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E9-1-1 Institute Presents 2005 Awards

The E9-1-1 Institute in Washington, DC, is presenting nine awards for outstanding actions and service in emergency response. The award winners range from two five-year-olds who saved their mothers' lives to a veteran police officer and emergency dispatchers. Summaries of the winners are as follows:

Citizen in Action Award: Five-year old Marquise Craft of Denver, CO, and five-year old Taylor Duckworth of North Richland Hills, TX. Their presence of mind to call 9-1-1 helped bring emergency assistance to their homes in time to save their mothers' lives and, in Taylor's case, her year-to-be-born sibling.

First Responder Award: Colorado State Trooper Sidney Smith, stationed in Craig, CO. His actions led to the arrest of two suspects in a shooting within 10 minutes of the 9-1-1 call. Leaving the communications center, he spotted a vehicle matching the description of the suspects.

9-1-1 Call Taker Award: Cynthia E. Cieloch of Syracuse, NY was honored for her work for the Onondaga County Sheriff's Department. She has worked in public safety communications since 1979, receiving many local awards for her work.

Outstanding Call Center Award: The Orange County, FL Fire Communications Center was given the award for performance during a most trying year for Florida. With a staff of only 40 employees, they handled more than 96,000 calls in 2004, while providing service for other emergency agencies.

Government Leader Award: John Marengo of Sacramento, CA was honored for his work as statewide coordinator for California's Wireless E9-1-1 Project. He is the central point of contact for wireless deployment in the state.

Industry Professional Award: Elizabeth Colunga of Richardson, TX was honored for her work for MCI as Project Manager and 9-1-1 Subject Matter Expert. She has worked for many years

with emergency agencies and now is developing work to integrate Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) service with 9-1-1.

State or Regional Program: The Tennessee Emergency Communications Board, Nashville, TN was honored for its commitment to address the challenges of rural emergency call centers. Tennessee was one of the first states to assure that 80% or more of its counties provide E9-1-1 landline telephone as well as wireless service

Media/Entertainment Excellence: Cullen Browder of WRAL-TV in Raleigh, NC was honored for his long-time interest in, and reporting on, emergency services, over the last 20 years.

Gregory L. Rohde, Executive Director of the E9-1-1 Institute, said, “More than 400,000 calls are made each day to 9-1-1. Some calls highlight extraordinary heroism, such as those by five-year old children saving the lives of their mothers. The volume of calls each day also tax the 9-1-1 system and some of our honorees demonstrate dedicated public service to ensure that the 9-1-1 system is there to meet all emergencies. These award winners show the importance of the 9-1-1 emergency number system and remind all of us that we cannot take emergency communications for granted. They honor quick thinking and long-term dedication – each of which is necessary for a successful emergency response.”

The awards will be presented at a March 1 ceremony in Washington, DC.

About the E9-1-1 Institute. The E9-1-1 Institute (www.e911institute.org) is a not-for-profit organization which provides administrative and policy support to the Congressional E9-1-1 Caucus. The purpose of the E9-1-1 Institute is to promote public education and awareness of E9-1-1 and emergency communications issues and serve the Congressional E9-1-1 Caucus as a clearinghouse of information on E9-1-1 and emergency communications issues. Gregory L. Rohde, former Administrator of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, serves as the E9-1-1 Institute’s Executive Director.

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