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NJDOC SENIOR OFFICER CALLED “HERO OF CIVILIZATION” IN PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TRENTON, NJ, Dec. 28: The New Jersey Department of Corrections announced today that **Senior Correctional Police Officer Chad Ammerman** has received the Carnegie Medal, a prestigious award recognizing his heroism in rescuing an elderly boater who capsized in Little Egg Harbor in 2021.

“Senior Officer Ammerman represents the best of NJDOC,” said Commissioner Victoria L. Kuhn. “When we say we are ‘NJDOC Strong,’ this is what we mean – a willingness to put others before self, to risk one’s own safety to save another. We’re proud the Carnegie Hero Fund has recognized his remarkable actions this way.”

Ammerman is among this year’s 16 recipients of the Carnegie Medal, given by the [Carnegie Hero Fund Commission](#). Each year, recipients are selected and they, or their survivors, become eligible for financial awards, including one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits and continuing assistance.

The Carnegie Hero Fund awards the Carnegie Medal to “individuals in the United States and Canada who risk death or serious physical injury to an extraordinary degree saving or attempting to save the lives of others.”

Businessman and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie created the Fund in 1904 and charged the Commission with honoring “heroes of civilization,” who display lifesaving actions and heroism.

Ammerman’s off-duty actions on June 21, 2021 earned him the Carnegie Medal. As the award citation noted:

“A sailboat carrying John L. McKenna capsized in Little Egg Harbor on June 21, 2021. McKenna, unable to reenter the sailboat, floated in the harbor until he arrived near a bulkhead along a bank. Fatigued, McKenna called out for help. Chad Ammerman, a 41-year-old corrections officer, heard McKenna’s call for help and phoned 911. Fearful that a rescue boat might arrive too late, Ammerman procured an emptied, 29-pound plastic cooler, jumped into the water, and swam through rough currents with the help of directional instructions from bystanders. Once he reached McKenna, Ammerman instructed him to grab one handle of the cooler while Ammerman backstroked toward the bulkhead. A firefighter piloting a boat responded and delivered McKenna and Ammerman to the bulkhead.”

Ammerman swam out 300 yards to reach the 82-year-old boater.

Ammerman, who works at Garden State Youth Correctional Facility, said he was grateful for the award but doesn’t consider himself a hero.

“I’m just grateful I could be in the right place at the right time that day to help,” Ammerman said. “I appreciate the Carnegie Hero Fund for recognizing me in this way.”

William Sullivan, president of NJPBA 105, which represents about 5,000 New Jersey correctional police officers, said Senior Officer Ammerman is among 10,000 recipients of the Carnegie Medal in its 118-year history.

“Our training and careers in the NJDOC extend well beyond our tour at our facilities. We appreciate his actions and heroism in saving this gentleman. Our officers are the best in the nation and times like this show just that.”

More information on the Carnegie Hero Fund and this year’s Medal recipients can be found here: <https://www.carnegiehero.org/>

FOX29.COM: [Off duty correctional officer rescues elderly man stranded in water off New Jersey coast, police say.](#)

PhillyVoice.com: [Off-duty correctional officer swam 300 yards to rescue elderly man at Jersey Shore](#)