into the cold water and swam out to the car, approaching on its driver's side. He broke out the window of the driver's door by striking it with the pipe and his fist, then he reached inside and cut Levin's safety belt with a pocketknife. The car submerged, taking Kelsch down. After attempting to pull Levin through the driver's window, Kelsch surfaced for air. He returned to the car, which had sunk to the floor of the harbor by then, and again attempted to remove Levin. Incapacitated by the cold, Kelsch drifted away from the car, to a side of the harbor from which responding firefighters shortly rescued him. Firefighters also removed Levin from his car. He and Kelsch were taken to the hospital, where Kelsch was treated for hypothermia. He recovered. Levin died of his injuries two days later.

78907-9035

**DAVID S. PARKS**  
Weston, West Virginia

**WARREN BENNETT**  
Kingsland, Georgia

David S. Parks and Warren Bennett helped to rescue Andrew F. Sleigh, Jr., from burning, and Parks saved Mary G. Sleigh, Weston, West Virginia, July 17, 2005. Sleigh, 75, and his wife, 83, were on the second floor of their house after fire erupted in a bedroom on that floor. Visiting in the neighborhood, Parks, 38, deputy sheriff, saw thick smoke issuing from the residence and immediately responded to it. He entered the house and called out, then, hearing the couple on the second floor, ascended the stairs. Dense smoke on the second floor repelled him, and he retreated below the smoke to breathe. Parks crawled back to the top of the stairs, then through the hall until he brushed against one of Sleigh's feet. He grasped Sleigh by that foot and dragged him to the top of the stairs. Driving by, Bennett 55, business operator, also had seen smoke, and he too entered the house and proceeded up the stairs. As Parks left to obtain a wet towel from the first floor, Bennett dragged Sleigh downstairs. Two other rescuers who had entered the house removed him to safety through the front door. Parks, meanwhile, returned to the second floor and found Ms. Sleigh standing in the smoke in the hall. Taking her by the hand, he guided her downstairs and outside to safety. Sleigh required extensive hospitalization for treatment of severe burns. His wife was hospitalized for smoke inhalation, and she recovered. Parks and Bennett also suffered effects of smoke inhalation, and they recovered.

78678-9036 / 79719-9037

**JÜRGEN HAPKE, deceased**  
Burbank, California

Jürgen Hapke died rescuing Helmut Mende from assault, Beverly Hills, California, December 14, 2005. Commercial painters Mende, 71, and Hapke, 65, were in a parking lot at a job site when, just before dawn, a man approached Mende and without provocation stabbed him three times with a kitchen knife. Mende fell to the pavement and attempted to fight off the assailant. His yelling attracted the attention of Hapke, who was working about 25 feet away. Hapke approached the assailant, speaking to him, but the assailant turned from Mende and stabbed Hapke repeatedly. Mortally wounded, Hapke fell to the pavement as the assailant fled the scene. Mende required hospital treatment for his wounds, and he recovered. 79061-9038

**JENCIE REGINA FAGAN**  
Reno, Nevada

Jencie Regina Fagan helped to rescue an indeterminate number of persons from assault, Reno, Nevada, March 14, 2006. A 14-year-old boy entered the middle school he attended, armed with a .38-caliber revolver and three bullets. He went into the main corridor and fired three times, striking one student and injuring another with bullet fragments. Fagan, 43, teacher, was in the gymnasium adjacent to the corridor when she heard the gunfire. She ran to the corridor as the third shot was fired. Seeing the armed student, Fagan told others in the vicinity to seek safety. She then moved to within 12 feet of the assailant, telling him to discard the gun, and he did so, throwing it to the floor. Fagan went to the assailant and held him until police arrived shortly. The two students who had been injured received medical treatment, and they recovered. 79175-9039

**MICHAEL S. RUCINSKI**  
Starkville, Mississippi

Michael S. Rucinski saved Landon, Garrett, and Shari Hoffman from drowning, Brooksville, Mississippi, March 13, 2006. Brothers Landon, 10, and Garrett, 12, fell from a spillway at Bluff Lake into the 53-degree water of a drainage pool and were carried by the swift current out into the deep pool. Their mother, Hoffman, 41, who was fishing from the bank, entered the water for them, as they could not swim from the current. Fishing on the opposite bank, Rucinski, 35, maintenance employee, immediately ran around the pool to the nearer side. Removing his shoes, he dived into the water and swam about 45 feet to Landon, who was in water about 27 feet deep. He took Landon back to the bank, then saw that Hoffman was having difficulty with Garrett. Rucinski entered the pool again and swam out to them. Securing a hold on the boy, he took Garrett to the bank. Rucinski re-entered the pool again when he saw that Hoffman, who was nearly exhausted from the cold, was having difficulty. He helped her to shallow water, from which both left to safety. 79247-9040

**CODY JAMES GRIFFIN**  
Bethel, Vermont

Cody James Griffin saved Diane M. Brunner from drowning, Stockbridge, Vermont, February 21, 2006. Attempting to rescue a dog that had broken through the ice along the bank of the White River, Brunner, 52, also broke through, at a point about 15 feet from the bank. Cody, 17, high school student, who had been flagged down by Brunner to help with the dog, walked across the ice toward her. Clad only in a basketball uniform, Cody knelt at the edge of the hole and grasped Brunner by the arms. Although Brunner, a poor swimmer, outweighed him and was fully attired, Cody pulled her from the open water and onto the ice, then took her toward the bank. Brunner and the dog returned to the house where she was staying, and she recovered after three days' rest. Cody's foot had broken through the ice, but he was not injured. 79152-9041

**DONALD C. WILKINSON, JR., *deceased***  
Lincoln, Nebraska

Donald C. Wilkinson, Jr., died after helping to save a boy from drowning, Aransas Pass, Texas, February 15, 2006. A 5-year-old boy fell from the end of a wooden pier that extended 60 feet into Conn Brown Harbor off the Gulf of Mexico. Fishing nearby from the pier, Wilkinson, 67, retired power plant employee, climbed over the pier railing and dropped six feet into the 60-degree water, which was about eight feet deep. He grasped the boy, then held to one of the pier's supports while the boy clung to him. A man in a boat responded shortly and took the boy aboard. Unable to take Wilkinson aboard, the man let the boat drift toward shore with Wilkinson holding to it. When they reached shallow water, the boy waded ashore and the boater assisted Wilkinson to a seated position. Wilkinson lost consciousness. He was removed from the water by paramedics, then was hospitalized. He died early the next day of complications of near drowning. 79183-9042

**PATRIZIO BARTOLOZZI**  
Gleichen, Alberta

Patrizio Bartolozzi saved Steven M. A. Hillman from drowning, Edmonton, Alberta, February 24, 2005. Steven, 9, and another boy were walking on ice that extended from the banks of the North Saskatchewan River. The ice broke beneath them. Steven's friend pulled himself from the open water, but a swift current pulled Steven downstream about 1,300 feet, or to where he leaned against the edge of solid ice at a point about 250 feet from the bank. Steven's friend screamed for help, attracting the attention of Bartolozzi, 50, baker, who was walking nearby. Bartolozzi saw Steven in the water and ran along the river to a point opposite him. He then walked and crawled across the ice toward Steven. Near the edge of the ice, which was only about an inch thick there, he flung his jacket toward Steven. Steven grasped it with difficulty and held to it as Bartolozzi pulled him onto solid ice. Bartolozzi crawled back toward the bank, pulling Steven, then stood and carried him the rest of the way in. Steven was taken to the hospital, where he was treated for hypothermia, and he recovered. Bartolozzi was cold and nearly exhausted, and he too recovered. 78346-9043

**ARTHUR THORP**  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Arthur Thorp helped to save Victoria M. Salukas from burning, Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania, August 26, 2004. Salukas, 48, lay semiconscious on the front seat of her car after an accident in which the car left the roadway and struck a guide rail and then a tree. Flames broke out in the engine compartment and grew. Thorp, 56, insurance salesman, approached the scene in his vehicle and stopped. He attempted to open the doors of the burning car but found them all jammed. Bracing himself against the car, Thorp pulled open the right rear door, then entered the back seat area. He lowered the back of the front passenger seat, then leaned over the seat and grasped Salukas as flames spread to the interior of the car. Thorp pulled Salukas into the back seat then started to maneuver her from the vehicle. Another man held Salukas while Thorp exited the car. The men pulled her from the vehicle and took her to safety as the interior of the car was shortly engulfed by flames. Salukas required hospitalization for treatment of extensive injuries. 79147-9044

**DAVID MICHAEL MCCARTNEY**

Elwood, Indiana

**LEE PIERCE**

Clayton, Indiana

David Michael McCartney and Lee Pierce rescued Elizabeth A. Testerman from burning, Atlanta, Indiana, January 9, 2006. Testerman, 54, was the driver of a sport utility vehicle that left the roadway, went down an embankment, and struck a concrete culvert. The vehicle came to rest partially on its passenger side and caught fire in its engine compartment. Flames grew and entered the vehicle at its floorboard, burning Testerman. McCartney, 21, factory worker, had been following Testerman and witnessed the accident. He stopped at the scene and approached the burning vehicle from the front. Despite four-foot flames on the front of the vehicle, McCartney kicked in the remaining portion of the windshield, then reached inside and cut one of the straps of Testerman's safety belt. Another motorist who had responded, Pierce, 29, cable technician, reached through the broken-out window of the driver's door and cut the other strap. McCartney and Pierce then pulled Testerman through the windshield and, joined by a third man, carried her to safety. Flames soon engulfed the vehicle and compromised its fuel tank. Testerman required hospitalization for treatment of second-degree burns and other injuries. 79122-9045 / 79100-9046

**KEVIN ANTHONY VENN**

Richmond, British Columbia

Kevin Anthony Venn saved a woman from assault, Richmond, British Columbia, July 31, 2004. At night, a young woman struggled against her intoxicated boyfriend in a wooded area just off a commercial street. Her shouting attracted the attention of Venn, 20, an attendant at a service station nearby. After telling the manager of the station to call 911, Venn, believing he was witnessing an attempted rape, approached the couple and told the assailant to stop his mistreatment of the woman. In response, the assailant, who was notably larger than Venn, turned on Venn, striking and kicking him repeatedly and sending him to the ground. The assailant and the woman left the scene. Arriving police found Venn about a mile away, the victim of what police believed to be a second vicious assault. Venn required hospitalization for treatment, including surgery, of extensive lacerations to his face and multiple fractures to bones in his head. 77831-9047

**JAMES W. DAVIES II**

Sicklerville, New Jersey

James W. Davies II attempted to rescue Shannon D. Williams from assault, Stratford, New Jersey, August 17, 2004. At night, Williams, 19, was stabbed repeatedly by her estranged boyfriend in a hallway of the apartment building where she lived. Hearing her scream for help, Davies, 22, heavy machine operator, opened the door of his apartment across the hall and saw the assailant straddling Williams. He immediately ran to the assailant, shouting at him to stop. The assailant turned on Davies and stabbed him in the neck, sending him to the floor. Williams fled into her apartment, but the assailant followed her and stabbed her again before leaving the building. Davies returned to his apartment and called 911, then went to an outside door to await police, who arrived shortly and apprehended the assailant. Williams and Davies were hospitalized for treatment of their stab wounds, Davies requiring surgery for his injuries, which included a lacerated jugular vein, collapsed right lung, and nerve damage to his right arm. 78543-9053

**LAUREN D. HESEBECK**  
Rice Lake, Wisconsin

**CARTER L. CROTTEAU**  
Haugen, Wisconsin

**JESSICA M. WILLERS**, *deceased*  
Green Bay, Wisconsin

**ALLAN JAMES LASKI**, *deceased*  
Haugen, Wisconsin

**DENNIS L. ROUX**, *now deceased*  
Rice Lake, Wisconsin

On November 21, 2004, near Birchwood, Wisconsin, Terry S. Willers, 47, was deer hunting on private property with several others, including Dennis R. Drew, 55, and **Lauren D. Hesebeck**, 48, automobile sales manager. They and other members of the party confronted a trespasser on the property and directed him to leave. The trespasser, armed with a rifle, started to walk away but then opened fire on the hunters, wounding Willers, Drew, and Hesebeck, and killing three others. Although a vehicle nearby was available to him, Hesebeck remained at the scene to tend Willers and Drew. At the party's nearby cabin, **Carter L. Crotteau**, 18, college student, who was the son and brother of two of the hunters who were killed, was alerted by radio to the shooting and, despite not knowing the assailant's whereabouts, responded by all-terrain vehicle with Willers's son. They evacuated Willers from the scene, Hesebeck again electing to remain, with Drew. Hearing her father's voice on a radio transmission, **Jessica M. Willers**, 27, surgical technician, and **Allan James Laski**, 43, lumber yard manager, also members of the hunting party, set out to the scene from the cabin on an all-terrain vehicle. En route, they too were shot and mortally wounded by the assailant. The assailant reappeared at a point near Hesebeck and saw that he was alive. He fired again at Hesebeck, then fled. Two other members of the hunting party, **Dennis L. Roux**, 63, retired union officer, and Drew's brother, arrived shortly in a pickup truck and took Hesebeck and Drew to safety, Roux tending Drew in the truck's bed. Willers required hospital treatment for his wound, and he recovered. Drew, also hospitalized, died the next day of his injury. Hesebeck was hospitalized for treatment, including surgery, of a shoulder wound, and he recovered.

78757-9048 / 79296-9049 / 78836-9050 / 78835-9051 / 79756-9052

CARNEGIE MEDAL



ANDREW CARNEGIE

