On the evening of June 12, more than a decade after the centennial celebration of the founding of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission by Andrew Carnegie, 275 invited guests returned to Carnegie Music Hall to honor his philanthropic legacy and 10,000 Carnegie heroes.


Master of Ceremonies Scott Simon, a decorated journalist, author, and host of Weekend Edition Saturday on NPR, welcomed guests to the festivities. The Chicago native proved he had indeed done his homework with his expert pronunciation of the Carnegie name. Following Simon’s introduction, William E. Hunt,
Before the presentation of medals, the audience viewed a short video about the commission’s history, in addition to a moving reflection of the heroic actions of guests of honor, Tillman and Rhodes. As the videos played, the audience pensive looked on, the stories of Tillman and Rhodes taking hold.

Carnegie Hero #10,000 Vickie Tillman, 56, a school cafeteria clerk, was honored for helping to rescue police Cpl. Billy A. Aime, 44, from a Feb. 19, 2017, assault in Baton Rouge, La. Aime had been arresting a man beside his police car in a vacant parking lot when a fierce struggle ensued. Tillman stopped at the scene and called 911. Upon seeing blood on Aime’s head as he attempted to maintain control of his holstered gun, Tillman proceeded to grasp the assailant’s hand, pulling it off of Aime’s gun. Arriving police officers eventually subdued the assailant and halted the attack. Aime, who suffered a concussion, was off work for one month, he recovered. Tillman was treated for wrist pain and recovered.

As Simon read the details of Tillman’s acts aloud, Aime, who towered over the 5’2” Tillman, placed the Carnegie Medal over her head.

“Ms. Vickie saved my life. Anything for her, I’m willing to do,” Aime said.

Carnegie Hero #10,001 Jimmy Rhodes, 38, rescued Patrick E. Mahany, Jr., 64, from a burning medical helicopter on July 3, 2015 in Frisco, Colo. After hearing of the helicopter crash in the hospital’s parking lot, Rhodes, a radiographic technologist employed by the hospital, ran to the helicopter’s nose with a fire extinguisher, spraying Mahany and attempting to reach for his legs to free him from the burning wreckage. Two nurses aboard the helicopter escaped. Although Rhodes successfully pulled Mahany from the burning wreckage, Mahany did not survive the severe burns, blunt force, and internal trauma.

The stage is set at the June 12 Power of One event held in Pittsburgh that celebrated Andrew Carnegie’s legacy and his 10,000 heroes.

Andrew Carnegie celebration

chair of the museum’s Board of Trustees, and Mark Laskow, chair of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, provided additional introductions.

Laskow noted Carnegie’s legacy of benevolence.

“More than a century ago, Andrew Carnegie built a series of organizations in North America and Europe through which he intended to do nothing less than make the world a better place. That’s an ambitious goal, but he was an ambitious man. His building materials were money and ideas, and he built well,” he said.

After dinner, guests moved into the intimate auditorium of Carnegie Music Hall to hear words on the educational impact and legacy of Andrew Carnegie from Farnam Jahanian, president and Henry L. Hillman President’s Chair of Carnegie Mellon University, and Mary Frances Cooper, president and director of Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

Carnegie Hero Fund President Eric P. Zahren spoke of the strength of character and altruistic bravery engrained in Carnegie’s heroes. He referenced the selfless actions of William Hunter, a Scottish boy who lost his life attempting to save another child from drowning in a lake in 1886, believing it gave "life to a movement" — the same very celebration tonight — in support of an idea that one individual, acting selflessly in behalf of another, can in itself not only save a life, but give life to hope for our future and the world.”

At the end of his address, Zahren revealed a Roll of Honor of Carnegie Medal-awarded heroes and heroines, completed with meticulous attention and in accordance with the Deed of Trust, which calls for a “timely executed roll.” This timely tribute to the more than 10,000 past and present Carnegie Heroes, not only indicated the unwavering sense of bravery and self-sacrifice found in humans, but also the Carnegie Hero Fund’s commitment to sharing the stories of individuals such as Vickie Tillman and Jimmy Rhodes, who were the guests of honor at the gala as the commission’s 10,000th and 10,001st Carnegie Medal awardees, respectively.

Following Zahren’s words, keynote speaker and Pittsburgh native Michael Keaton returned home to recognize the 10,000th and 10,001st Carnegie Medal awardees. During his long and impactful acting career, he had embodied heroes such as Batman, but spoke of the importance of the Fund’s deferent treatment of the title ‘hero’ and the recognition of true noble acts of valor, evident in Carnegie Heroes.

He noted that the common denominator of heroism is courage.

“Courage shows up all the time in this world and often without any fanfare,” he said.
Andrew Carnegie celebration

thermal injuries he suffered. Rhodes received medical treatment for smoke inhalation and burns and recovered.

At the event, Mahany’s widow, Karen Mahany, in an emotional moment, presented the Carnegie Medal to Rhodes, both of their eyes wet with tears. The audience members, many of whom were also moved to tears, stood and applauded Tillman and Rhodes for several, heartfelt minutes.

Andrew Carnegie’s dedication to honoring civilian heroes continues to be fulfilled by the Carnegie Hero Fund. More than 114 years later, during a celebratory evening at the Carnegie Music Hall, the presentation of the 10,000th and 10,001st Carnegie Medals is testament to the steadfast, inherent capability of humans to act selflessly and bravely at times when they are needed most.

—Abby Brady, Commission intern

Top right: The evening’s Master of Ceremonies, Scott Simon, right, meets with Carnegie Hero Fund Commission President Eric P. Zahren and Board Member Nancy L. Rackoff look on. Simon, host of NPR’s Weekend Edition, said he was honored to be part of the event.

Bottom right: Keynote speaker Michael Keaton engages the audience while reflecting on the importance of recognizing heroic acts. “The idea of honoring those who have been heroic at the risk of their own well-being, to selflessly and bravely at times when they are needed most, warms our hearts,” he said at the Pittsburgh event.

Below: Police Cpl. Billy A. Aime, right, places the Carnegie Medal on Jimmy Rhodes, Carnegie Hero #10,001, during the program portion of the gala. Master of ceremonies Scott Simon, left, and Carnegie Hero Fund Commission President William Rackoff, left, while Carnegie Hero Fund Commission President and Board Member Nancy L. Rackoff look on. Simon, host of NPR’s Weekend Edition, said he was honored to be part of the event.

The Washington Symphony Orchestra opened its Feb. 18 “Music to the Rescue” concert at Trinity High School in Washington, Pa., with a presentation on Washington County Carnegie heroes numbering 16. As part of the presentation, “Heroes Among Us,” a short documentary on the history of the Commission and its heroes, was also shown. A short description of the Commission and its work also appeared in the concert program.

Concert attendees included Carnegie heroes William David Pennell, who in March 1999, rescued three people from a burning car in Monongahela, Pa., and Thomas W. Siegler, who helped save two men from drowning after their towboat was swept into turbulent water at the base of a dam in January 2005 on the Ohio River. Commission President Eric P. Zahren, and his wife, Laura Zahren, also attended the performance.

“Music to the Rescue” was a fitting theme to pair with the Commission’s work, said Adam Shaffer, general manager for the symphony. In addition, the orchestra prides itself on working other local organizations into its programming when appropriate, enhancing the educational experience for its patrons.

Included in the program were John Williams’ film favorites “Superman” and “Raiders March,” along with a medley from the James Bond films. On the classical side, the concert featured Tchaikovsky’s “Marche Slave,” Rimsky-Korsakov’s “Scheherazade,” and Verdi’s “Triumphal March” from Aida.

“Whether it was Superman or Mighty Mouse from our childhood, we knew when we heard that memorable musical motif that help was on the way,” said Yugo Ikach, principal conductor and music director. “With ‘Music to the Rescue,’ we shared musical moments that inspire and strengthen us.”

The concert also featured 10 talented musicians from four Washington County high schools through the Side-by-Side Program, playing wind, brass, string, and percussion instruments with orchestra mentors.

“Music to the Rescue” was the third of four concerts in the Washington Symphony Orchestra’s 16th season. The orchestra presents four concerts a year featuring a blend of classics and pops around a central theme. In addition to the traditional holiday concert, “Har Ho Ho with the WSO,” next year’s themes are “Scary Music,” “Fire and Ice,” and “Back to Broadway.”

Matthew L. Stultz, a member of the Washington (Pa.) Symphony Orchestra’s board, narrates a presentation on local Carnegie Medal recipients.

‘Music to the Rescue’ symphony concert recognizes local Carnegie heroes

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For more information about the orchestra, visit washsym.org.
Since the last issue of impULSE, the following 37 individuals have each been awarded the Carnegie Medal, bringing the total number of recipients to 10,028 since the Hero Fund’s inception in 1904. The latest awards, which were announced on March 26 and June 25, are detailed on the Commission’s website at carnegiemedal.org. The next announcement of awards will be Sept. 18.

Photojournalist Austin Rainboth, 40, of Blue Jay, Calif., saved a man from a burning car on Jan. 1, 2017. The man remained in the driver’s seat of his sport utility vehicle after a highway accident in Los Angeles. As it came to a stop, it was struck by multiple vehicles, rotated, and was pushed against a concrete barrier. Its rear end caught fire, and the vehicle came to rest with part of its driver’s side against the barrier. After witnessing the accident, Rainboth ran across highway traffic lanes, approached the vehicle, and broke out the front passenger window with a fire extinguisher. After several attempts to force the door open, he succeeded, and despite growing flames, extended most of his body inside, reaching across the unconscious man. Unable to release the man’s seat belt, Rainboth positioned the belt and pulled the man up from under it. Another man assisted Rainboth in removing him from the immediate vicinity and ensuing flames.

John Gerald O’Rourke, a 61-year-old delivery driver of Milford, Conn., saved a boy, 10, from a Feb. 5, 2017, drowning in Milford. O’Rourke, who was walking his dog on a trail, warned the boy and his friends about dangerous ice conditions of a nearby pond. Soon the boy fell through the ice. Grabbing an 8-foot-long tree branch and moving on his stomach to reach the boy, O’Rourke also broke through the ice a few feet from him. Fully clothed and still about 75 feet from shore, he grasped the boy and held him above the surface of the water while treading water and attempting to break a path through the ice toward shore. Exhausted, O’Rourke heaved the boy onto surrounding ice and instructed him on how to get to safety. Unable to hoist himself out of the water, O’Rourke was pulled from the water and across the ice by police using a rope and flotation ring. He and the boy were treated for exposure to cold water and both recovered.

Philadelphia residents Louis Marano, a 48-year-old salesman, and Thomas W. Brown, a 55-year-old sales executive, helped save two men from an Aug. 6, 2016, drowning in North Wildwood, N.J. The men, both in their 20s, were swimming in the Atlantic Ocean at twilight when they struggled to stay afloat and shouted for help. After being alerted to the situation, Marano and Brown retrieved boogie boards; entered the water, and paddled and kicked to the young men, who were about 400 feet from shore. Marano grasped the arm of one of the men, told him to climb on his back, and using the boogie board, started to kick toward shore. Brown had the other man hold to his board. With difficulty in the waves and current, Marano and Brown moved toward the shore with the men. Officials from multiple agencies arrived at the scene with rescue equipment and entered the water. The two rescued men refused treatment at the scene. Marano and Brown were tired, and Marano swallowed water and was sore the next day, but both recovered.

Zachary J. Corey and Karen Marie Mallon, both of Beulah, Mich., saved Olivia L. Thomas and Addalyn A. Mallon from a burning car on the night of Dec. 2, 2016 in Beulah, Mich. They were alerted to the situation by Zachary J. Corey, a 27-year-old salesman, who was walking his dog on a trail, warned the boy and his friends about dangerous ice conditions of a nearby pond. Soon the boy fell through the ice. Grabbing an 8-foot-long tree branch and moving on his stomach to reach the boy, O’Rourke also broke through the ice a few feet from him. Fully clothed and still about 75 feet from shore, he grasped the boy and held him above the surface of the water while treading water and attempting to break a path through the ice toward shore. Exhausted, O’Rourke heaved the boy onto surrounding ice and instructed him on how to get to safety. Unable to hoist himself out of the water, O’Rourke was pulled from the water and across the ice by police using a rope and flotation ring. He and the boy were treated for exposure to cold water and both recovered.

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Zachary J. Corey and Karen Marie Mallon, both of Beulah, Mich., saved Olivia L. Thomas and Addalyn A. Mallon from burning on Nov. 1, 2016 after an accident in Benzie, Mich. Olivia, 6, and her sister Addalyn, 13 days old, along with their mother and 8-year-old sister were in a vehicle that struck a tow truck head on, and then traveled off the road into a shallow ditch where it caught fire. Both Olivia and Addalyn were conscious. Corey, 27, driver of the tow truck, ran to the passenger side of the vehicle where he saw Olivia in the front passenger seat. He forced the door open slightly, extended his upper body inside the vehicle, and removed Olivia from the vehicle. Mallon, a 51-year-old secretary, arrived and was alerted to the presence of children in the vehicle. With difficulty, Mallon freed Addalyn from her car seat and took her to safety. Olivia’s mother and 8-year-old sister did not survive. Olivia and Addalyn were treated for minor injuries; neither was burned.

A 26-year-old probation and parole officer, Joshua K. Watt, of Berlin, Conn., rescued a 16-year-old girl and a 51-year-old man from an overturned and burning pickup truck following a June 26, 2017, highway accident in Brownsville, Ky. Watt witnessed the crash that left the truck overturned with its passenger side against a guide rail. Unable to see the victims from the driver’s side, Watt moved to the truck’s passenger side and crawled under the guide rail. He found the girl, whose arms and upper torso extended outside through the passenger window, and used a pocketknife to cut her seat belt. After he pulled the girl to safety, Watt returned to the passenger side to find the man, whose shorts, socks, and legs were burning, crawling toward the passenger window. Despite burning gasoline dripping into the cab and onto Watt’s clothes, he pulled the man through the window to safety. Both victims were hospitalized and treated for burns.

Jason Alan Doig, a 44-year-old cabinet shop owner from Sequin, Wash., helped save a woman from fuming in Port Gamble, Wash. Doig was a passenger in a vehicle that was traveling on a bridge that spanned the Hood Canal when he saw a distraught woman standing atop a railing, attempting to commit suicide. He swiftly exited the vehicle and crossed to the opposite side of the bridge, remaining out of the woman’s view. Another man approached the woman, distracting her, while Doig ran a short distance to her and grabbed her body. He maintained his hold on the woman as she struck him in the face, leapt backward from the railing, and dangled above the structure. The other man arrived and also grabbed the woman. They began to pull her upward over the railing when a third man arrived and helped. The woman was safe and transported to a hospital for treatment.

On March 24, 2017, a 28-year-old duty officer, William M. Mack III rescued a 54-year-old woman, from burning in a house fire in Aston. The woman remained in a rear bedroom of her home after a fire broke out in the home’s attached carport before dawn. Three family members had escaped the house by the time Mack and another officer arrived to the scene. Mack and the officer scaled a fence and approached her bedroom. Mack climbed a stapler to reach the window, which was about 8 feet above the ground. Using his flashlight to break the window’s glass, he climbed into the bedroom as flames spread through other parts of the house. Despite thick smoke in the room, Mack, following the woman’s means, crawled about 8 feet, grasped her, and carried her back to the window where he handed her to the officer on the ladder outside. She recovered.

Thomas Julius Sais, Jr., a 62-year-old construction project manager from Palm Bay, Fla., helped save a man from burning on Oct. 16, 2016 in Palm Bay. The man, 60, was in a sport utility vehicle that, in a highway accident, left the highway, descended a steep embankment, overturned, and came to rest on its passenger side in dense vegetation at the embankment’s base. Sais stepped at the scene and descended the embankment to the burning vehicle. He broke out glass from its rear hatch window and climbed fully inside. The driver was suspended by his seat belt, and after an unsuccessful attempt to secure a knife, Sais was able to release the motorist from his belt. Despite intense heat and advancing flames at the vehicle’s front, Sais grasped the motorist and, with difficulty, began to pull him toward the rear. A police sergeant arrived and the two men worked together to pull the man to safety. Flames spread and the motorist was moved to the embankment and taken to the hospital for treatment; he was not burned.

A 46-year-old teacher, Matthew John Kalafat, of Scotch Plains, N.J., saved a 28-year-old woman from drowning on Sept. 25, 2016 in Point Pleasant Beach, N.J. Kalafat and his wife were on the beach when she was swept and alerted him of a possible emergency in the Atlantic Ocean. It was high tide and the woman was struck by a wave that carried her away from shore. Kalafat immediately ran to the nearby shoreline where a small crowd had gathered and, though he did not immediately see the woman, he entered the ocean and swam into deeper waters to search for her. He found her face-down and unconscious and proceeded to grab her around the waist, and with difficulty, towed and pushed her toward the beach. Briefly separated by a large wave, Kalafat surfaced beside her and, grasping her, resumed moving her toward shore, ultimately to a point of safety in wadable water where others took her from him and began efforts to resuscitate her. The woman was taken to the hospital where she was treated for several days and ultimately recovered.

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The collapsed, burning home that Carnegie Hero David Moen entered on June 28, 2017, to remove a 29-year-old woman to safety in Lake Orion, Mich. Photo by Deborah Roseanne Bettis.

LATEST AWARDES

Maintenance man Ross A. Johnson, 52, of Colorado Springs, Colo., rescued a 65-year-old woman from assault. The woman was in the driver’s seat of a car that was parked at a self-service car wash when her estranged husband suddenly punched her in the face and began to stab her in the abdomen with a pocket knife. The woman cried out for help and struggled with the assailant. Johnson heard her cries, approached the car, and shouted forcefully for the assailant to stop, prompting him to cease his attack and exit the vehicle. The assailant grabbed the wounded woman, stabilizing her three more times as she attempted to exit the car. The woman collapsed and Johnson pushed away the assailant, who had placed the knife down nearby. He positioned himself between the woman and the assailant. The assailant was arrested and the victim spent eight weeks hospitalized and in rehabilitation, suffering partial paralysis from her wounds.

Business operator Robert Lee Thornton, Jr., 40, of Warren, Mich., rescued a woman, 77, and attempted to rescue a man, 79, from a burning vehicle on Nov. 23, 2016 in Center Line, Mich. The man driving his pickup truck, accompanied by the woman, collided with a power pole carrying high-voltage lines. The truck rolled over onto its passenger side and caught fire. Thornton was driving nearby and witnessed the wreck. Realizing the truck was not energized, Thornton reached inside, grabbed her arms, and pulled her through the opening. Thornton handed her to two awaiting police officers and returned to the truck to attempt to save the driver, despite the spreading flames. Flames entered the truck’s cab, causing the man to disengage. A transformer on the power pole exploded and Thornton retreated. The woman was taken to the hospital. Unable to escape, the driver died.

John Andrew Ussery, 51, of Sanford, Fla., died on May 16, 2017 attempting to save his 25-year-old co-worker from drowning in the ocean off Palm Beach, Fla. The man was wading in the Atlantic Ocean near a beach when he was swept into deeper, unrowable water and called for help. Ussery, a cable lineman, who was on the beach, entered the water, and swam to him. Ussery grabbed him, but was unable to maintain his hold and the two were separated amidst rough surf. With flotation devices, responding police officers swam out to the man and Ussery, who were about 200 feet from shore, followed by lifeguards who paddled out with rescue boards. The officers rescued the two men and brought them ashore, the man recovered after hospitalization, but Ussery fell unconscious on the beach and could not be revived at the hospital.

Detroit police officer, Brian R. Gadwell, 39, and Steven A. Rauser, 37, on April 17, 2017, helped to rescue a 31-year-old woman from drowning in the Detroit River. The woman fell from a concrete bulkhead into cold, deep water. Gadwell removed his duty gear to lighten himself, and jumped into the 40-degree water. Gadwell reached the woman and moved her to the bulkhead. There, he wrapped his legs around her and held to a steel rod that jutted from the bulkhead. He struggled to retain his hold and called for help. Rauser entered the water. Taking control of the woman, Rauser grabbed her with one arm and held onto the rod with the other. She wrapped her arms around Rauser’s neck and submerged him twice. The woman eventually disengaged from Rauser and drifted a few feet away. A boat responded and lifted all three from the water. All were taken to the hospital and treated for exposure to frigid water temperature. They all recovered.

Joshua Aaron Traylor and Ron Allen Elko helped to save a 3-year-old boy from drowning on April 9, 2017, in Mount Clemens, Mich.; Traylor drowning in the process. 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, a construction worker of Clinton Township, Mich., 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, also of Clinton Township, 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...
flames on the victim’s body with her bare arms. She ran for help and accompanied by a female physician with a blanket, the two led the woman to a car outside her office, laid her down, and smothered the flames. As the physician left to call 911, the assailant returned with a strong razor and pair of scissors and attempted to stab the woman as Klun attended to her. Klun shielded her from the attack, grabbed the assailant’s leg, and pulled him to the floor. A male sergeant arrived to subdued, disarm, and take the man into custody. The woman spent 42 days in the hospital where she was treated for burns to 18 percent of her body. She survived. Klun was treated for burns to her arms and hands for a bone fracture in her leg that she sustained in the struggle. She recovered.

Farmar Damani Languell, 35, of Wade, Maine saved a 16-year-old boy on July 15, 2017, from burning in a car after it collided head-on with a tree, nearly splitting it in two. The boy had been driving and, of the force of the crash thrust him into the back seat, his legs pinned in the wreckage, still wearing his seat belt. He quickly turned on a tree, nearly splitting it in two. The boy was severely injured and was transported to a hospital. In the hospital, he received treatment that afternoon at a military medical center in Leavenworth, Kan. The emergency responders attempted to perform rescue breaths on him as they towed him back to the beach, but he remained unresponsive and in cardiac arrest. The girl was treated at the scene, taken to the hospital, and released shortly. The mother reached shore. Whidford could not be revived.

A 17-month-old baby was rescued by James Williams, 47, of Green Bay, Wis., from attacking dogs on June 20, 2016. In a residential neighborhood, an adult pit bull dog latched on to the young boy’s head and pulled him from his straffer. A second pit bull dog bit the boy’s mother, and she fell on the street, out of reach from her son. Williams, a disabled construction worker, heard screams and ran to the scene. He grabbed the dog that was latched on to the boy and punched its head until it released him, then threw it aside. When the dog began to move back toward Williams and the boy, Williams’s stepson held it off. Williams then restrained the second dog until police arrived. The boy 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.

Scott Derrick Whidford, 56, of New Bern, N.C., died June 17, 2017 while attempting to rescue a 15-year-old girl from drowning in Atlantic Beach, N.C. After being carried by a rip current about 200 feet away from an Atlantic Ocean beach, Williams and the boy, Williams’s stepson held the boy from behind. The girl clung to him, and Whitford shouted for the assailant to stop and threw a crate at the assailants head. The assailant turned on the tree through the window, a sudden explosion occurred, burning him outside and knocking Kunze back. Flames entered the room through the window into the bedroom, and moved to the woman’s bed. Languell entered the room 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. He placed her over his shoulder and carried her out to the porch. The girl, unresponsive, was given rescue breaths by Surrell, and was revived. She was hospitalized for smoke inhalation and recovered. Surrell was hospitalized for a burn to his larynx and smoke inhalation.

Richard R. Krul, 64, of Allentown, Pa. 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.

Brian Kunze

M. Ross Khan, 45, of Somerville, Mass. and Katherine Kinyua, 24, of Boston, helped to rescue a man on Oct. 30, 2016 from drowning in the Charles River in Cambridge, Mass. The man floated unconscious in a dense, murky, unlit area near a highway. Alerted by bystanders, Khan, an off-duty sheriff’s lieutenant, pulled over and raced to the sidewalk’s railing. Khan climbed over the railing to a ledge about 15 feet above the water’s surface. He removed his jacket and boots and plunged into the 53-degree water. Kinyua, a paralegal, who had also been passing by the scene, stopped and followed Khan. In the water, Khan reached the man and turned him over, elevating his face above the surface. He revived him, then grasped him from behind and towed him about 5 feet to the bulkhead. Kinyua swam to the bulkhead and helped Khan hold up the man while treading water. Police responded shortly and returned all three to shore. The man was hospitalized. Khan and Kinyua were not injured.
Carnegie heroes Angel Darlene Fiorini, of Newman Lake, Wash., and Matthew Paul Burson, of Spokane Valley, Wash., were presented the Carnegie Medal by Spokane County Commissioner Mary Kuney on March 6 in Spokane, Wash.

Fiorini, 32, removed two of her children from their burning home and then re-entered for daughter Gianna Fiorini, 7. Fiorini crawled through thick, black smoke and blistering heat to reach her daughter.

“I had this rush of maternal strength. I would walk through fire for my children,” said Fiorini in an online article.

Fiorini and Gianna both lost consciousness while attempting to exit the home. Burson, a 45-year-old registered nurse, then arrived at the scene and pulled both outside to safety.

“You help people,” added Burson. “It could have been my family and I would want the same thing.”

Pictured, from left, are Fiorini, Gianna, Kuney, and Burson.

Carnegie Hero Mark Rich, left, was presented the Carnegie Medal by U.S. Rep. Mark Walker on March 12 in Greensboro, N.C.

Rich, a 52-year-old arborist from Randleman, N.C., helped to save a girl from drowning on July 25, 2016 in Atlantic Beach, N.C.

A 9-year-old girl and her sister were caught in a strong current and pulled away from shore.

Both of their parents responded, with the mother reaching the 9-year-old.

Rich swam to the girl, who left her mother, who was struggling, and held to him.

With difficulty, Rich swam the girl nearly back to shore but struggled to reach wadable water. Rich’s wife swam out to assist them, along with others, in reaching the beach safely.

Boaters rescued the girl’s sister and mother from the water and recovered her father, who was unresponsive and could not be revived.

“I was humbled today to present Mark Rich of Randleman the Carnegie Medal – a rare and prestigious award for life-saving heroism,” Walker said. “Because of his sacrifice and courage to do the right thing, this girl has a future. Thank you Mr. Rich for being a hero.”

Walker represents North Carolina’s sixth congressional district.

Photo courtesy of Walker’s office.

On behalf of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, Shakopee (Minn.) Mayor Bill Mars presented the Carnegie Medal to the family of posthumous Carnegie Medal awardee Dmitriy A. Bondarenko during a city council meeting held March 20.

Left: Bondarenko’s son, Artem Bondarenko, right, accepts the award from Mars.
Right: From left, Artem holds his father’s Carnegie Medal while posing with his mother, Anastasiya Bondarenko, and sister, Dasha Bondarenko.

Bondarenko, 39, died Aug. 10, 2016 while attempting to save a man from drowning in Panama City, Fla. The Shakopee resident and businessman was on a family vacation when a relative was swept from shore by a strong current. Bondarenko entered the surf and waded and swam toward the man. Bondarenko reached a point about 3 feet from him and told him to swim before he submerged and never resurfaced. His relative was able to swim out of the rip current and was brought to shore by another person equipped with a rescue tube.

“It’s totally in his character. He would do this naturally. It would flow out of him. He loved people,” said Natalia Sidorov, Bondarenko’s sister, in an online article.

Photo courtesy of the City of Shakopee.

Carnegie Hero Joshua J. Owen, left, stands as Shawnee (Kan.) Mayor Michelle Distler reads the details of Owen’s heroic actions during a Feb. 12 presentation of the Carnegie Medal at a Shawnee City Council meeting.

On Sept. 11, 2016, Owen, a 39-year-old construction worker, helped rescue a woman and 8-month-old baby from an assault in a parking lot after two men ambush the woman at her car after she placed her baby inside. Suffering blows to her head, including from a handgun, she screamed for help.

Owen, of Kansas City, Mo., responded and confronted one assailant, punching and tackling him. The assailant returned to his feet and shot Owen in the face. Owen took him to the ground a second time, and while they were on the ground, the assailant shot Owen twice more in the left forearm and shoulder.

Another bystander fatally shot that assailant; the second assailant fled the scene but was later apprehended.

The woman, who was bloodied, was hospitalized for head injuries, and Owen underwent surgeries to reconstruct his face and to remove the bullet from his shoulder. He recovered in about six months.

In a Feb. 12 tweet, the Shawnee Police Department stated the Carnegie Medal was “an honor befitting [Owen’s] heroism.”

Photo courtesy of the City of Shawnee.
Justin William Schroepfer, a 24-year-old accountant from Rhinelander, Wis., died attempting to save two 22-year-old women from drowning on June 11, 2016 in Lake Superior, Marquette, Mich. After seeing the women struggling in rough current, Schroepfer entered 50-degree water and swam through large waves toward them, but all three were swept into deeper water. One woman and Schroepfer eventually submerged and drowned. Others rescued the other woman.

"We knew our whole lives he was a brave, brave guy. It had to be hard to do, we’re proud of him, we all wish he was standing here. It just wasn’t God’s will,” said Kevin Schroepfer, Justin Schroepfer’s father, in an online article.

"It’s the only time I’ve ever seen a miracle,” said Garvey’s wife, Nancy Garvey, in an online news article. "I’m very proud of him.”

Posthumous Carnegie Medal awardee Justin William Schroepfer was honored on April 3 at U.S. Rep. Sean Duffy’s district office in Wausau, Wis. Justin William Schroepfer, a 24-year-old accountant from Rhinelander, Wis., died attempting to save two 22-year-old women from drowning on June 11, 2016 in Lake Superior, Marquette, Mich. After seeing the women struggling in rough current, Schroepfer entered 50-degree water and swam through large waves toward them, but all three were swept into deeper water. One woman and Schroepfer eventually submerged and drowned. Others rescued the other woman.

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The family of posthumous Carnegie Medal awardee Davis Iban Zinsenheim accepted the Carnegie Medal, presented by volunteer presenter Charles S. Harris on April 22, 2018 in Marietta, Ga. Pictured, from left, are Penny and Steve Zinsenheim with Harris.

On May 10, 2016 in Lake Toxaway, N.C., 22-year-old college student of Marietta, Zinsenheim died attempting to save his friend from falling to the base of a waterfall. The two were walking on the rocks in a streambed while hiking. The man fell and slid over the brink to a ledge partway down. Zinsenheim yelled out and ran after him until he, too, lost his footing and slid over the edge.

"Truly, what is a hero? A hero is a person that has saved or attempted to save another person with no real thought of the consequences of his actions upon himself. Davis Iban Zinsenheim definitely fills the shoes of a true hero in every sense of the word. He truly gave his all for another,” said Harris during the presentation.

Harris is a past recipient of the Carnegie Medal, for a 1962 water rescue of two girls who were in the rear seat of a coupe that plunged into Big Spring Creek in Guntersville, Ala. Photo by Teresa Harris.
Two interns join Carnegie Hero Fund Commission this summer

This summer, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission offered two individuals the opportunity to intern with the Commission throughout the summer. Interns Abby Brady and Lauryn Maykovich delved into communicating through social media outreach, preparing cases for the meeting of the Executive Committee, and assisting in planning and executing the Power of One event, honoring the Commission’s 10,000th and 10,001st Carnegie Heroes. It is clear that their time with the Commission has impacted each in a significant way as they reflected on their experience.

**ABBY BRADY**

As a Cincinnati native, I had been to the Pittsburgh suburb to visit old neighbors as I was growing up, and as I was beginning high school, attended a family wedding on Mt. Washington. I was drawn to the opportunities Pittsburgh had to offer.

When I came to the city four years ago to begin my undergraduate studies at the University of Pittsburgh, I was intrigued by the wide-ranging impact of industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. As a student, my tuition covered and every Carnegie hero’s story is a similar key point that appeared:

Throughout this summer, I am eager to continue learning about hope, optimism, and confidence in the resolute human tendency to rise to the occasion, despite dangers and risk to their own lives. Admittedly, I often catch myself feeling discouraged by stories I hear on the news or doubtful of the actions and demeanor of individuals in the media. However, I am inspired by the brave and selfless acts of Carnegie Medal awards. Their stories provide hope, optimism, and confidence in the resolve human tendency to rise to the occasion, despite dangers and risk to their own lives. Throughout this summer, I am eager to continue learning about individual heroes and assist with the various outreach efforts of the Commission.

The theme of optimism and good-natured humanity projected by each every Carnegie hero’s story is a similar key point that appeared striking to both interns during their time with the Commission.

**LAURYN MAYKOVICH**

There are millions of reasons to be positive. I have always been a firm believer that positivity is one of the most important attributes; it is also one of the most rewarding qualities an individual can spread.

Since I was young, I have been known for my sheer optimism. It is simple for me to see the good in every situation. As a student, I volunteered my time with organizations such as Salvation Army, Soles for Souls, and several other community efforts. My friends would often refer to me as “a ray of pure blonde sunshine” or “annoyingly happy.”

As I learned about this personality trait, my affinity to help express positivity to others grew. This innate feeling is part of what pushed me to pursue a degree in journalism and multi-media arts at Duquesne University. There’s nothing quite like the feeling when I see a person react to a video I have created to increase body positivity or see remarks of how my written words impacted others in an encouraging manner.

Being fortunate enough to help others is invaluable to me. When I first learned about the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, I became enthralled. Recognizing individuals for their acts of civil heroism and bravery is an incredible opportunity to highlight and strengthen the positivity in human nature that still exists but can, at times, be clouded. When I began working hands-on for the Commission, I have never been more passionate about the tasks I was executing, and never felt more at home with the friendly staff.

Throughout my time as an intern here, I continue to find myself enamored in each and every act of a Carnegie hero performs. Whether a wagon rescue from years past or a water rescue that occurred just last year, there is a specific quality to genuine goodness that captivates me. Additionally, I have acquired more knowledge about Andrew Carnegie and his generous principles than any history book could ever teach me.

Here, I have been able to personally experience his legacy and influence, yet, more importantly, I have been able to participate in the continuation of preserving them. Being blessed to have the opportunity to apply my academic knowledge and skills to honor such selfless individuals, such as Carnegie Heroes, and their acts of courage is an opportunity that will humble me forever.

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**NEWSLETTER CHANGES PUBLICATION SCHEDULE**

Starting with this edition, the publishing schedule for imPULSE, the Hero Fund’s quarterly newsletter, has changed. The editions will now be designated by season: winter, spring, summer, and fall, and follow the informal publishing months of January, April, July, and October.

This special edition contains the award summaries for the spring and summer Carnegie heroes, but subsequent editions will include only those awarded most recently. The change allows each edition to more closely align with the quarterly award announcements, making each issue timely. The next edition of imPULSE will come out in October.
GRAVE MARKERS  Bronze grave markers (below), cast in the likeness of the Carnegie Medal, are available at no cost to the families of deceased awardees. They are designed for mounting on stone or bronze memorials. Contact Susan Rizza (susan@carnegiehero.org).

MEDAL REFINISHING  The Hero Fund will refinish Carnegie Medals at no cost to the owner. The medals are to be sent to the Hero Fund's office by insured, registered mail. Allow a month for the process. The contact is Jo Braun (jo@carnegiehero.org).

OBITUARIES  Written accounts of the awardee's life, such as contained in an obituary, are sought for addition to the awardee's page on the Commission's website. Contact Chris Foreman (chris@carnegiehero.org).

ANNUAL REPORTS  Copies of the Hero Fund's most recent annual reports (2015-2016) are available online or by contacting Jo Braun (jo@carnegiehero.org).

imPULSE ONLINE?  Should you wish to receive imPULSE in PDF rather than in your mailbox, let us know: impulse@carnegiehero.org

THE QUOTABLE A.C.  

It is always well to remember that there are giants in our own day, too.  
— Triumphant Democracy, 1886