



## Carnegie Hero Fund COMMISSION

A CENTURY of HEROES 1904-2004

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## NEWS RELEASE

### CARNEGIE MEDALS FOR HEROISM AWARDED TO 16 THROUGHOUT U.S., CANADA

PITTSBURGH, PA, September 28, 2006—In its fourth award announcement of 2006, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission today named 16 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 67 the number of individuals who have been recognized in 2006 to date and to 9,028 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 \$4,000. Throughout the 102 years since the Fund was established by industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, \$28.8 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance.

The awardees include a circuit judge and a state trooper from Missouri who rescued their fishing guide from the frigid waters of Great Slave Lake on July 29, 2005. On the first day of their fishing expedition in Canada's Northwest Territories, David Gregory Kays, 43, acting presiding judge of the 26<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, and Jason E. Riggs, 33, entered the 41-degree water to save the guide, who was attempting to retrieve a boat that was adrift. The men were cold and nearly exhausted, but they recovered.

The awardees are:

Richard J. Gallagher	Hyannis Port, Mass.
L. Rodger Currie	Palm Beach, Fla.
John H. Flanigan	Pittsburgh, Pa.
Elizabeth L. Darlington	Columbia, S.C.
Christopher R. G. Mervin	Chatham, Ont.
Donald R. Gollwitzer	Grafton, Wis.
Charles D. Hetrick	Brookville, Pa.
Patrice Bélanger	Rivière-Héva, Que.
Kerry D. Reardon	St. Petersburg, Fla.
Peter Edward Alley	Bar Harbor, Maine
Robert Rex Miller	Lakeside, Calif.
David Gregory Kays	Lebanon, Mo.
Jason E. Riggs	Lebanon, Mo.
Benjamin Saks	Pittsburgh, Pa.
Joseph Johnson	Morgantown, Ky.
Robert L. Atkinson	Argyle, Texas

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)

**RICHARD J. GALLAGHER**  
Hyannis Port, Massachusetts

**L. RODGER CURRIE**  
Palm Beach, Florida

Richard J. Gallagher and L. Rodger Currie saved Daniel R. Adams and five others from burning, Hyannis Port, Massachusetts, July 12, 2005. Adams, 43, four family members, and a friend were crossing Nantucket Sound in Adams's 48-foot motor yacht when fire broke out below deck and grew. Dropping anchor, Adams called the Coast Guard and gathered his passengers to the bow of the vessel. Gallagher, 54, fire commissioner, and Currie, 81, retired dentist, were approaching the scene in Currie's 24-foot sport boat, which Gallagher was then operating. They spotted smoke, then saw that the yacht was issuing 10-foot flames from stern to midship. Responding to the yacht, Gallagher positioned the sport boat alongside it, but wind and four-foot seas made it difficult for him to maintain the position. Likewise, the rocking boats caused variance in the distance between the levels of their decks. While Gallagher remained at the wheel, Currie stood on the bow of the sport boat to help in the transfer of the victims. The first to board was Adams's young daughter, who was tossed to Currie by her mother. The mother followed, by jumping to the smaller craft, and three of the remaining victims followed her in similar fashion. Before Adams could leave the yacht, flames had spread to the extent that Gallagher feared an explosion. He distanced the sport boat from the yacht, Currie yelling to Adams to jump overboard. Adams did so, then grasped the end of a line that Currie had thrown toward him, and he was pulled aboard the smaller craft. Within a short time, the yacht was engulfed by flames, and it sank later that day. Rescue boats arrived, and Adams and his party were escorted to shore, where they were tended by medical technicians. Adams's daughter had a minor burn on an ankle, but none of the others was injured. 78856-9026 / 78857-9027

**JOHN H. FLANIGAN**  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

John H. Flanigan saved Lindsey C. Stocke from burning, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, August 15, 2005. Lindsey, 6, was sleeping in a basement bedroom of her family's 1.5-story house after fire broke out in the basement and filled it with dense smoke. Working nearby, Flanigan, 57, bricklayer, was alerted to the fire, and he responded to the scene. He entered the house through its rear door but found that the stairs leading to the basement were not passable due to fire conditions. Flanigan then went to the side of the house, where he kicked in an air conditioner that was in a basement window. He entered the basement through the window, then, despite the dense smoke that precluded visibility, walked about searching for Lindsey. After returning to the window for air, he crawled about the room but again had to retreat for air. After additional attempts, Flanigan found Lindsey, who lay on the bedroom floor, unconscious. He picked her up and carried her to the window, where he handed her outside to others. Flanigan then climbed through the window to safety. Lindsey required hospitalization for treatment of smoke inhalation, and she recovered. 78671-9013

**ELIZABETH L. DARLINGTON**  
Columbia, South Carolina

Elizabeth L. Darlington helped to rescue William M. Koob from burning, Hickory, North Carolina, October 12, 2005. Koob, 85, was in the den of his ranch house when fire broke out at a propane heater in that room. Flames spread quickly. His wife responded to the den and, screaming, alerted her sister, Darlington, 77, retired interior designer, who was visiting. Darlington immediately responded from the opposite end of the house but was thwarted by flames from entering the den. After reporting the fire, she exited the house and went to an outside door that accessed the den. Despite advancing flames, Darlington re-entered the house and approached Koob. She grasped him by one arm while his wife grasped the other, and they dragged him to the outside door, then through it to the porch. As flames followed them, the women dragged Koob to safety in the yard. Koob was hospitalized for treatment of burns and smoke inhalation and died 16 days later. Darlington and Koob's wife suffered minor burns and were treated at the hospital. They recovered. 78831-9018

**CHRISTOPHER R. G. MERVIN**  
Chatham, Ontario

Christopher R. G. Mervin saved a man and woman from burning, Strathroy, Ontario, November 7, 2004. The man, 52, and woman, 42, were inside the man's apartment, on the first floor of a two-story house, after fire broke out in the kitchen of that unit and filled the apartment with dense smoke. Nearby in the neighborhood, Mervin, 33, laborer, was alerted to the fire. He responded to the scene, where he learned that the house was occupied. Mervin entered the enclosed porch at the front of the house but was forced out by smoke. He re-entered, that time on his stomach, and moved across the porch to the front door, then into the entry hall. Finding the man in the hall, Mervin grasped him, but the man started to pull Mervin farther into the building. Mervin held the man in a bear hug and forced him from the house. He then re-entered the structure, again crawling through the enclosed porch and into the hall. Entering the living room, which was off the hall, he found the woman standing there. Mervin grasped her underneath the arms and dragged her from the house to safety. Neither the man nor the woman was injured. Mervin inhaled smoke, and he recovered. 78095-9015

**DONALD R. GOLLWITZER**  
Grafton, Wisconsin

Donald R. Gollwitzer rescued Paul G. Hockerman from burning, Franklin Park, Illinois, July 31, 2005. Following a highway accident involving a pickup truck and the van in which he was a passenger, Paul, 11, remained in his seat, unconscious and secured by his safety belt. The van's fuel tank had ruptured in the collision, and flames that immediately erupted virtually engulfed the vehicle and entered its interior. A motorist nearby, Gollwitzer, 50, foreman, witnessed the accident. Abandoning his vehicle, he ran to the van, where he saw Paul lying against a door on the passenger side. Unable to open that door, Gollwitzer broke out its window with his fist, then reached inside and unlatched and opened it. Despite rapidly spreading flames and intense heat, Gollwitzer extended his upper body inside the van and released Paul's safety belt. He then lifted Paul from the vehicle and took him a safe distance away. Paul was hospitalized for three days for treatment of burns, and he recovered. Gollwitzer suffered a burn to his right hand, and he too recovered. Two other children in the van died at the scene. 78672-9016

**CHARLES D. HETRICK**  
Brookville, Pennsylvania

Charles D. Hetrick rescued Martha J. Rich from burning, Brookville, Pennsylvania, February 23, 2006. Rich, 58, who used a wheelchair, was in the kitchen of her mobile home when fire broke out there at night and sent dense smoke into the unit. She shouted for help, alerting neighbors who reported the fire. In his home nearby, Hetrick, 54, technical school student, learned of the fire by radio and immediately responded to the scene. He opened the mobile home's front door and was hit by smoke and heat. Hearing Rich moan, Hetrick went to his stomach and crawled across the living room toward the sound. He found Rich, who, semiconscious, lay on the floor where the living room and kitchen adjoined. Flames engulfing the kitchen were close by. Hetrick grasped Rich and dragged her to the front door, where a neighbor assisted in removing her from the mobile home. Rich was taken to the hospital, where she was detained for treatment of smoke inhalation and a burn to an arm. She recovered. Hetrick inhaled smoke and also recovered. 79138-9017

**PATRICE BÉLANGER**  
Rivière-Héva, Quebec

Patrice Bélanger rescued a boy from burning, Rivière-Héva, Quebec, November 26, 2004. A 2-year-old boy and his young cousin were in the basement of a two-story house after fire erupted in that area. All occupants of the house, except the boy, fled to the outside. Bélanger, 41, forestry technician, was driving past the house when he saw smoke issuing from it. After alerting a neighbor, he returned to the scene, where he learned from the boy's family that the boy was in the basement. Bélanger entered the house three times in search of the boy but was repulsed each time by smoke. On a fourth attempt, he crawled to the head of the basement stairs, then, feet first, crawled backward down them. Although there was no visibility in the basement because of the smoke, Bélanger found the boy, who lay unconscious on the floor. Taking hold of him, Bélanger crawled back up the stairs and exited the house. He resuscitated the boy, who required hospitalization for treatment of burns. Bélanger was examined at the hospital for smoke inhalation and was released later that day. 78771-9019

**KERRY D. REARDON**  
St. Petersburg, Florida

Kerry D. Reardon saved Amar Jakupovic from drowning, Tampa, Florida, November 5, 2005. Amar, 7, was trapped in the back seat of his family's sport utility vehicle after it dropped from a highway bridge into Tampa Bay. The vehicle submerged in water at least 15 feet deep. Other members of Amar's family escaped the vehicle and were picked up by four men in a boat. Driving on the bridge, Reardon, 43, air and hydronics technician, stopped at the scene and learned that someone remained in the vehicle. He removed his shoes, then dived from the bridge into the water, the surface of which was about 14 feet below. Reardon located the vehicle on his first dive, then surfaced for air. He dived again and went to the driver's side of the vehicle, which he entered through the window of the driver's door. Finding Amar in the back seat, Reardon freed him from his safety belt, then removed him from the vehicle. They surfaced and were taken aboard the boat. Amar was unconscious, and resuscitation efforts were begun as the boat went to shore. Amar was taken to the hospital for treatment, and he recovered. Reardon sustained minor scratches, and he too recovered. 78871-9020

**PETER EDWARD ALLEY**  
Bar Harbor, Maine

Peter Edward Alley saved Gary C. Alley from burning, Bar Harbor, Maine, January 13, 2006. Unconscious, Gary, 52, remained in the driver's seat of the pickup truck he had been driving, after a pre-dawn accident in which the vehicle slid on ice, left the highway, and struck a tree. Fire broke out in the pickup's engine compartment and began to spread, and dense smoke filled the cab. An approaching motorist, Peter, 46, maintenance supervisor, stopped at the scene and tried to open the driver's door but was unsuccessful. He then reached through the door's missing window, unlatched Gary's safety belt, and pulled on Gary, but he could not move him. Peter left the scene to obtain a fire extinguisher from a nearby house and on returning found that the extinguisher was not functional. Despite flames that had grown and spread to the roof of the vehicle and had begun to enter the cab, Peter returned to the driver's side, reached through the window, and again pulled on Gary. After several attempts, he pulled him partially out of the vehicle, but Gary's foot was tangled in the safety belt. Peter freed the foot, then dragged Gary about 20 feet away to safety. Within moments, an explosive burst of flame engulfed the vehicle, the fuel tank of which was found to be ruptured, and the vehicle was destroyed. Gary required hospital treatment for his injuries, but neither he nor Peter was burned. 79059-9021

**ROBERT REX MILLER**  
Lakeside, California

Robert Rex Miller helped to rescue Silvestre O. Garcia from burning, San Diego, California, April 29, 2005. Semiconscious, Garcia, 31, was trapped inside his car after an interstate highway accident in which the car was rear-ended by a sport utility vehicle. Four other vehicles were then struck. Garcia's car and the sport utility vehicle came to rest in contact with each other on their driver's sides, and both were burning, with flames spreading to the back-seat area of Garcia's car. Miller, 45, plumber, was in one of the other involved vehicles. Uninjured, he exited that vehicle and, taking a hammer, responded to the passenger side of Garcia's car. Miller broke out the window of the passenger door with the hammer, then leaned inside the car to his waist, singeing his hair and clothing. He cut Garcia's safety belt, then grasped and pulled him headfirst partially through the window. Another man helped to remove Garcia the rest of the way from the car. He and Miller then dragged Garcia to safety. Flames shortly engulfed both vehicles. Garcia was taken to the hospital for treatment of his injuries, which included burns. Miller also was treated at the hospital, for arm and hand lacerations. He recovered.

78554-9022

**DAVID GREGORY KAYS**  
**JASON E. RIGGS**  
Lebanon, Missouri

David Gregory Kays and Jason E. Riggs saved Jonathan M. Knickle from drowning, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, July 29, 2005. After a few hours of fishing, Knickle, 23, a guide, and two clients, Kays, 43, circuit court judge, and his friend, Riggs, 33, state trooper, took their 18-foot aluminum boat to shore in a remote area along the East Arm of Great Slave Lake. Intending to prepare a meal, they disembarked but found minutes later that the boat was drifting away from shore. Clothed, Knickle immediately entered the 41-degree lake and began to swim to the boat. Experiencing difficulty in the frigid water, he stopped swimming and shouted for help. Alone and with no means of calling for help, Kays and Riggs removed their outer attire, entered the water, and swam about 120 feet to Knickle. They grasped Knickle, who was bobbing in the water, and positioned him on his back. Grasping Knickle's clothes about the shoulder, Kays and Riggs swam back to shore, albeit with difficulty as they swam against a current, swallowed water, and experienced fatigue. In wadable water, Kays and Riggs dragged Knickle ashore, where they divided up their dry clothing. About 35 minutes later, fishermen in another boat saw the drifting vessel and located the stranded party. Their boat returned to them, Knickle, Kays, and Riggs returned to the lodge. Knickle was cold and sore, but he recovered the next day. Kays and Riggs were cold and nearly exhausted. Riggs recovered later that day after resting, and Kays developed flu-like symptoms from which he recovered in two weeks.

79289-9023 / 79290-9024

**BENJAMIN SAKS**  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Benjamin Saks helped to save a police officer from assault, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, February 25, 2006. A police officer, 24, tackled the man he had been pursuing on a city street and took him to the pavement. The men struggled there, the officer calling for backup as the man attempted to get the officer's duty weapon. Saks, 21, college student, who lived nearby, saw the latter part of the chase. Standing on the street near where the men were struggling, he asked the officer if he need help. Saks then approached the men and lay on the assailant's legs to help hold him down. The assailant grasped the officer's weapon and fired it, the bullet passing through the gun's holster and striking Saks in the left hand. Saks got to his feet and backed away as two other officers approached. The assailant was subdued and arrested. The first officer recovered from lacerations and scrapes, and Saks required hospital treatment for his wound, which was sutured.

79135-9014

**JOSEPH JOHNSON**  
Morgantown, Kentucky

Joseph Johnson saved Joshua N. Woosley from burning, Morgantown, Kentucky, March 6, 2006. Woosley, 20, was the passenger in a pickup truck that, in a highway accident, left the roadway, struck two trees, and broke into flames at its front end. The driver was killed in the collision, and Woosley, severely injured, remained in the front passenger seat. At a house near the scene, Johnson, 41, disabled mechanic, heard the accident and responded. Despite high flames issuing from the engine area of the vehicle, Johnson approached the passenger door and opened it, with difficulty. He leaned inside the cab at least twice but had to exit due to intense heat. Again leaning inside, he grasped Woosley, then lifted him from the vehicle and set him on the ground. Taking Woosley by the arms, Johnson dragged him to safety. Flames soon consumed the truck. Woosley required hospitalization for treatment of his injuries, but he was not burned. Johnson experienced soreness in his back for a few days, and he recovered.

79199-9025

**ROBERT L. ATKINSON**  
Argyle, Texas

Robert L. Atkinson helped to rescue a girl from an attacking shark, Miramar Beach, Florida, June 25, 2005. A 14-year-old girl was swimming in the Gulf of Mexico when a large shark attacked her, inflicting severe wounds. A man who was on his surfboard in the vicinity paddled to her and placed her on the board, the shark remaining nearby. Atkinson, 40, airline pilot, was on the beach and witnessed the attack. He entered the water with a small boogie board and swam out, as did another man, who took an inflatable raft. Despite the shark menacing them, bumping into Atkinson's legs, the men placed the girl aboard the raft, then started to shore with it. Others from the beach helped remove her from the water. The girl could not be revived and died at the scene of her injuries.

79575-9028

*[Note: Associated rescuers, Jack Timothy Dicus of Destin, Fla., and Christopher N. White of Lawrenceville, Ga., were recognized by the Hero Fund in May 2006.]*

CARNEGIE MEDAL



ANDREW CARNEGIE

