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Press Release

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[Bridges & Tunnels](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA Bridges and Tunnels Honors Heroic Bridge and Tunnel Officers

MTA officials joined MTA Bridges and Tunnels Acting President David Moretti in presenting the agency's highest employee award, the Medal of Honor, to four recipients at a ceremony on September 26th at Marina del Rey in the Bronx. These awards are presented to Bridge and Tunnel Officers (BTOs), Sergeants, and Lieutenants for extraordinary valor in the line of duty involving protection of life at the risk of one's own.

Chairman H. Dale Hemmerdinger, Vice Chair David S. Mack, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer Elliot G. Sander, Deputy Executive Director/Director of Security William A. Morange and Chief of Staff Myrna I. Ramon participated in the awards ceremony and congratulated individual members of the bridge and tunnel workforce.

MTA Bridges and Tunnels has almost 800 Bridges and Tunnel Officers and 166 Sergeants and Lieutenants, all of whom are New York State Peace Officers. Dozens of other awards were also given to employees in various titles at the annual event.

The Medal of Honor incidents occurred at the Queens Midtown Tunnel, the Bronx–Whitestone Bridge and the Triborough Bridge. The following describes the actions of the Medal winners.

Midtown Slasher Subdued

Officer Darnell Eason of the Bronx and Sgt. Caspere Caratelli of Long Island, MTA Bridge and Tunnel Officers of the Queens Midtown Tunnel, assisted NYPD officers to stop a rampaging slasher last October. Eason and Caratelli were on duty when they heard what sounded like a gun shot. They began running toward Second Avenue and E.35th Street in the direction of the sound, and when they arrived at the scene came to the immediate aid of two police officers struggling with a knife-wielding man. The suspect, who had a history of mental illness, was wielding knives stolen from a nearby restaurant, where he had just stabbed a man in the neck and face, after which he attacked a woman walking her dog nearby. An off-duty NYPD Transit officer had witnessed the incident and fired his weapon to stop the man but, despite sustaining a wound, the suspect continued to struggle violently. Sgt. Caratelli discharged his pepper spray, while Officer Eason managed to handcuff the suspect.

Thwarted Suicide Attempt

Bridge and Tunnel Officer John Morano of Ozone Park, Queens was on patrol at the Bronx–Whitestone Bridge when he noticed a driver stop her car on the southbound roadway. He walked over to offer assistance and, as the driver opened her door, he saw she had a knife in her hand and had slashed her wrist. Officer Morano disarmed the woman and applied pressure to her wounds to stanch the bleeding and make sure she could do no further harm to herself. Fire Department and Emergency Service units responded and took the woman to Jacobi Hospital. Officer Morano's careful actions helped save the woman's life.

Careening Truck Brought Under Control; Driver Saved

While assigned to the Triborough Bridge's Bronx span, former BTO Akeem Sadiku of Laurelton, Queens took quick steps to save a truck driver's life after the man suffered a seizure and lost control of the steering wheel. As the truck was rolling into traffic, Officer Sadiku hopped onto the running board of the vehicle, opened the driver's side door and managed to apply the brake while keeping the driver from falling out. His actions helped avert a dangerous situation for other motorists on the plaza and saved the truck driver from serious injury. Sadiku, who left the Authority in the past year and is currently in training at the Fire Academy to become a New York City Firefighter, was asked to return so he could be recognized for his heroics.

MTA Bridges and Tunnels' facilities, which connect the five boroughs of New York City, are the Triborough, Throgs Neck, Bronx–Whitestone, Henry Hudson, Verrazano–Narrows, Cross Bay Veterans Memorial and Marine Parkway–Gil Hodges Bridges, and the Queens Midtown and Brooklyn–Battery Tunnels. The agency is the largest toll authority in the nation, helping more than 850,000 vehicles and more than a million people reach their destination each day.



(left-to-right): Executive Director/CEO Elliot G. Sander; Chairman H. Dale Hemmerdinger; BTO Darnell Eason; Vice Chair David S. Mack; Sgt. Caspere Caratelli; Chief of Staff Myrna I. Ramon; Director of Security William A. Morange.



(left-to-right): Executive Director/CEO Elliot G. Sander; Chairman H. Dale Hemmerdinger; BTO John Morano; Vice Chair David S. Mack; Chief of Staff Myrna I. Ramon; Director of Security William A. Morange.



(left-to-right): Executive Director/CEO Elliot G. Sander; Chairman H. Dale Hemmerdinger; former BTO Akeem Sadiku; Vice Chair David S. Mack; Chief of Staff Myrna I. Ramon; Director of Security William A. Morange.