



# CARNEGIE HERO FUND COMMISSION

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## **18 will receive Carnegie Medal for acts of extraordinary heroism; including one man who will posthumously receive second Carnegie Medal**

PITTSBURGH, March 24, 2021 — The Carnegie Hero Fund Commission today announced that 18 people (listed below) will receive North America’s highest honor for civilian heroism for risking their lives for others in peril.

Among those to be awarded the Carnegie Medal is **Michael Robert Keyser**, to become only the sixth person in the 117-year history of the Hero Fund to receive a second Carnegie Medal. Keyser received the Carnegie Medal at the age of 19, when he went to the scene of a Feb. 25, 1990, one-vehicle accident in which the car had left the highway and hit a utility pole; flames broke out at the front end of the car. Risking electrocution, Keyser reached through the driver’s window and pulled the 37-year-old driver to safety. Thirty years later, he is being recognized posthumously for again going to the aid of a motorist. Keyser approached an overturned tractor-trailer at night and attempted to break the windshield to pull the man from the cab, when another semi-truck careened into the overturned truck which hit and killed Keyser and the driver of the first semi.

“The 30 years between the two acts bear witness to Michael Keyser living his life as a hero, always willing to help his fellow man. We are honored to count Mr. Keyser among these latest esteemed heroes and the newest member of the small grouping of double-awarded Carnegie heroes,” Hero Fund President Eric Zahren said.

More information about the five previous double-awarded Carnegie heroes can be found [on our website](#).

The Carnegie Medal is given throughout the U.S. and Canada to those who enter mortal danger while saving or attempting to save the lives of others. With this first announcement of 2021 recipients, a total of 10,220 Carnegie Medals have been awarded 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 117 years since the Fund was established by industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, more than \$42 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance.

The awardees are:

<b>Norman Tanner Olsen</b>	Salt Lake City, Utah	<b>Matthew Goldfarb</b>	Howell, New Jersey
<b>Christopher Etre</b>	Upton, Massachusetts	<b>Shawn H. Turner</b>	Boca Raton, Florida
<b>Andrew J. Sullivan</b>	Enfield, Connecticut	<b>Mark S. McAuliff</b>	Milford, New Jersey
<b>Kendall D. Flowers*</b>	Miami, Florida	<b>Lyle Berglund</b>	Roy, Utah
<b>Christian Alexander Burgos*</b>	Miami, Florida	<b>Bradley Jay Berglund</b>	Syracuse, Utah
<b>Jonathan A. Hudash</b>	Williamson Co., Texas	<b>Jonathan Wiese</b>	San Diego
<b>Michael Robert Keyser*</b>	Hesperia, California	<b>Kinzo Heath Mihara</b>	Hauser, Idaho
<b>John A. Franco</b>	Willington, Connecticut	<b>Rafael A. Rodriguez</b>	Henderson, Nevada
<b>Jonathan L. Goldfarb</b>	Fairfield, Connecticut	<b>Lester Robert Taber, Jr.</b>	Winchester, Massachusetts

\*deceased

To nominate someone for the Carnegie Medal, complete a nomination form online or write to the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, 436 Seventh Ave., Suite 1101, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. More information on the Carnegie Medal and the history of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission can be found at [carnegiehero.org](http://carnegiehero.org). Follow us on Facebook: [facebook.com/carnegiehero](https://www.facebook.com/carnegiehero) and Twitter: [@carnegie\\_hero](https://twitter.com/carnegie_hero).

### **Norman Tanner Olsen**

Carnegie Hero **Norman Tanner Olsen** is still recovering from injuries sustained while saving a man from burning on Sept. 1, 2019, at a remote mountain campground near Kamas, Utah. A 59-year-old man attempted to light a campfire using gasoline but accidentally spilled some of the fuel on himself, which ignited and engulfed him in flames. Olsen, 23, a university student of Holladay, Utah, immediately ran to him, grabbed him in a bear hug and took him to the ground. As the man, fully aflame, continued to burn, Olsen used his arms and body to smother the flames. Others poured water on the man's smoldering clothing, and both men were taken to the hospital for treatment of severe burns.

### **Christopher Etre**

**Christopher Etre** was driving in Grafton, Massachusetts, the night of Dec. 13, 2019, when he saw a car slide off the road and enter the Quinsigamond River. A construction company owner, 48-year-old Etre, of Upton, Massachusetts, stopped at the scene, and after following the car as it drifted downstream, entered the frigid water and, while carrying a large wrench, swam 30 feet to the car, which had submerged completely except for its rear. Etre broke out the rear, driver's-side window but was unable to remove the car's 18-year-old passenger. Climbing onto the car's roof, he used the wrench to break the rear windshield and then pulled the glass from it with his hands. He grasped the woman by the arms and assisted her from the vehicle. They both swam to safety on the opposite bank. The woman was not injured, and Etre recovered from cuts on his hands.

### **Andrew J. Sullivan**

After a plane crash on Oct. 2, 2019, at a Windsor Locks, Connecticut, airport, employees, including 28-year-old operations supervisor **Andrew J. Sullivan**, of Enfield, Connecticut evacuated to a nearby parking lot. The crash had caused the wing of the vintage military bomber to break from the fuselage and careen into a metal-framed, vinyl building, its fuel catching fire and igniting the vinyl. Sullivan searched the lot for his 51-year-old co-worker who had been working in the burning building. Failing to find him among the evacuated, he went to search for the man, whom he heard calling for help from inside the building. Unable to enter the building through its doors that were blocked by fire, Sullivan ripped a hole in a vinyl maintenance flap and entered. In thick, black smoke, Sullivan called out and shone his cell phone flashlight. Sullivan reached the man at a point about 70 feet inside the building. Sullivan led them back to the torn flap where they exited to safety. Sullivan later recovered from burns to his fingertips and forehead.

**Kendall D. Flowers, deceased**

A day at the lake turned deadly for a group of teen boys in Cutler Bay, Florida, on Sept. 27, 2018. Two of the boys were swimming in a deep lake, when a 16-year-old began to struggle and call for help. **Kendall D. Flowers**, a 17-year-old Miami high schooler, was on the bank, and entered the lake with others to help. Reaching the boy, Kendall positioned himself behind his struggling friend and pushed him toward the bank before submerging. The other boys made it back to the bank, but Kendall did not resurface. Divers recovered him from the lake; he had drowned.

**Christian Alexander Burgos, deceased**

Despite rescue efforts by a crowd of people, 17-year-old **Christian Alexander Burgos** drowned Sept. 30, 2019, after saving a 9-year-old boy and returning to rough water to save the boy's mother. The mother and son struggled to stay afloat in rough surf in Biscayne Bay off the coast of Miami, Florida. Upon seeing their distress, Burgos, a Miami student, who was wading closer to shore, swam to them and quickly towed the 9-year-old closer to shore. He returned for the boy's mom, who was panicking. She clung to him, and he submerged. Others rescued the mother and then beachgoers formed a human chain to bring Burgos to shore, but, by then, he was unresponsive. He died at the hospital two days later.

**Jonathan A. Hudash**

A Williamson County, Texas, sheriff's deputy went above and beyond his duties on April 15, 2020, when he partially entered a burning van to remove a 22-year-old passenger. **Jonathan A. Hudash**, 28, responded to the scene of a two-car crash in Round Rock, Texas. Despite heavy smoke and flames issuing from the van, Hudash extended his arms and hands through the open passenger window, but blistering heat made it impossible for him to unlatch the man's seat belt. Hudash reached in again and cut the shoulder strap with a pocketknife. He grasped the man's arms and tugged, but he lost his grip. Hudash grasped the man's belt, pulling on it until the man's upper body came through the window opening. He then fully pulled him from the vehicle and dragged him to safety. The man was taken by ambulance to the hospital for treatment of his extensive injuries, including severe burns, but later died. Hudash was treated at a hospital for burns to his hands. He was released and later recovered.

**Michael Robert Keyser, deceased**

**Michael Robert Keyser**, who received the Carnegie Medal 30 years earlier for saving a motorist from being electrocuted after a 1990 single-vehicle accident, will posthumously receive a second Carnegie Medal for attempting to save the driver of an overturned tractor-trailer on Jan. 19, 2020, in Apple Valley, California. Keyser, a 49-year-old mine worker of Hesperia, California, was driving at night when he saw the overturned semi-truck, with its tractor extending about 3 feet into the roadway. Keyser stopped and, on foot, crossed the highway and approached the scene. At the truck, he pounded on the truck's windshield with a flashlight as the truck driver stood inside the cab, unable to lift himself out of the opened driver's window. Within seconds, another semi-truck hauling two trailers containing hundreds of pounds of flammable lighter fluid struck the overturned semi, pushing it and Keyser off the highway into the desert. The trucks immediately erupted in flames. Keyser and the man he was trying to rescue died.

### **John A. Franco**

Upon hearing screaming on May 22, 2020, outside his Willington, Connecticut, home, **John A. Franco**, 80, approached a 23-year-old man who was standing over a 62-year-old man on the ground slashing him with a sword. Retired auditor and neighbor to the victim, Franco shouted at the assailant to stop the assault. Franco moved closer to the scene; his neighbor had been severely injured, with wounds to his hands, head, and upper body. The assailant, who was larger than Franco, turned his attention to Franco and attacked, slashing at his hands and head. Franco fell near his driveway, and other neighbors responded. The assailant fled the scene and was arrested later. The neighbor died on his way to the hospital. Franco was hospitalized one week and spent another week in a rehabilitation center. He underwent surgery to repair serious wounds to both hands, and his left hand remains disabled.

### **Jonathan L. Goldfarb and Matthew Goldfarb**

Two brothers entered the frigid Dec. 22, 2019, waters of Lake Mohegan near Fairfield, Connecticut, in 2019 to save a 24-year-old man who had entered the lake to retrieve a dog that had broken through ice partially covering the lake. In open water about 100 feet from shore, the 24-year-old and the dog struggled in the water. **Jonathan L. Goldfarb**, a 26-year-old physical therapist of Fairfield, and **Matthew Goldfarb**, a 30-year-old Howell, New Jersey, teacher, responded and ran to the scene. They entered the water and moved ice out of their path as they swam to the man. Jonathan Goldfarb grasped the man, and Matthew Goldfarb grasped the dog, and they swam back to shore and exited the water. The men were treated at the hospital for hypothermia, lacerations, and contusions, but they recovered.

### **Shawn H. Turner**

A 34-year-old woman was driving on a Boca Raton, Florida, road on Feb. 23, 2020, when she suffered a medical emergency and passed out. Her vehicle veered off the road and entered deep, murky water in a canal. **Shawn H. Turner**, a 33-year-old plumber from Boca Raton, was driving nearby and stopped at the scene. He removed his pants and shoes and swam to the car, where he could see the unconscious driver inside. As the car sank, Turner fully entered the vehicle through the front, passenger window, released the woman's seat belt, and pushed her through the driver's window to another man who had responded. As the vehicle fully submerged, Turner swam from the vehicle, and, after helping the other man untangle the woman from her seat belt, they brought her to safety on the bank.

### **Mark S. McAuliff**

Despite being a poor swimmer, 64-year-old **Mark S. McAuliff** immediately entered the Atlantic Ocean after being alerted to a 16-year-old girl who was struggling to return to shore on Aug. 16, 2019. He had been driving on a beach in Seaside Park, New Jersey, when the girl's sister asked him for help. Donning a life jacket, McAuliff, a 54-year-old retired carpenter of Milford, New Jersey, ran into the water and swam to the girl. The panicking girl grabbed onto his neck, and McAuliff turned her around and grasped her under the arms. He attempted to swim toward shore with the girl, but the current thwarted his efforts. Lifeguards responded and, with a rescue rope and flotation buoys, swam about 180 feet to them. McAuliff and the girl each clung to a buoy and lifeguards on shore towed them to shore. On shore, the girl vomited water and was taken to the hospital. McAuliff was nearly exhausted, but recovered.

### **Lyle Berglund and Bradley Jay Berglund**

Brothers **Lyle Berglund** and **Bradley Jay Berglund** rescued two men from a burning plane after it crash-landed on June 25, 2020, in a Centerville, Utah, pasture and caught fire. Lyle Berglund, a 32-year-old Roy, Utah, contractor, and his 34-year-old brother Bradley Jay Berglund, a Syracuse, Utah, contractor, were driving nearby and saw the plane crash. They ran 1,000 feet to the scene and, despite flames and smoke issuing from the plane's nose, Lyle Berglund stepped onto the wing and grasped one of the occupant's arms. Blistering heat drove him back, but he returned and after Bradley Berglund released the man's seatbelt, they both grasped him again and pulled him from the wreckage, dragging him away from the fire to safety. The brothers then returned to the wing. Bradley Berglund, again, reached into the cockpit and released the other man's seatbelt. They pulled the man from the plane and dragged him to safety. Both of the plane occupants later died from their injuries. The brothers were both treated at a hospital for second-degree burns, but they recovered.

### **Jonathan Wiese**

A San Diego police officer used a dog leash to rappel down a 30-foot cliff and then entered the Pacific Ocean to save a man and his two daughters from drowning on June 13, 2020. Before sunrise, the 47-year-old man was the driver of a truck that left the road at the top of the cliff and entered the ocean. The man had left the partially submerged and overturned vehicle and was holding his 2-year-old twin daughters in the water beside the truck, as Officer **Jonathan Wiese**, 43, analyzed the scene. He removed his shirt, ballistic vest, and duty belt, wrapped the 100-foot leash twice around his chest, and other officers at the scene lowered Wiese to the base of the cliff, where he removed the leash and entered the water. Wiese swam to the man, who was larger than him, grasped him, and pushed him and the girls to the base of the cliff. One of the girls was unresponsive, and he secured her to a backpack; officers at the top of the cliff hoisted her, and then her sister, to safety; they were later hospitalized with serious injuries. The father was removed from the cliff by helicopter. Wiese eventually used a surfboard to paddle about 200 feet to a point where he could exit the ocean.

### **Kinzo Heath Mihara**

After a June 23, 2020, helicopter crash in a Rathdrum, Idaho, field, 42-year-old attorney **Kinzo Heath Mihara**, of Hauser, Idaho, ran to the scene. By then, one of the two occupants, a flight instructor, had seen flames inside the cockpit and rolled out of it to safety, but a 78-year-old man remained inside amid flames and blistering heat. Mihara and the flight instructor opened the door nearest the man, and Mihara reached into the burning cockpit to grab the man's arms, but he lost his grip. Taking off his outer shirt and using it to cover his hands and forearms, he reached in again and grasped the man by his shirt, pulling him from the cockpit to safety. Mihara and another motorist with paramedic training who had also stopped at the scene ushered the men away from the flames and the other motorist began first aid. Both men suffered extensive burns and were taken to the hospital. The flight instructor was hospitalized for more than six months and continues to recover. The other man died three days later.

**Rafael A. Rodriguez**

On June 1, 2020, a Nevada state trooper risked his life to help save a woman from taking her own on an overpass over an interstate in Henderson, Nevada. The 30-year-old woman was clinging to the outside of a chain-link fence on the overpass, crying and threatening to fall, when **Rafael A. Rodriguez**, 38, arrived on the scene. Rodriguez spoke to the woman in an effort to calm her and, when other officers arrived at the scene, one of them hoisted Rodriguez onto the fence. Rodriguez climbed up the fence, including over a part at the top which curved inward and then maneuvered toward the woman. Releasing his grip on the fence, he handcuffed the woman's wrists to the fence to secure her. Fire rescue personnel arrived shortly and removed the woman from the bridge to safety.

**Lester Robert Taber, Jr.**

A 77-year-old man was spending time in the reading room of a Winchester, Massachusetts, library on Feb. 24, 2018, when a 23-year-old man began stabbing a woman with a 10-inch hunting knife. The woman screamed as the assailant, who did not know her, stabbed her repeatedly in the head, neck, and upper body. **Lester Robert Taber, Jr.**, a retired engineer of Winchester, stood and moved toward the assailant shouting at him to stop. The assailant paused his attack on the woman, and attacked Taber, eventually wounding Taber's upper arm. As Taber engaged with the assailant, the woman attempted to flee, but the assailant chased her and stabbed her until she collapsed, mortally wounded. Other library patrons surrounded the assailant, who was by then unarmed, and he surrendered. Taber was treated at the hospital for a 6-inch laceration to his arm, but he recovered.

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