



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

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*News Release*

FOR RELEASE:  
June 25, 2018

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**CARNEGIE MEDALS AWARDED TO 19 CARNEGIE HEROES  
 FOR ACTS OF CIVILIAN HEROISM**

PITTSBURGH, JUNE 25, 2018— A 62-year-old pediatric nurse practitioner used her body to shield a woman from an armed assailant; a 49-year-old sheriff’s deputy advanced into a burning home despite an explosion and other threats to carry a bedridden, 82-year-old woman to safety; a 47-year-old construction worker fought off attacking dogs that had latched onto the head of a 17-month-old boy and pulled him from his stroller. These are a few of the extraordinary acts of civilian heroism recognized in the latest class of Carnegie Heroes awarded by the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission.

Whether plunging into frigid waters to save a person from drowning or entering extreme environments of heat to rescue an individual from burning, these heroes exhibited persistence, glory, friendship, and strength by risking their lives in pursuit of saving another’s. Nineteen individuals will be honored and awarded the Carnegie Medal for their acts of bravery and heroism.

The Carnegie 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. The heroes announced today are the second group of awards made in 2018 and bring to 10,028 the total number since the Pittsburgh-based Fund’s inception in 1904. Commission Chair Mark Laskow said each of the awardees or their survivors will also receive a financial grant. Throughout the 114 years since the Fund was established by industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, \$40.1 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance. The awardees are:

- |                                |                         |                                |                    |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Brian R. Gadwell</b>        | Allen Park, Mich.       | <b>Kristian F. Falkenstein</b> | Newtown, Pa.       |
| <b>Steven A. Rauser</b>        | Ann Arbor, Mich.        | <b>Deanne M. Kilian</b>        | Olathe, Kan.       |
| <b>David Moen</b>              | Lake Orion, Mich.       | <b>Damian Languell</b>         | Wade, Maine        |
| <b>Stephanie L. Pelley</b>     | St. John’s, N.F.        | <b>Richard R. Krul</b>         | Grand Blanc, Mich. |
| <b>Charley Torres</b>          | St. John’s N.F.         | <b>Brian Kunze</b>             | Tucson, Ariz.      |
| <b>Joshua Aaron Traylor*</b>   | Clinton Township, Mich. | <b>Connor N. Devine</b>        | Warwick, R.I.      |
| <b>Ron Allen Elko</b>          | Clinton Township, Mich. | <b>Michael E. Surrell, Sr.</b> | Allentown, Pa.     |
| <b>David Scot Love</b>         | Flat Rock, N.C.         | <b>M. Ross Klun</b>            | Somerville, Mass.  |
| <b>James Williams</b>          | Green Bay, Wis.         | <b>Catherine Kinyua</b>        | Boston, Mass.      |
| <b>Scott Derrick Whitford*</b> | New Bern, N.C.          |                                |                    |

*\*deceased*

Resumes of the acts follow. To nominate someone for the Carnegie Medal, complete a nomination form online, write the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission at 436 Seventh Ave., Suite 1101, Pittsburgh, PA 15219, or call 1-800-447-8900 (toll-free). More information on the Carnegie Medal and the history of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission can be found at [carnegiehero.org](http://carnegiehero.org). Find us on Facebook: [facebook.com/carnegiehero](https://facebook.com/carnegiehero) and Twitter: [twitter.com/carnegie\\_hero](https://twitter.com/carnegie_hero).

**BRIAN R. GADWELL**  
Allen Park, Michigan  
**STEVEN A. RAUSER**  
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Brian R. Gadwell and Steven A. Rauser helped to rescue Ethel M. Woodger from drowning, Detroit, Michigan, April 17, 2017. At night in a park adjacent the Detroit River, Woodger, 34, fell from a concrete bulkhead into cold, deep water from which there was no easy egress. Police officers alerted to the incident, Gadwell, 39, and Rauser, 37, responded to the scene, moved to the top of the bulkhead that was about 6 feet above the water's surface, and observed Woodger struggling to stay afloat. Gadwell removed his duty gear and jumped into the cold water, the temperature of which was estimated to be in the 40s. Gadwell grasped Woodger about her torso and moved with her to the bulkhead, where he wrapped his legs around her and held to a steel rod that jutted from the bulkhead. Gadwell, for several minutes, secured Woodger at the bulkhead, keeping her afloat. Ultimately, he struggled to retain his hold on the rod and called out that he was losing his grip. Rauser jumped into the river. Taking control of Woodger, Rauser grasped her with one arm and held onto the rod with the other. Woodger wrapped her arms around Rauser's neck and began to pull him away from the bulkhead. Rauser, who was briefly submerged twice, told her to stop and tried to calm her. Ultimately Woodger disengaged from Rauser and drifted a few feet away, beyond Rauser's reach. A boat responded from nearby and Woodger was pulled into the boat by its crew. Gadwell and Rauser were lifted from the water by emergency personnel who had responded to the scene. Woodger was taken by ambulance to the hospital. Gadwell and Rauser were taken by ambulance to the hospital for treatment of exposure to cold water. They recovered. 89123-10010/89124-10011

**DAVID MOEN**  
Lake Orion, Michigan

David Moen rescued Kymberly A. Dominguez from burning, Lake Orion, Michigan, June 28, 2017. Dominguez, 29, was in a second-floor bedroom of her family's home when an explosion occurred in a first-floor room that caused a portion of the second floor to collapse onto the first floor and triggered a fire. David Moen, 64, automotive engineer and Dominguez's neighbor, heard the explosion and saw smoke and debris near the home. Moen responded and called out. Dominguez, who had moved from her room to a second-floor hall, responded. Moen stepped through a second-floor window which had fallen to ground level and entered the unstable, burning home, calling out for Dominguez to follow his voice. Moen moved simultaneously toward Dominguez, meeting her about 10 feet from the window, and Moen carried her outside to safety over broken glass and other debris. Aware that Dominguez's parents remained inside, Moen returned to the home and made efforts to re-enter, but the instability of the structure and intensifying fire, thwarted his attempt to rescue them. Dominguez's parents were unable to escape and did not survive the fire. Dominguez was treated for bruises and scrapes and recovered. She was not burned. 89208-10012

**STEPHANIE L. PELLEY**  
**CHARLEY TORRES**  
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

Stephanie L. Pelley and Charley Torres saved a woman from drowning, Flatrock, Newfoundland and Labrador, November 9, 2015. A distressed woman intentionally leapt, fully clothed, from a remote, rocky shoreline into a cove of the Atlantic Ocean as police officers, including Pelley, 25, who urged her not to enter the water, and Torres, 34, approached her. The woman called for help in frigid, deep water as she was carried from shore. Wearing her uniform, including bulletproof vest and duty belt, Pelley jumped into the ocean and swam toward the woman; she then returned to the water's edge and removed the gear, which weighed her down. Torres, too, removed his vest and belt and jumped into the water. Torres swam to the woman, grasped her from behind as she clutched an exposed rock, and towed the woman toward the rocky shoreline. Pelley also grasped her, and as waves broke over Pelley and Torres at the shore's edge, the woman resisted them. Ultimately, Pelley and Torres pulled the woman onto the slippery shore and away from the water. Medical personnel evaluated the woman, Pelley, and Torres, who were cold. They all recovered. 89296-10013/89297-10014

**JOSHUA AARON TRAYLOR, *deceased***  
**RON ALLEN ELKO**  
Clinton Township, Michigan

Joshua Aaron Traylor died attempting to save, and Ron Allen Elko saved, a 3-year-old boy from drowning, Mount Clemens, Michigan, April 9, 2017. The boy was on a dock on a bank of the Clinton River when he fell into the deep, 45-degree water and was carried away from the dock by a fast-moving current. Traylor, 24, construction worker, who was also on the dock, entered the river in an attempt to reach the boy but shortly began to struggle to stay afloat and submerged. Elko, 36, factory worker, who was fishing nearby, was alerted and ran to the scene. Seeing the boy submerge, Elko jumped into the water near him, grasped the boy's shirt and brought him to the surface, then kicked his legs and moved them both toward a boardwalk that extended along the river's bank. At the boardwalk Elko raised the boy up and handed him to another person, who secured him, then pulled himself out of the water and onto the boardwalk. The boy was taken to a hospital for evaluation. Traylor was recovered from the river by rescue divers about an hour after he submerged but could not be revived. He had drowned. 89082-10015/89092-10016

**DAVID SCOT LOVE**  
Flat Rock, North Carolina

David Scot Love rescued Mishelle K. Calzoncit from burning, San Antonio, Texas, December 30, 2016. Calzoncit, 22, was semi-conscious and trapped inside a burning car following an accident at night. Love, 41, missionary, heard the crash from his recreational vehicle parked nearby and ran to the scene, where Calzoncit cried out for help. Moving quickly to the front, passenger door, Love opened it, thick smoke issuing from its interior. Love located Calzoncit, prone, wedged between the underside of the steering column and the front of the driver's seat, her legs trapped in or near the burning engine compartment. Love entered the car and, kneeling on the passenger seat, put his arms beneath hers, and attempted to pull her free. Despite several attempts to move her, she did not budge. Love briefly stepped partially out of the car, still holding Calzoncit's hand, to get a breath of air. Love then re-entered the car, where Calzoncit had freed her legs, and grasped her beneath the arms. Love pulled Calzoncit from the car to safety. Calzoncit was hospitalized for burns to her right foot and calf and left thigh, as well as a compound fracture to her right ankle and broken right femur. She recovered. 88842-10017

**JAMES WILLIAMS**  
Green Bay, Wisconsin

James Williams helped to rescue Jaikeem Hillard from attacking dogs, Green Bay, Wisconsin, June 20, 2016. On a sidewalk in a residential neighborhood, an adult pit bull dog dragged Jaikeem, 17 months, from his stroller, bit onto his head, and did not let go. A second pit bull bit his mother, and she fell into the street, just out of reach of Jaikeem. Several neighbors, including Williams, 47, a disabled construction worker, who lived across the street, heard screams for help and went outside. Running to the scene, Williams grasped the dog that was biting Jaikeem's head, punched it until it released the boy, and threw it aside. As that dog moved back toward Jaikeem and Williams, Williams's stepson fended it off. Williams later restrained the second dog, pinning it on his porch until police responded. Jaikeem's mother carried him to safety. He was hospitalized for about two weeks for wounds to his head and an ear. Immediately afterward, Williams experienced acute anxiety, for which he received treatment that afternoon at a hospital. 88954-10018

**SCOTT DERRICK WHITFORD, deceased**  
New Bern, North Carolina

Scott Derrick Whitford died attempting to rescue a girl from drowning, Atlantic Beach, North Carolina, June 17, 2017. A 15-year-old girl was caught in a rip current that carried her about 200 feet from an Atlantic Ocean beach into water over her head. She and her mother, who was with her, called for help. Whitford, 56, carpenter, who was on the beach, entered the ocean, and despite rough conditions, swam into deeper water to the girl, where he grasped her from behind. During his efforts in her behalf the girl clung to him, and Whitford submerged several times. Ultimately, he was seen floating several feet from her as police and rescue crews shortly arrived. Emergency responders reached Whitford, who was unresponsive, and attempted to perform CPR on him as they towed him back to the beach. The girl, also brought in by emergency responders, was treated at the scene. She was taken to a hospital and released shortly. She recovered. The mother reached shore. Whitford, who remained unresponsive and in cardiac arrest, was pulled from the water and transported to a hospital, but he could not be revived. 89212-10019

**KRISTIAN F. FALKENSTEIN**  
Newtown, Pennsylvania

Kristian F. Falkenstein helped to save a 32-year-old man from drowning, Belmar, New Jersey, September 23, 2017. The man was swimming in the Atlantic Ocean when he began to struggle in a strong rip current and signaled his distress to those on shore. Falkenstein, 39, university development officer, was on the beach and alerted to the man's plight. Falkenstein entered the water and swam to the man, who had been carried out about 300 feet from shore and was barely above the surface of the water when Falkenstein reached him. Falkenstein grasped the man from behind and, while treading water, lifted him above the water's surface until a wave swept over them. Despite the turbulent ocean conditions and a strong current, Falkenstein, for several minutes, grasped the man several times from behind and persisted in his efforts to support him in the water and keep him afloat. A responding police officer swam out to Falkenstein and the man with a flotation device and the three, while grasping the device, unsuccessfully attempted to swim out of the current. Two lifeguards also swam out to them with additional flotation devices, to which the men clung at a distance several hundred feet from shore. All five men were removed from the water by a Coast Guard vessel that had responded to the vicinity of their location, and they were taken to safety. Falkenstein and the victim were taken to a hospital. The man was not injured, but Falkenstein was treated for effects of near-drowning; he recovered. 89408-10020

**DEANNE M. KILIAN**  
Olathe, Kansas

Deanne M. Kilian rescued Katie A. Blanchard from assault, Leavenworth, Kansas, September 7, 2016. Blanchard, 26, a clinical nursing supervisor, was doused with a flammable liquid and set afire by an assailant as she worked in her office at a military medical center. Kilian, 62, nurse practitioner, heard screaming in Blanchard's neighboring office and, going to investigate, saw Blanchard's upper body aflame. Kilian moved to Blanchard and unsuccessfully attempted to smother flames on Blanchard's body using her bare arms. Kilian left Blanchard to retrieve something to aid her in extinguishing the fire and returned with a female physician who had brought a blanket. Kilian and the physician, while using a blanket to smother flames on her body, led Blanchard to a corridor outside Blanchard's office where they laid her down and continued to smother the flames. As the physician left to call 911, the assailant returned armed with a straight razor and large pair of scissors and attempted to stab Blanchard on the floor as Kilian attended her. Kilian used one arm to fend off the assailant and shielded Blanchard's body with her own. The assailant briefly broke free, prompting Kilian to grasp his leg and pull him to the floor. As Kilian and the physician, who had returned, struggled to control the assailant, a male sergeant arrived to subdue and disarm the assailant, who was taken into custody. Blanchard spent 42 days in the hospital where she was treated for burns to 18 percent of her body. She survived. Kilian was treated for burns to her arms and hands and for a bone fracture in her leg that she sustained in the struggle. She recovered. 88560-10021

**DAMIAN LANGUELL**  
Wade, Maine

Damian Languell saved Quintin S. Thompson from burning, Wade, Maine, July 15, 2017. Quintin, 16, was badly injured and pinned inside a car that had caught fire after it collided head-on with a tree that nearly split the car in two. The car came to rest with the tree's trunk embedded in its front-seat area and Quintin, still wearing his seat belt, thrust into the back seat on the driver's side with his legs pinned in the wreckage. Languell, 35, farmer, lived nearby and was awakened by a loud sound outside his house. Observing smoke issuing from a tree nearby, Languell went outside, grabbed a water-filled bucket, and ran to the scene of the accident where the front of the car was aflame. Seeing Quintin injured and pinned inside, Languell tossed water on the flames, hoping to douse the fire. He then ran back to his home to retrieve more water and, with the aid of his girlfriend, repeated his efforts several times. As flames on the vehicle began to spread, Languell opened the car's rear, passenger-side door, entered the rear of the vehicle and, using a pocketknife, cut Quintin's seat belt. As flames spread to the dashboard and front, passenger seat of the car, Languell moved debris away from Quintin and freed his pinned legs. Languell then grasped Quintin and dragged him from the car, then carried him away to safety. The car was shortly fully engulfed by flames. Quintin was hospitalized for serious injuries which included broken bones and a punctured lung. He was not burned. Languell inhaled smoke and sustained a puncture wound to his leg; he recovered. 89283-10022

**RICHARD R. KRUL**  
Grand Blanc, Michigan

Richard R. Krul rescued Jeffrey C. Neville from assault, Flint, Michigan, June 21, 2017. An on-duty airport police lieutenant, Neville, 55, was walking with Krul, 60, maintenance man, when an assailant armed with a knife attacked Neville from behind and stabbed him in the neck and shoulder. As Neville was knocked forward by the blows, Krul turned toward the assailant and, seeing him about to stab Neville again, blocked the assailant's motion, preventing him from delivering another blow. A struggle ensued, during which Krul took the assailant to the floor with Neville's help. Others including the airport police chief responded from nearby and helped subdue and disarm the assailant. The assailant was handcuffed and arrested. Neville sustained serious knife wounds to his neck, for which he was hospitalized. He continued to suffer from nerve damage and psychological injury. Krul was treated for scratches on his right hand. 89218-10023

**BRIAN KUNZE**  
Tucson, Arizona

Brian Kunze helped to save a woman from burning, Tucson, Arizona, June 18, 2016. In the early morning, the 82-year-old woman, who was bedridden and on oxygen therapy, was in a bedroom of a one-story house when her adult daughter was assaulted by her grandson who possessed gasoline-filled bottles and was armed with a sword. The daughter fled the house. Responding sheriff's deputies, including Kunze, 49, sergeant, smelled natural gas inside the house and, concluding that the woman was in danger, Kunze used a tool to break open her bedroom window. As another deputy began to enter the room through the window, a sudden explosion inside the house blew him outside into the yard; Kunze, standing by the window outside, was knocked back. Flames briefly filled the room, then receded to an adjacent hallway. Kunze climbed through the window into the bedroom, and moved to the woman's bed. Kunze lifted the woman and carried her to the window, passing her outside to deputies who took her to safety as Kunze exited. The grandson, who remained inside, perished. The woman suffered a cut on a leg but was not burned. Kunze recovered from a cut on his left hand. 88845-10024

**CONNOR N. DEVINE**  
Warwick, Rhode Island

Connor N. Devine rescued Alyssa T. Garcia from assault, Warwick, Rhode Island, March 5, 2017. Garcia, 18, was at work inside a drug store when a 41-year-old man, armed with a butcher knife, approached her and stabbed her multiple times. She screamed and fell to the floor, while the assailant continued to stab her. Connor N. Devine, 19, shift supervisor, was behind the front, checkout counter when he heard Garcia's screams and hurried to investigate. Seeing Garcia under attack by the man, Devine shouted at the assailant to stop, and threw a crate at the assailant's head, but the assailant continued his assault on Garcia. Devine then retrieved a utility cart from nearby and forcefully rammed the cart into the assailant multiple times, knocking him away from Garcia. The knife slipped from the assailant's hand and landed on the floor a few feet away. As Devine and others made efforts to attend a badly injured Garcia, a store customer pinned the assailant to the floor. Police arrived shortly and arrested the assailant. Garcia, who suffered multiple stab wounds, was hospitalized. 88982-10025

**MICHAEL E. SURRELL, SR.**  
Allentown, Pennsylvania

Michael E. Surrell, Sr., saved Tiara Roberts from burning, Allentown, Pennsylvania, May 4, 2017. Tiara, 8, was on the second floor of a three-story row house after fire broke out in a bedroom on the home's second floor. Surrell, 64, disabled truck driver, who lived next door, was alerted to the fire. Learning that Tiara remained inside on the second floor, he entered the house through its front door and began to climb the stairway but was repulsed by dense smoke and heat and forced to retreat outside. Undeterred, Surrell re-entered the house, climbed the stairs to the second floor, and got down on his hands and knees. Surrell heard Tiara moan and, despite intense heat and dense smoke that precluded visibility, crawled toward the sound of her voice, finding her on her back several feet from the top of the stairs. Surrell stood up and placed Tiara over his shoulder, then carried her down to the first floor and out onto the porch. Tiara, unresponsive, was given rescue breaths by Surrell, and was revived. Tiara was hospitalized for smoke inhalation; she recovered. Surrell was hospitalized for a burn to his larynx and smoke inhalation. 89147-10026

**M. ROSS KLUN**  
Somerville, Massachusetts  
**CATHERINE KINYUA**  
Boston, Massachusetts

M. Ross Klun and Catherine Kinyua helped to save a man from drowning, Cambridge, Massachusetts, October 30, 2016. The man, 32, floated motionless in a deep, murky inlet of the Charles River near a bulkhead adjacent to a highway. Alerted by bystanders, a passing motorist, Klun, 45, off-duty sheriff's lieutenant, left his car and went to the sidewalk's railing. Seeing the man face down in the river, Klun climbed over the railing to a ledge, about 15 feet above the surface of the water. Klun removed his jacket and boots, and jumped into the 53-degree water from which there was no easy egress. Kinyua, 24, paralegal, who had also been passing by the scene and stopped, also climbed over the railing and, after removing her boots and glasses, jumped into the river. Klun grasped the man and turned him over, elevating his face above the water's surface. Klun revived him, then grasped him from behind and towed him about 5 feet to the bulkhead, to which he held while supporting him. Kinyua swam to the bulkhead and helped Klun hold the man up while treading water. Police responded shortly in a boat and brought the man, Kinyua, and Klun aboard. The man was hospitalized. Klun and Kinyua were cold but not injured. 89088-10027/89628-10028