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Press Release

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NYC Transit

IMMEDIATE

MTA NYC Transit Awards Medals of Excellence

An awards ceremony highlighted the outstanding efforts of 32 New York City Transit employees who selflessly came to the aid of customers and fellow workers during times of need, or distinguished themselves consistently as they went about their normal duties.

Medals and commendations were awarded for specific acts of bravery and quick responses to situations that resulted in danger to others, as well as stand-out efforts during day-to-day operations. The ceremony, held at the National Grid Auditorium in Downtown Brooklyn, was attended honorees, their families and co-workers and top Transit officials.

Details of the incidents were compelling and served to illustrate the willingness of NYC Transit workers to go above and beyond the call of duty, often disregarding their own personal safety. Examples include a signals maintenance crew spotted four people in peril during Superstorm Sandy and drove in reverse 200 feet to rescue them and escort them to the hospital; a power distribution maintainer saved a customer with disabilities from the track bed at the Myrtle-Wyckoff Av station complex, where trains were entering every four minutes; on two different occasions, employees prevented trains from entering stations immediately after an injured customer had fallen onto the tracks; and a 65-year Transit employee, renowned throughout the agency. Some of these individuals have already received recognition in the press while others are only now becoming widely known through this forum.

“Your heroism and service make each of you role models for your fellow workers and serve to inspire our customers. You go out and show every day that people matter,” said NYC Transit President Carmen Bianco. “A lot has changed in New York City since my first tour at Transit in 1991. But, I’m glad to see that one thing hasn’t changed: our agency remains filled with dedicated, hard-working employees who provide an essential service for millions of people each day. It’s the people who make the system, and as I often say, ‘People Matter.’ The acts for which you are being hailed today show me that you feel exactly the same way.”

Each year, awards are presented in three areas:

- **Heroism** -- for employees who perform specific acts of bravery, on or off-duty, in the face of extremely dangerous circumstances, which easily could have resulted in personal injury or death.
- **Commendations** -- for job-related acts involving personal risk, or requiring exceptionally good judgment. The employee’s decisions and subsequent actions indicate that, without quick thinking and corrective measures, highly undesirable and dire consequences could have resulted.
- **Distinguished Service** -- commendations go to employees who have demonstrated outstanding efficiency that reflects the highest standards and ideals of a dedicated public employee.

“Medals of Excellence are one of our signature employee recognition programs and our agency’s highest honor. They celebrate employees for their extraordinary dedication to our customers and our agency,” noted Dawn M. Pinnock, Vice President, Human Resources, who hosted the event.

The acts that earned accolade for these employees were viewed as “nothing special” by award recipients but are indicative of the longstanding tradition of NYC Transit employees coming to the rescue when they notice someone in a potentially dangerous situation.

Nominations for honorees were sent to our Employee Recognition Program Committee, which selected the following employees that met the committee’s criteria in the above mentioned categories.

Honorees:

Heroism (8 Awards; 12 Recipients)

1	Roger Bell	PDM	Rescued blind, double-amputee from tracks
2	Leudy Acosta	Supervisor	Saved lives and equipment during Sandy
3	Cosimo Cascio	Superintendent	Led 6 employees to safety during Sandy
4	Johnny Goings	Structure Mntnr	Evacuated families and rescued coworkers during Sandy
5	Joseph Landro	Structure Mntnr	
6	Joseph Fraschilla	Plumber	

7	Salvatore Ambrosino	Superintendent	Spotted 4 people in peril during Sandy, drove in reverse 200 feet to rescue them and escorted them to the hospital
8	Eric Williams	Superintendent	
9	Steven Miller	Superintendent	
10	Michael Watt	Supervisor	
11	Colombo Solimo	Signal Mntnr	
12	Kevin Puma	Signal Mntnr	

Commendation (14 Awards; 19 Recipients)

1	Gerald Smith	Cleaner	Prevented customer from falling between cars
2	Larry Alava	Cleaner	Found and reported broken rail, avoiding derailment
3	Felicia Williams	Cleaner	Spotted & identified fleeing criminal, aiding the arrest
4	Adam Joshua	Station Agent	Identified 4 muggers and assisted police investigation
5	Dionne West	Cleaner	Persuaded woman off the tracks & comforted her
6	Adalberto Baez	Cleaner	Flagged train upon seeing a drunk man on roadbed
7	Mark Hodge	Road Car Inspector	Revived coworker via CPR in remote area of yard
8	Vincent Clark	Stockman	Restored and ran storeroom damaged by Sandy
9	Donald Hay	Train Operator	Prevented a train from hitting 3 customers in tracks
10	Abdelkader Macer	Signal Mnter	Descended onto tracks to help customer onto the
11	Harry Philip	Signal Helper	platform after train entered station
12	Evon Reynolds	Train Svs Supv	Rescued an apparently-intoxicated customer who
13	Eric Younger	Train Svs Supv	fell onto the roadbed at the Rector Street station with the power still on
14	Chris Magri	Train Svs Supv	
15	Sean Byrnes	Prop Protect Agt	Stopped Museum visitor from toppling down lift
16	Jihad Abed	Bus Operator	Saved a teenage customer from gang assault
17	William Schneider	Superintendent	Supervised evacuations and repatriations of patients
18	Mark Finamore	Superintendent	from nursing homes and senior centers during
19	Thomas Chin	Officer	Sandy

Distinguished Service (1 Award, 1 Recipient)

1	Thomas Merrick	Superintendent	Longest-serving NYCT employee (65 years)
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