



CARNEGIE HERO FUND COMMISSION

Recognizing civilian heroism in the United States and Canada

436 Seventh Avenue, Suite 1101
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-1841

News Release

FOR RELEASE:
September 24, 2015

Contact: Douglas R. Chambers
Toll free: 1-800-447-8900

CARNEGIE MEDALS AWARDED TO 22 IN U.S., CANADA FOR ACTS OF EXTRAORDINARY CIVILIAN HEROISM

PITTSBURGH, PA, September 24, 2015—In its third award announcement of 2015, the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission today named 22 individuals from throughout the United States and Canada as recipients of the CARNEGIE MEDAL. The medal is awarded to those who risk their lives to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others. Four of the awardees died in the performance of their heroic acts.

The heroes announced today bring to 60 the number of awards made to date in 2015 and to 9,797 the total number since the Pittsburgh-based Fund's inception in 1904. Commission Chair Mark Laskow stated that each of the awardees or their survivors will also receive a financial grant. Throughout the 111 years since the Fund was established by industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, \$37.5 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance. The awardees are:

Liane Heather Wood	Frankford, Ont.
Daniel Marvin Wood	Frankford, Ont.
Ronald LaRue, <i>deceased</i>	Mayfield, Ky.
Joel Kevin Kyle, Jr.	Tyrone, Pa.
Phillip Ashley Grigg	Phoenix, Ariz.
Gary A. Golding, Jr.	Redondo Beach, Calif.
Kevin Patrick Cotter	Palos Verdes Estates, Calif.
Robert McNulty	Burbank, Calif.
William Ayotte	Churchill, Man.
Mark James Hoffman	Aristes, Pa.
Kory Kern Kocher	Waialua, Hawaii
Isaac G. Pinsonneault	Chatham, Ont.
Kirby Crump	West Jordan, Utah
Michael T. Landsberry, <i>deceased</i>	Reno, Nev.
Brian Wargo	Kailua-Kona, Hawaii
Charles E. Wyant	New Bethlehem, Pa.
Karen Wessel, <i>deceased</i>	Arlington Heights, Ill.
Tou Hu Vang, <i>deceased</i>	Coon Rapids, Minn.
Kenphenyeehu Hawj	Ham Lake, Minn.
Gregorio V. Monge	San Bernardino, Calif.
Russell Allen Hill	Indianapolis, Ind.
Earl Heath Wickline	Londonerry, N.H.

Resumes of the acts follow. To nominate someone for the CARNEGIE MEDAL, write the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, 436 Seventh Avenue, Suite 1101, Pittsburgh, PA 15219, or call 1-800-447-8900 (toll free). Fuller information on the CARNEGIE MEDAL and the history of the CARNEGIE HERO FUND COMMISSION can be found at www.carnegiehero.org. Find us on Facebook: facebook.com/carnegiehero.

LIANE HEATHER WOOD
DANIEL MARVIN WOOD
Frankford, Ontario

Liane Heather Wood and Daniel Marvin Wood saved Megan J. Barr from drowning, Frankford, Ontario, February 6, 2013. Megan, 13, was trapped inside her family's compact sport utility vehicle after a nighttime accident in which the vehicle entered the Trent River and, overturned, was carried a distance by the strong current. It lodged against a rock in water about 3.5 feet deep at a point about 13 feet from the bank, which at the scene was a retaining wall. Liane, 42, insurance broker, and her husband, Daniel, 43, minister, were alerted to the accident from nearby. With the air temperature at about 13 degrees, Liane descended a ladder that Daniel and Megan's father had placed into the river at the wall and entered the 32-degree water. In the darkness, she waded about 33 feet to the passenger side of the vehicle, which was submerged at its front end. Unsuccessful in opening the front door, she returned to the ladder for a tool to break one of the vehicle's windows. When she went back to the car, she fell but quickly regained her footing. Although he was recovering from a recent shoulder injury, Daniel then descended into the river and waded to the car. Feeling their way along the vehicle in the darkness, Liane and Daniel went to its rear end, finding that its hatch was opened. They called for Megan to move toward them, and she did so. Daniel entered the rear of the vehicle, and he and Liane aided Megan from it to a point along its passenger side, where both Megan and Liane fell. As Liane held to the vehicle, unable to move on her own, Daniel carried Megan to the ladder and then returned for her. He supported Liane as both waded back to the ladder and ascended it to safety. Megan required hospital treatment for minor injury, and both Liane and Daniel had symptoms of hypothermia and difficulty breathing, for which they later sought treatment. All recovered.

86930-9776 / 86931-9777

RONALD LARUE, deceased
Mayfield, Kentucky

Ronald LaRue died attempting to save Aiden A. Bulkley from drowning, Bucksport, Maine, August 8, 2014. Aiden, 5, and his grandfather, LaRue, 54, disabled truck driver, were fishing from a floating dock just off the bank of the Penobscot River with other family members when Aiden fell into the water. A very swift tidal current started to carry him away. LaRue immediately jumped into the river, swam to Aiden, and grabbed him. He held to Aiden with his right arm as he tried to swim toward the bank with his left arm, of which he only had partial use. Struggling in the water, LaRue was pulled downstream while holding Aiden and was seen floating on his back lifting Aiden with both arms. Both then submerged twice and were separated. First responders removed Aiden from the river at a point about 300 feet downstream of the dock and attempted unsuccessfully to revive him. LaRue's body was recovered from the river in the same vicinity a few hours later. He too had drowned.

86798-9789

JOEL KEVIN KYLE, JR.
Tyrone, Pennsylvania

Joel Kevin Kyle, Jr., saved Giovanni A. Bongiorno from burning, Altoona, Pennsylvania, May 4, 2014. Giovanni, 23 months, was in his crib in a bedroom on the second floor of his family's two-story house after fire broke out in the adjacent bedroom, grew quickly, and filled that floor with dense smoke. Kyle, 29, cable construction employee, was visiting on the first floor when he was alerted to the fire. Knowing that Giovanni was on the second floor, Kyle ran up the stairs and made his way through a smoke-filled hall, having to pass the room of origin, which was nearly engulfed by flame. He entered Giovanni's bedroom, located the crib, and, tucking the boy under an arm, retraced his course through the hall as flames were starting to breach the burning room. Kyle ran down the stairs to safety with Giovanni as flames spread to enter the attic and burn through the roof, destroying the structure. Giovanni and Kyle were both taken to the hospital, where Giovanni was found to be uninjured and Kyle was treated for smoke inhalation, from which he recovered.

86593-9794

PHILLIP ASHLEY GRIGG
Phoenix, Arizona

Phillip Ashley Grigg rescued Scott B. Sefranka from assault, Phoenix, Arizona, December 31, 2013. Sefranka, 34, a police officer, was pursuing armed-robery suspects in a vehicle when that vehicle collided with a pickup truck driven by Grigg, 63, construction truck driver. Grigg's truck was stopped at an intersection, and the impact jammed shut its driver's door. Sefranka pulled up to the scene, exited his vehicle, and, drawing his pistol, ordered the driver of the suspects' vehicle out. Raising his hands, the driver exited his vehicle. When Sefranka approached him, the driver began to struggle against Sefranka. Grigg exited his truck from the passenger side, approached the assailant and Sefranka, and attempted to restrain the assailant, who was larger than both Sefranka and Grigg. At some point the assailant obtained control of Sefranka's gun. He fired three shots, striking Grigg in the chest and Sefranka in the abdomen, felling them. The assailant then fled the scene but was later arrested. Both Sefranka and Grigg were hospitalized for treatment of extensive injuries, Grigg requiring numerous surgeries. 86288-9779

GARY A. GOLDING, JR.
Redondo Beach, California

KEVIN PATRICK COTTER
Palos Verdes Estates, California

ROBERT McNULTY
Burbank, California

Gary A. Golding, Jr., and Kevin Patrick Cotter attempted to save a man from drowning, and Robert McNulty saved him, Rancho Palos Verdes, California, July 6, 2014. An 18-year-old man jumped from a cliff into a narrow cove off the Pacific Ocean and became caught in the turbulent water created there by the surge and retreat of series of large waves. In another party at the scene, Golding, 46, self-employed, stepped to the water line at the rocky edge of the cove and twice tried to reach for the man, but a surging wave swept him into the cove. Golding struggled against the rough water as it carried him into a cave beneath the cliff and then washed him from it. From a point on the opposite side of the cove, Kevin, 17, high school student, jumped into the water and swam to the man. They too were swept into the cave, where Kevin grasped the man, who was unconscious by then, and submerged with him to avoid being thrown against the cave's back wall. Kevin swam with the man before they were separated by waves, and he was repeating the effort when they were separated again. Tiring as they were buffeted by the wave activity, Golding and Kevin were able to reach safety at opposite sides of the cove. The larger waves subsiding momentarily about then, a friend of Golding, McNulty, 39, broadcast systems technician, dived into the still turbulent water and swam to the man, who was then about midway across the 30-foot-wide cove. He wrapped his left arm around the man and swam with his right to tow him to the opposite side of the cove. Golding joined them there and worked with McNulty to revive the victim. All three rescuers sustained cuts and bruises, and they recovered.

86710-9780 / 87338-9781 / 86711-9782

WILLIAM AYOTTE
Churchill, Manitoba

William Ayotte rescued Erin A. Greene from an attacking polar bear, Churchill, Manitoba, November 1, 2013. Greene, 30, was walking in the dark through a residential neighborhood when a 275-pound, male polar bear approached and attacked her, taking her to the ground and biting her about the head. From his house nearby, Ayotte, 69, retired water treatment plant operator, heard Greene's screams. He opened his front door and saw the bear thrashing Greene about. Taking a snow shovel with him, Ayotte advanced to Greene and the bear and struck the bear once, hard, about the face. The bear released Greene, who then fled to safety inside Ayotte's house. As Ayotte retreated, the bear took him to the ground and began to maul him. Neighbors attempted without success to scare the bear away until one of them approached in his pickup truck. The bear then left the scene. Ayotte and Greene were taken to the hospital, where Greene was detained a day for treatment of numerous bite and claw wounds. Ayotte was detained a week for treatment, including surgery, of extensive lacerations, including a nearly severed ear. He fully recovered.

86909-9783

MARK JAMES HOFFMAN
Aristes, Pennsylvania

Mark James Hoffman helped to save Virginia B. Lindenmuth from drowning, Catawissa, Pennsylvania, August 14, 2014. Lindenmuth, 79, was in the front passenger seat of a car parked by a lake in a private campground when the vehicle started to roll down the bank toward the lake. From nearby, Hoffman, 50, ran to the car as it was moving and crawled into it through the opened window of the driver's door. The car entered the lake and began to fill with water as it drifted to a point about 100 feet from the bank, where the lake was about nine feet deep. After Hoffman released Lindenmuth's safety belt, she held to him about the neck as he maneuvered through the window, pulling her. Requiring repeated attempts, during which he surfaced for air, Hoffman pulled Lindenmuth through the window and took her to the surface of the water. She was unconscious by then, and the car was completely submerged. Holding to her by an arm, Hoffman started to swim back to the bank and about halfway there was met by a woman who took Lindenmuth farther in. Others joined in removing her from the lake. Hoffman followed, nearly exhausted. Revived at the scene, Lindenmuth was taken to the hospital, where she died several hours later. Hoffman bruised a knee.

86794-9786

KORY KERN KOCHER
Waialua, Hawaii

Kory Kern Kocher helped to save Isa I. Degener from burning, Waialua, Hawaii, August 16, 2014. Degener, 90, was on the second floor of her two-story house after fire broke out on the first floor and sent smoke throughout the structure. Kocher, 37, refuse truck driver, who lived nearby, was alerted to the fire. He responded to the scene, entered the house, and searched the first floor in light smoke for Degener before climbing the stairs to the second floor. Smoke was denser there, limiting Kocher's visibility and impeding his breathing, but he saw Degener standing a few feet from the top of the stairs. Kocher put her over his shoulder and started to descend the stairs, backward, but he stumbled and fell with Degener to a landing halfway down. Kocher's wife also had responded to the scene, and she climbed to the landing to help with Degener. Regaining his footing, Kocher dragged Degener down the remaining steps, the base of which was just off the front door. With flames by then advancing quickly toward the door, Kocher and his wife removed Degener from the house. Flames shortly engulfed the wooden structure, destroying it. Both Degener and Kocher required hospital treatment, Kocher for carbon monoxide exposure and smoke inhalation, from which he recovered.

86795-9787

ISAAC G. PINSONNEAULT
Chatham, Ontario

Isaac G. Pinsonneault helped to save Joshua B. Martin from drowning, Goderich, Ontario, August 15, 2014. Martin, 21, was swimming in Lake Huron when he found he was unable to return to shore against rough water and a strong undertow. On the beach in another party, Isaac, 16, student, was alerted to his situation. Isaac entered the lake and went out to a man who had taken two boogie boards into the water in a rescue attempt. He took one of the boards from the man and continued out to Martin, who, at about 200 feet from shore, was struggling to stay afloat. Martin joined Isaac atop the board, but it started to sink under their weight. He then lay across it as Isaac held to it. After resting, Isaac and Martin attempted to kick toward shore but made little progress until they timed their efforts to take advantage of the momentum of the advancing four-foot waves. After several minutes they reached wadable water, meeting up with two men who were responding with a small inflatable boat. They returned Martin to shore, where he collapsed, exhausted. Nearly exhausted himself, Isaac followed. Martin was given oxygen at the scene and taken to the hospital for further treatment. He recovered, as did Isaac.

86802-9788

KIRBY CRUMP
West Jordan, Utah

Kirby Crump helped to save Steven G. Sedlacek from burning, West Jordan, Utah, August 10, 2014. Sedlacek, 56, was the pilot of a six-seat airplane that partially lost power shortly after taking off. It crash landed not far from the runway in a soccer field of a park, coming to rest upright and starting to smoke at its engine area. Semiconscious and severely injured, Sedlacek remained secured in his seat. Crump, 53, was traveling in his vehicle nearby and saw the plane descend. He immediately drove to the scene, as did another man, and both responded to the right side of the plane and stepped onto its wing. A door to the fuselage opened off the wing, which held one of the plane's fuel tanks. After the other man removed Sedlacek's wife from the front passenger seat and was taking her to safety, Crump fully entered the fuselage, knelt on the seat, and searched for the release of Sedlacek's safety belt. By then, flames two feet high were issuing from the engine area and advancing to the cockpit. Crump released Sedlacek's safety belt and with difficulty pulled his upper body onto the passenger seat as Crump backed from the plane. Standing on the wing, he pulled hard on Sedlacek, inching him closer to the door. The other man returned to the wing and aided in pulling Sedlacek from the plane. Together they carried and dragged him about 20 feet away as flames grew, soon to engulf most of the plane, including the cockpit. Sedlacek was hospitalized for treatment of extensive injuries, but he was not burned.

86782-9790

MICHAEL T. LANDSBERRY, deceased
Reno, Nevada

Michael T. Landsberry died attempting to save an indeterminate number of people from assault, Sparks, Nevada, October 21, 2013. A 12-year-old boy armed with a nine-millimeter handgun entered the play yard at the rear of his middle school before the start of classes. Of the many students who were gathered there, the boy shot one of them in the shoulder. Landsberry, 45, and another teacher were at the opposite end of the yard supervising the students. They heard the gunshot and advanced toward where it originated as students were fleeing. At the same time, the assailant was walking in Landberry's direction, the gun in his right hand at his side. At a point about 15 feet from the assailant, Landsberry stopped and then slowly approached him with his hands up. He was heard asking the assailant to put the gun down. When the assailant told Landsberry to back away, Landsberry took one step backward, but the assailant pointed the gun at him and fired, fatally wounding him. The assailant then approached one of the wings of the school, fired twice into it, and then shot another student, in the stomach. Walking away, the assailant shot himself, inflicting a fatal wound. The two wounded students required hospital treatment, and they recovered.

86120-9791

BRIAN WARGO
Kailua-Kona, Hawaii

Brian Wargo rescued McKenzie N. Clark from an attacking shark, Kapa'au, Hawaii, October 31, 2014. Clark, 34, was surfing in the Pacific Ocean about 450 feet from shore when a shark, about 12 feet long and later determined by authorities to be a tiger shark, bit her left hand and that part of the surfboard to which she was holding. She freed her hand from the shark, falling into the water, but the shark kept its bite on the board, taking it a short distance and towing Clark, who remained tethered to the board by an ankle. Clark's friend, Wargo, 45, fisherman, was surfing nearby and saw the attack. As he paddled his surfboard toward Clark and was closing in on her, Wargo saw the shark swimming alongside him. He yelled to Clark to get back on her board and then grabbed the shark's dorsal fin with both hands to stop the shark. Pulled off his board, which then came between him and the shark, Wargo kicked and punched the shark repeatedly until it turned and swam away. Clark and Wargo returned to shore atop their boards. Clark required hospital treatment, including suturing, for injuries to two fingers. Wargo recovered from soreness.

86964-9792

CHARLES E. WYANT
New Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Charles E. Wyant rescued Michael L. Wiant from burning, Rimersburg, Pennsylvania, January 2, 2015. Wiant, 53, was the driver of a tri-axle dump truck that, in a highway accident, left the roadway, struck a guide rail and a utility pole, and then went down an embankment and overturned onto its passenger side in a shallow creek. One of the vehicle's fuel tanks ruptured in the accident and soaked Wiant's clothing with diesel fuel, and flames broke out in the engine compartment and grew and spread. Wiant's safety belt released after he struggled with it, and he then attempted to climb through the opened window of the driver's door. Wyant, 39, equine dentist, drove upon the scene and responded to the truck. Despite flames nine feet high issuing from its engine area, he climbed eight feet up the exposed underside of the vehicle and then advanced to the driver's window, where Wiant was supporting his upper body outside the vehicle as his lower body remained suspended inside, amid flames that had entered the cab. Wyant grasped Wiant by an arm and pulled but could not lift him. Pulling again, hard, he lifted Wiant onto the side of the truck, although Wiant outweighed him. Wiant's coat was aflame, and Wyant pulled it off him to find that flames had spread to Wiant's shirt. Both men then jumped into the creek, where Wyant splashed Wiant to extinguish the flames. He then helped Wiant away from the truck and, with assistance from two other men, took him up the embankment to safety as flames grew to engulf and destroy the cab. Wiant was hospitalized for treatment of significant burns and other injuries.

87011-9793

KAREN WESSEL, deceased
Arlington Heights, Illinois

Karen Wessel died after helping to save a boy from drowning, Star Lake, Wisconsin, July 22, 2014. While swimming in Star Lake, an 8-year-old boy struggled in deep water just off a submerged sandbar while trying to return to the bank. A woman from his party swam out to him, but a struggle ensued between them. The woman's sister, Wessel, 47, administrative assistant, then entered the water and swam out to them, reaching them at a point about 100 feet from the bank. She grasped the boy, allowing her sister to return to safety, and repeatedly pushed him up to keep him at the surface of the water until both submerged. A man responded to the scene in a pontoon boat, located the boy, and entered the water for him. He revived the boy and had him hold to the boat as he recovered Wessel, who was floating nearby, just beneath the surface of the water. The man took Wessel to the boat and attempted to revive her. Another boater responded to the scene and took Wessel, and then the boy, to a dock, where first responders continued resuscitation efforts on Wessel. She was taken to the hospital but could not be revived, as she had drowned. The boy was hospitalized for observation, and he recovered.

86756-9795

TOU HU VANG, deceased
Coon Rapids, Minnesota

KENPHENYEEHU HAWJ
Ham Lake, Minnesota

Tou Hu Vang died attempting to save Calvin Yang from drowning, and Kenphenyeehu Hawj saved him, Taylors Falls, Minnesota, May 25, 2014. Calvin, 11, was on a family fishing outing along the St. Croix River when he fell into the water. Swollen from recent rains, the river had a very strong current, and Calvin was carried away from the bank and downstream. His uncle, Vang, 21, college student, jumped into the river after him and swam toward him but did not reach him. At a point about 15 feet from the bank, Vang began to struggle in the water and turned back as Calvin continued to drift downstream. Vang was swept from his party's view, and by the time those in his party accessed the river downstream, he could not be found. In another party on the bank at the scene, Hawj, 44, truck driver, saw Calvin in the water. Removing his outer attire, Hawj ran along the river to reach a point downstream of Calvin. From atop a cliff, about 30 feet above the water, Hawj jumped into the river, swam to Calvin, who was about 60 feet from the bank, and grabbed the back of his shirt. He started to swim toward the bank with Calvin, but halfway there he tired. After resting on a submerged boulder, Hawj towed Calvin the rest of the way to the bank and aided him from the water. Calvin was uninjured. Hawj was tired and sore, and he recovered. Vang's body was removed from the river five days later at a point about seven miles downstream. He had drowned.

86629-9784 / 86635-9785

GREGORIO V. MONGE
San Bernardino, California

Gregorio V. Monge attempted to rescue Jack D. Stine from burning, San Bernardino, California, May 4, 2014. Stine, 91, was in a bedroom of his one-story house after fire broke out in that room at night and filled it with dense smoke. He collapsed to the floor beside his bed. At his nearby home, Monge, 35, was alerted to the fire, and he responded to the scene, where he learned that Stine was still inside the structure. Monge entered the house through its front door, which opened to a hall that accessed Stine's bedroom, but after proceeding a few feet he was repulsed by the smoke and retreated outside for air. After using a lawn chair to break out windows in the bedroom, to vent it of smoke, he sprayed water into the room to fight the flames. He then re-entered the house, reaching the door to Stine's room, where he saw Stine on the floor. Again repelled by the smoke, Monge retreated outside, where he removed his sweater, soaked it with water, and held it to his face. Again he re-entered the house. He proceeded to Stine's room, entered, and, grasping Stine by an arm, pulled him to the hall and then to the front door. Stine died at the scene, and Monge suffered smoke inhalation, for which he later sought treatment. He recovered.

86585-9796

RUSSELL ALLEN HILL
Indianapolis, Indiana

Russell Allen Hill rescued Jalon J. Lewis from attacking dogs, Indianapolis, Indiana, November 2, 2014. Jalon, 12, was walking through a residential neighborhood when two pit bulls, weighing about 65 and 70 pounds, attacked and pinned him against a fence. The dogs bit him repeatedly. Hill, 60, handyman, was seated in his truck, parked at a property about 110 feet away, when he heard screaming and growling from the scene. He grabbed a log from the property, ran to Jalon, and swung the log a few times, striking the dogs until they stopped attacking the boy. Hill then grabbed Jalon by the shoulders and pulled him toward the nearby street intersection. The dogs then attacked Hill, knocking him to the street, and repeatedly bit him about the arms and legs, chewing off most of his clothing. A police officer responded about four minutes after the attack on Hill commenced and halted it by shooting one of the dogs, dispatching it. Jalon was hospitalized a day for treatment of multiple puncture wounds and cuts. Hill was hospitalized 15 days for treatment, including surgeries, of significant bite wounds to his extremities, resulting in tissue loss. He recovered.

86966-9797

EARL HEATH WICKLINE
Londonderry, New Hampshire

Earl Heath Wickline rescued Robert S. Braley from burning, Londonderry, New Hampshire, January 26, 2013. Braley, 58, lay unconscious on the front seats of a sport utility vehicle after an early-morning accident in which the vehicle left the roadway, struck a tree, and broke into flames at both its front and rear ends. Wickline, 62, postal supervisor, soon drove upon the scene and stopped. He approached the vehicle and attempted to open further its driver's door, but the door was jammed. Wickline then attempted to gain access to the vehicle through its cracked windshield but again was unsuccessful. Using a fire extinguisher provided by a bystander, Wickline fought flames at the rear of the vehicle, the flames by then extending to its soft top and entering its passenger compartment. Seeing that the vehicle's rear wheels were still turning, Wickline went again to the driver's door, reached inside, and turned the ignition off. He proceeded to the passenger side, opened the front door, and, leaning inside, patted out the flames that were burning on Braley's shirt. He then grasped Braley by the arms and pulled him from the vehicle, taking him to the ground. A police officer who had arrived then helped take Braley to safety, flames spreading quickly on the vehicle. Braley required extensive hospitalization for treatment of burns and significant injuries. Wickline too was burned, on his right hand, and received medical treatment. He recovered.

85498-9778

CARNEGIE MEDAL



ANDREW CARNEGIE

