



**CARNEGIE HERO FUND COMMISSION**  
*Recognizing civilian heroism in the United States and Canada*

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## News Release

FOR RELEASE:  
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### **22 CITED FOR EXTRAORDINARY HEROISM BY CARNEGIE HERO FUND COMMISSION**

PITTSBURGH, PA, July 1, 2009—In its second award announcement of 2009, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission today named 22 individuals as recipients of the CARNEGIE MEDAL. The medal is awarded 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.

Four of the awardees lost their lives in the performance of their rescue acts, including 12-year-old Aaron D. Robinson of Cambridge, Md., who attempted to save his younger brother from drowning in a pond.

The heroes announced today bring to 9,284 the total number of awards since the Pittsburgh-based Fund's inception in 1904. Commission President Mark Laskow stated that each of the awardees or their next of kin will also receive a financial grant. Throughout the 105 years since the Fund was established by industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, \$31.5 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance. The awardees are:

Terry Ray Odom	Naples, Fla.
Richard S. Cameron	Naples, Fla.
Thomas Eugene Foust	Glenview, Ill.
Frederick L. Visconti	Danbury, Conn.
Edwin Hernandez	Reading, Pa.
Edward Bohan	Franklin Square, N.Y.
R. Jason Altman, <i>deceased</i>	Andrews, S.C.
Tommy Earl Barnhill	Georgetown, S.C.
Michael P. Schmidt	Hickory Creek, Texas
Richard W. Meserve	Falmouth, Maine
Dwight A. Moore	Aliquippa, Pa.
Casey Marie Peirce	Calgary, Alta.
George E. Gorton III	Ware, Mass.
Susan M. Ricard	Webster, Mass.
Randall Scott Brewer, <i>deceased</i>	Lancaster, N.H.
Aaron D. Robinson, <i>deceased</i>	Cambridge, Md.
Paul Cossalter, <i>deceased</i>	Wrenshall, Minn.
Toby Ames	Runnells, Iowa
David Patrick Rosamilia	Hollidaysburg, Pa.
Chloe C. Van Alstine	Wells, N.Y.
Henry W. Mott IV	Middletown, R.I.
Francis J. Gutierrez	Middletown, R.I.

Resumes of the acts follow. To nominate someone for the CARNEGIE MEDAL, write the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, 436 Seventh Avenue, Suite 1101, 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)

**TERRY RAY ODOM**  
**RICHARD S. CAMERON**  
Naples, Florida

Terry Ray Odom and Richard S. Cameron saved Ray J. Davis from drowning, East Naples, Florida, July 3, 2008. Davis, 55, was the driver of a sport utility vehicle that left the roadway, entered a golf course lake, and began to submerge, upright, in water about 25 feet deep. Driving behind him, Odom, 49, business operator, witnessed the accident. He parked and ran to the lake, removing his shirt and shoes. With the vehicle then about 25 feet from the bank, Odom waded and swam to it. After attempting unsuccessfully to open its driver's door, he reached through the door's open window, grasped Davis, and attempted to pull him out, but again without success. Odom then climbed through a window into the vehicle as it continued to submerge. Meanwhile, Cameron, 36, construction worker, had also witnessed the accident while driving at the scene, and he too shed his shirt and shoes and swam out to the vehicle. As he extended his upper body through the driver's door window and pulled on Davis, Odom, from inside the vehicle, grasped Davis by the torso and pushed on him. They struggled, as Davis's leg was caught on the steering wheel. Davis became free as the vehicle submerged. Cameron took him to the surface and swam to the bank with him as Odom climbed through the window of the passenger door and surfaced. He too swam to the bank. Davis required a month's hospitalization, and Odom sustained a laceration to his foot, from which he recovered.

81481-9263 / 81480-9264

**THOMAS EUGENE FOUST**  
Glenview, Illinois

Thomas Eugene Foust saved a woman from being struck by a train, Glenview, Illinois, September 8, 2007. An 83-year-old woman mistakenly drove her automobile onto one of two railroad tracks at a crossing, and the car became stuck as a passenger train approached on that track at high speed. Thomas, 17, student, who had been driving with a few friends behind the woman, saw what was happening. He and others immediately ran to the car as the crossing's gates and bell were activated, indicating that the train was about 32 seconds away. Thomas and his friends urged the woman to exit her car, and as the train bore down, he pulled open the driver's door, reached inside, and unfastened her safety belt. He then pulled the woman from the car, took her 10 feet to a fence that bordered the track bed, and shielded her with his body. Within seconds, the train struck the car and knocked it into the path of another train, which was approaching on the second track. The car was struck again, sending debris flying. The woman was shaken but uninjured.

80678-9265

**FREDERICK L. VISCONTI**  
Danbury, Connecticut

Frederick L. Visconti rescued Robert J. Mitchell from burning, Danbury, Connecticut, May 24, 2008. Mitchell, 18, was in his bedroom on the second floor of his family's two-story house after an accidental fire broke out in that room. A neighbor, Visconti, 65, retired firefighter, smelled smoke and responded to the scene. He entered the house through its front door and learned that Mitchell was on the second floor. Visconti went up the stairs and, in dense smoke that severely limited visibility, crawled into Mitchell's bedroom, in which flames were growing. Finding Mitchell in his bed, he pulled him to the floor and into the hall. Visconti then aided Mitchell downstairs and outside to safety. Mitchell required hospital treatment for minor burns and smoke inhalation, and he recovered.

81278-9266

**EDWIN HERNANDEZ**  
Reading, Pennsylvania

Edwin Hernandez rescued a woman from assault, Reading, Pennsylvania, April 18, 2008. A 65-year-old woman was in the living room of her residence, which adjoined a small store that she operated. Her son entered the room and, without provocation, began to punch her and another woman who was present. The other woman escaped to the outside and called 911 as the assailant continued to attack his mother, severely injuring her, and he then threw a wall unit at her, pinning her to the floor. Hernandez, 31, general contractor, was walking nearby when the other woman alerted him to the attack. He entered the store and proceeded to the living room. There, he heard the 65-year-old woman pleading for help from beneath the wall unit as the assailant was thrusting an 18-inch shard of glass at her through the unit's openings. Hernandez lifted the wall unit from her, but then the assailant threatened him with the shard. Hernandez pushed the wall unit toward the assailant to block him and then lifted the woman and took her into the storeroom and outside to safety. Police arrived soon and arrested the assailant. Both women required hospital treatment for their injuries. 81174-9267

**EDWARD BOHAN**  
Franklin Square, New York

Edward Bohan rescued John H. Collymore from burning, North Hempstead, New York, July 1, 2008. Collymore, 58, was the driver of a sport utility vehicle that, in the hours before dawn, left the roadway, struck a utility pole and a tree, and caught fire. Flames spread to the interior of the vehicle as Collymore, who was injured in the accident, attempted to free himself. Approaching in his vehicle, Bohan, 31, off-duty firefighter, observed the flames and stopped at the scene. After finding the doors to the vehicle locked, Bohan used a metal post that was nearby to smash the driver's window. He then opened the door, leaned into the vehicle, and unfastened Collymore's safety belt. Grasping Collymore under the arms, Bohan pulled him from the vehicle to the ground, and then he and another man dragged Collymore away shortly before flames grew to engulf the vehicle. Collymore required extensive hospitalization for treatment of serious burns and other injuries. Bohan also received hospital treatment, for second-degree burns and cuts to his hands, and he recovered. 81394-9268

**R. JASON ALTMAN, *deceased***  
Andrews, South Carolina

**TOMMY EARL BARNHILL**  
Georgetown, South Carolina

R. Jason Altman died helping to save Keith E. Gibson from suffocation, and Tommy Earl Barnhill helped attempt to save Altman, Georgetown, South Carolina, November 4, 2006. Gibson, 39, lost consciousness in the oxygen-deficient atmosphere of the chemical dryer that he was cleaning at the plant where he was employed. When those responding, including Altman, 27, operator, could not remove him through the opening in the top of the dryer, Altman entered the unit. He lifted Gibson toward the opening, where the others secured a hold on him and pulled him to safety. After focusing on Gibson, reviving him and readying him for emergency medical personnel, the other workers, by then including Barnhill, 43, operator, who had responded from another area of the plant, realized that Altman was unaccounted for. They found him lying unconscious in the dryer. Two of the men, equipped with air supply, entered the dryer and lifted Altman toward the opening as Barnhill, unprotected, extended his upper body through the opening to grasp him. With others he pulled Altman from the dryer. Gibson, Altman, and Barnhill were taken to the hospital, where Gibson was detained a day for treatment. He recovered. Altman could not be revived. Barnhill was hospitalized for treatment of severe respiratory distress. 79868-9269 / 80711-9270

**MICHAEL P. SCHMIDT**  
Hickory Creek, Texas

Michael P. Schmidt helped to save Alexandra L. Stuart from drowning, Lewisville, Texas, June 6, 2008. Stuart, 23, was the driver of a sport utility vehicle that, at night, accidentally entered Lake Lewisville at a marina boat launch and began to sink in water 25 feet deep. She was unsuccessful in breaking her way out of the vehicle. Off duty, Schmidt, 38, firefighter, was fishing with a friend from one of the nearby docks. Immediately running on the docks to a point opposite the vehicle, Schmidt removed his shoes, entered the lake, and swam about 50 feet to the vehicle, which by then was about half submerged. Unable to gain access through the windshield, which Stuart had broken, Schmidt partially opened the driver's door. As water filled the vehicle, taking it completely under, he opened the door wide. Submerging with the vehicle, Schmidt reached inside, grasped Stuart by her arms, and pulled her out. They surfaced. Schmidt's friend, who also had swum out, took Stuart to a nearby wooden pier, Schmidt following. They exited the lake there. Stuart was treated at the scene for minor cuts, from which she recovered. 81306-9271

**RICHARD W. MESERVE**  
Falmouth, Maine

Richard W. Meserve saved a girl from drowning, Scarborough, Maine, July 3, 2008. While swimming in the Atlantic Ocean with her short surfboard, a 9-year-old girl was carried farther from the beach and a few hundred feet along it, into a vicinity of large rocks over which waves broke. Meserve, 42, teacher, was at the beach when he became aware of the situation. He entered the water with a broken section of a short surfboard and swam out through the rough water to the girl. Re-establishing her on her board, Meserve instructed her to kick strongly, and then he placed his hand on her back as he swam alongside her, using his section of board as a flotation device. They proceeded along the shore to get past the rocks and then headed directly in, to the point in wadable water from which others assisted them to the beach. The girl was not injured. Meserve was nearly exhausted, but he recovered. 81482-9272

**DWIGHT A. MOORE**  
Aliquippa, Pennsylvania

Dwight A. Moore saved Kara M. Freeman from burning, Aliquippa, Pennsylvania, May 23, 2008. Freeman, 18, was asleep in her bedroom on the top floor of her family's 2.5-story house after fire broke out at night in the kitchen and began to spread rapidly. After shouting to awaken her, Freeman's mother fled the structure and attracted the attention of a neighbor, Moore, 33, welder. Moore entered the house through the front door. Learning Freeman's location, he proceeded through dense smoke up the stairs to the second and attic levels. He alerted Freeman to the fire and, as she was confused, pushed her to the head of the stairs. She descended to the first floor and stumbled outside to safety. Moore followed her but encountered difficulty breathing on the second floor and returned to the attic for air. He then descended the stairs to the first floor and exited the house. Flames spread to the second and attic levels of the structure and destroyed it. Moore suffered smoke inhalation and was treated at the scene, but he recovered. 81292-9273

**CASEY MARIE PEIRCE**  
Calgary, Alberta

Casey Marie Peirce saved a man and woman from drowning, Canmore, Alberta, July 26, 2008. A man and woman, 49, called for help after their 16-foot aluminum canoe capsized on Spray Lakes Reservoir. They held to the canoe, becoming hypothermic in the mountain lake's 50-degree water. Peirce, 30, communications manager, and her parents and sister were riding bicycles on the bank in that vicinity, which was remote, and became aware of the situation. Peirce removed her shoes, entered the water, and swam to the couple, who were at about midpoint in the 2,460-foot-wide lake. Grasping a rope attached to the canoe and wrapping it around her wrist, Peirce began to swim back to the bank, towing the canoe and its victims. The cold sapped her strength in the arduous swim, which took about 45 minutes. When she was close to the bank, her father threw one end of a rope, with a buoy attached, to her. She grasped it, and her father pulled her, with the canoe, the rest of the way in. Peirce's parents took the couple from the lake and tended to them as Peirce, too tired to move, rested in wadable water until she too was removed from the lake. Peirce was nearly exhausted, hypothermic, and sore, and she developed a cold but recovered. 81455-9274

**GEORGE E. GORTON III**  
Ware, Massachusetts

George E. Gorton III attempted to rescue a girl from an out-of-control vehicle, East Longmeadow, Massachusetts, August 2, 2008. A 3-year-old girl was alone in her family's passenger van, which was parked facing downhill along a residential street. The van began to coast down the grade, attracting the attention of those at a yard sale across the street, including Gorton, 45, biomedical engineer. Although he was wearing cycling shoes with exposed cleats, Gorton immediately ran to the van, but it was moving too fast for him to open a door. He extended his arms through the open window of the driver's door and pulled on the steering wheel to keep the van from striking a car parked in its path. His feet dragging on the pavement, Gordon then steered the van toward the rise of a yard on the opposite side of the street. The van approached the yard but came too close to another parked car for Gorton to clear it. Caught between the two vehicles, he was thrown to the pavement. The van continued but came to a stop on striking a tree in the yard. The girl was uninjured, but Gorton suffered a broken leg, requiring hospitalization, surgery, and extended convalescence. 81478-9275

**SUSAN M. RICARD**  
Webster, Massachusetts

Susan M. Ricard saved John Benoit from drowning, Webster, Massachusetts, July 18, 2008. Benoit, 58, and his young granddaughter struggled against rough waters of Webster Lake after their sailboat capsized in one of the lake's coves during an evening storm that approached suddenly. The storm brought thunder, lightning, and winds that were recorded as high as 33 m.p.h. From her home on the bank of the cove, Ricard, 37, teacher, was watching the storm over the lake and witnessed the accident. She immediately ran to the water and, taking two child's short surfboards, entered it from the end of her dock. Clad in pajamas, she swam with difficulty against the wind and waves, which were white-capped, to Benoit, who was about 150 feet from the bank. En route she encountered his granddaughter, who was wearing a life jacket, and, reassuring her, directed her toward the bank. Ricard continued to Benoit and placed one of the boards under him. Using the second board for herself, she linked arms with Benoit and returned to the dock with him, aided by the waves. Benoit was taken to the hospital for observation. 81463-9276

**RANDALL SCOTT BREWER, *deceased***  
Lancaster, New Hampshire

Randall Scott Brewer died helping to save a boy from drowning, Lancaster, New Hampshire, April 19, 2008. An 11-year-old boy jumped into the swift, cold water of the Israel River and had difficulty staying afloat. After a teenage girl in his party entered the river for him and also experienced difficulty, Brewer, 27, another member of the party, removed his shoes and outer attire and entered the 38-degree water. Brewer made his way to the boy and pushed him toward safety. Then caught by the current, Brewer was carried downstream and submerged. The boy was not injured. Brewer's body was found the next day; he had died of accidental drowning. 81173-9277

**AARON D. ROBINSON, *deceased***  
Cambridge, Maryland

Aaron D. Robinson died attempting to save Jairus A. Robinson from drowning, Cambridge, Maryland, February 11, 2007. At a point about 20 feet from the bank, Jairus, 8, broke through ice partially covering a pond at the housing development where his family lived. His brother Aaron, 12, student, was nearby on the bank with friends when they saw him in the water. Aaron immediately ran to the pond and made his way out on the ice toward Jairus. As he reached for him, Aaron also broke through the ice. Jairus submerged, as did Aaron, after a brief struggle. Police and rescue personnel responded shortly and removed the boys from the pond. They were taken to the hospital but could not be revived. 80099-9278

**PAUL COSSALTER, *deceased***  
Wrenshall, Minnesota

Paul Cossalter died attempting to save Joseph P. Kimmes III, Scott A. Kimmes, and Harold N. Olsen from suffocation, Superior, Wisconsin, November 1, 2007. Joseph, 44, and his brother, Scott, 40, were replacing a pump inside a lift station at a landfill. Working with them was Olsen, 47. The lift station was a 20-foot-deep, belowground chamber in which water was collecting at the bottom. Joseph lost consciousness in the lift station, the atmosphere of which was found to contain lethal levels of hydrogen sulfide gas. Scott then climbed into the lift station, followed by Olsen. A friend of the Kimmes brothers, Cossalter, 41, contractor, had stopped at the worksite and was present when Joseph was overcome. He told another man at the scene to call for help, and then he too climbed into the lift station and was overcome. Rescue personnel arrived and, equipped with safety gear, entered the lift station after ventilating it and removed the four men, all of whom had been asphyxiated. 81416-9279

**TOBY AMES**  
Runnells, Iowa

Toby Ames saved Sarah M. Elrod from burning, Mitchellville, Iowa, July 18, 2008. Elrod, 21, was unconscious inside her automobile following its collision with a cargo truck. Flames erupted at the back of the car, which, severely damaged, remained in contact with the front of the truck. Driving on the same highway, Ames, 38, landscaper, witnessed the crash and stopped at the scene. Despite flames issuing from the rear half of the car, he opened its driver's door, reached inside, and unfastened Elrod's safety belt. He then lifted her from the vehicle and carried her to safety. Flames grew to engulf the car and spread to the truck. Elrod required extensive hospitalization and rehabilitation for severe injuries. 81435-9284

**DAVID PATRICK ROSAMILIA**  
Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania

David Patrick Rosamilia removed Ronald L. Weamer from a burning vehicle, Claysburg, Pennsylvania, April 24, 2008. Weamer, 61, remained in the driver's seat of his car after a nighttime accident in which the car left the roadway, struck a tree head on, and caught fire in its engine compartment. Driving nearby, Rosamilia, 38, a general contractor who was on duty as a part-time police officer, was flagged down and alerted to the accident. He responded to the scene and tried to open the driver's door of Weamer's car, but it was jammed. Successful in opening the passenger door, he entered the vehicle and grasped Weamer but then found that Weamer's leg was caught in the wreckage. Despite smoke and fumes in the car and flames entering it through a hole in the windshield, Rosamilia lay across the console and worked to free Weamer. Reaching under his arms and pulling on his leg, Rosamilia freed Weamer and, backing, pulled him from the car. Another man helped to move him farther away. Weamer was pronounced dead at the scene of injuries received in the crash, and Rosamilia sustained smoke inhalation, which required hospital treatment. He recovered in a week. 81680-9280

**CHLOE C. VAN ALSTINE**  
Wells, New York

Chloe C. Van Alstine helped to save William T. Trainor from drowning, Wells, New York, November 1, 2008. Trainor, 48, was the driver of a vehicle that left the roadway, entered Lake Algonquin, and began to sink in water 10 feet deep. He escaped the vehicle through a window and struggled to stay afloat in the 45-degree water at a point about 90 feet from the bank. Chloe, 17, high school student, witnessed the accident from the opposite bank, where she had been jogging. She immediately ran across a nearby bridge to the other side of the lake, removed her shoes, and entered the water, its coldness startling her. Swimming to Trainor, Chloe grasped him to keep him from submerging and then started back to the bank with him. When they were met by a man responding in a boat, Chloe and Trainor held to the boat as the man returned them to the bank. Trainor and Chloe were examined by emergency medical personnel but were uninjured. 81741-9281

**HENRY W. MOTT IV**  
**FRANCIS J. GUTIERREZ**  
Middletown, Rhode Island

Henry W. Mott IV and Francis J. Gutierrez rescued Keith T. Ulich from burning, Middletown, Rhode Island, July 3, 2008. Ulich, 38, and two others were aboard a light aircraft that crashed into trees just beyond an airport runway. It landed upright and broke into flames, which spread into the cockpit. Residents of a nearby neighborhood, including Mott, 42, illustrator, and Gutierrez, 51, marine electronics technician, heard the crash and responded to the scene. Arriving first, Mott approached the burning airplane and called out to see if there were survivors. Ulich responded, extending an arm through the cockpit doorway. Despite intense heat and growing flames, Mott went up to the airplane, receiving a burn to his forehead, grasped Ulich by the arm, and pulled him partway onto the wing. Gutierrez joined Mott at the wing, and the two men grasped Ulich and pulled him the remaining distance out of the airplane and to the ground. They then removed their shirts to extinguish flames on him. Ulich was severely burned and died 10 weeks later. The two other occupants of the airplane died at the scene. Mott required hospital treatment for the burn to his forehead, and he recovered.

81417-9282 / 82237-9283

CARNEGIE MEDAL



ANDREW CARNEGIE

