



MTA Press Releases

Press Release

February 12, 2018

NYC Transit

IMMEDIATE

34 MTA New York City Transit Employees Honored for Heroism, Service

Awards Presented to Transit Workers for Acts of Bravery, Exemplary Work

Honorees Include Employees Who Responded to Recent Terrorism Acts

Photos and Video of the Honorees, Ceremony Available Online

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) on Friday presented 34 MTA New York City Transit employees with Medals of Excellence for exemplary service and acts of heroism and altruism.

New York City Transit President Andy Byford presented the annual Medals of Excellence to Transit employees including the Department of Subways, Department of Buses and Staten Island Railway (SIR), thanking them for going above and beyond in their efforts to help customers, colleagues and the City during a ceremony at MTA's headquarters on Friday, Feb. 9.

"New York City Transit employees are among the city's hardest working and bravest public servants because on any given day, they face incredibly challenging situations that require quick thinking and courage," said NYC Transit President Andy Byford. "Our employees keep customers safe and transit moving by keeping cool heads in heated moments. We thank these employees whose inspiring acts of humanity and bravery help make the MTA network – and the whole city – a better, safer and kinder place."

This year's ceremony honored workers for service and acts of bravery in 2016 and 2017, including two terrorism attacks. Fifteen workers were acknowledged for acts of heroism and bravery that occurred either on or off duty; 16 were recognized for job-related acts that involved personal risk or exceptional judgment; and three employees were honored for distinguished service reflecting the highest standards and ideals of a public servant.

Among the honorees were:

- Subways signal maintainer David Martinez, who saved the life of a colleague after she tripped on the tracks and made contact with the live third rail in October 2016. Martinez immediately called for help, then performed chest compressions to the beat of the Bee Gees' disco hit "Stayin' Alive," a trick he learned from reading a newspaper article. She regained consciousness, a rare example of survival for anyone who touches a live third rail, and remains in recovery.
- Subways station cleaner Sean Monroe, who was en route to clean a spill within the 42 St-Port Authority station complex on December 11, 2017, when an explosion occurred in a pedestrian passageway. Monroe was close enough to see the suspect and witness the explosion. He quickly worked to evacuate the area, directing customers to exits and even assisting customers retrieve their belongings after the evacuation.
- SIR conductor Kiamesha Scott, who saw an allegedly intoxicated male customer fall onto the tracks in August 2017. She alerted operations managers to stop incoming trains and remove power from the third rail as other customers pulled the man onto the platform. When he became combative and tried to return to the tracks, Scott restrained him until police removed him to a hospital.

The awards were presented in three areas:

Heroism: Employees who perform specific acts of bravery, on or off duty, in the face of extremely dangerous circumstances that could have resulted in personal injury or death.

- Victor Arroyo - Bus dispatcher - Prevented a customer from menacing others on his bus
- Diana Belgrave - Bus operator - Stopped a knife-wielding male from harassing customers for money
- Marston Blanch - Revenue collecting agent - While off-duty, helped a New York State trooper detain an attacking motorist
- Devon Bryan - Bus operator - Safely evacuated customers after bus was struck by a charter bus that ran a red light
- Warren Cox - Subway conductor - Saved a woman from jumping onto subway tracks with her 9-year-old daughter
- Andrew Dell'Olio - Executive agency counsel - While off-duty, helped to save a woman who set herself on fire on the street
- Peter Eco & Hayden Guinaldo - Bus dispatcher - Bus operator Evacuated customers from a bus, secured bus after female customer attempted vehicle theft
- Darren Johnson - Subway station cleaner - Prevented an alleged sexual predator from leaving the scene and assisted in arrest
- David Martinez - Subway signal maintainer - Saved colleague's life with CPR after she tripped and made contact with third rail
- Bruce Mitchell - Bus operator - Intervened during customer attack, safely operated bus to a stop while being attacked
- Kenly Molina - Bus operator - Intervened in an alleged robbery attempt on customers
- Sean Monroe - Subway station cleaner - Assisted in the safe evacuation of 42 St-Port Authority after explosion
- Juergen H. Muehlhaus - Subway track worker - Participated in organ donor exchange program to help a colleague obtain a kidney match
- Anthony Ventimiglia - Bus dispatcher - Intervened in an assault of two customers at the Eltingville Transit Center

Commendation: For job-related acts involving personal risk or requiring exceptional judgment. The employee's decisions and actions indicate that, without quick thinking and corrective measures, highly undesirable and dire consequences could have resulted.

- Ayana Arroyo & Da'Tra Felder - Subway conductors - Assisted a lost special-needs customer reunite with family
- George Burton Bus operator Found a customer's missing 5-year-old son
- Greg Cawley, Paul Hayes, & Darrell Nelson - Subway track workers - Saved colleague's life after he collapsed
- Norton Cockburn - Bus operator - Assisted in the delivery of a customer's baby on board his bus
- David Cooper - Subway station cleaner - Prevented a suicidal customer from jumping onto the tracks
- Eugene Griffith - Chief of safety/quality assurance - While off-duty, assisted a Transit employee with a medical emergency who had pulled over on a highway during a blizzard
- John Herzog - Subway track worker - Performed Heimlich maneuver on choking colleague
- Hon Wong Kwong - Revenue equipment maintainer - Assisted in the care of an elderly customer who had fallen onto subway tracks
- Alexander Rodriguez - Bus operator - Assisted cyclist struck by truck during October 31 terrorism attack
- Kiamesha Scott - SIR conductor - Helped to detain combative male from tracks
- Ellis Tommaseo - Subways quality assurance analyst - Assisted in the care of an elderly customer with dementia
- Henry Williams - Bus operator - Notified police of suspicious activity on his bus involving a suspected gun
- Chantharath Xumphonphakdy - Special inspector - Performed CPR on a child with difficulty breathing

Distinguished Service: For employees who have demonstrated outstanding efficiency that reflects the highest standards and ideals of a dedicated public employee:

- Kirt Clarke - Bus operator - Exemplary customer service and work including perfect attendance, participation in steward program, and serving as a mentor to new bus operators
- Eddie Giha - Subways general superintendent - 25 years of excellent service and leadership, including mentorship of teen apprentices
- David Hasse - Subways stations planning director - 28 years of excellent service and dedication to improve customer flow in stations, including improvements at Grand Central and funding commitments for MTA projects in East Midtown

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