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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VCFD Awards Recognize Community Heroes

CAMARILLO – The Ventura County Fire Department honored 59 people today for their outstanding service in support of public safety during the 26th annual VCFD Awards.

“Each of the people honored today rose to the occasion to enhance public safety in our community,” Fire Chief Dustin Gardner said. “They exemplify excellence. And some went far, far above expectations to save lives. They are role models and inspirations for all of us to emulate.”

Captain Zach Trottier, Engineer Logan Hershman, Firefighter Austyn Frailey and Ventura County Sheriff’s Deputy Austin Whittaker received Medals of Valor for saving a 16-year-old girl and her mother, who were being attacked by six Cane Corso mastiffs and a Pitbull mix in Thousand Oaks. The Medal of Valor is the highest honor the department bestows.

The men rushed to the victims, using the fire engine’s sirens and air horn, compressed air from a breathing apparatus, firefighting tools and pepper spray to drive the dogs off the victims and corral them back inside the house.

Captain Desi Rodriguez, Captain Jeff Witt, Engineer Kevin Lundgren, Engineer Ethan Miller, Firefighter Andres Castilleja and Firefighter Alexandra Johnson were presented with Meritorious Service Medals for their work saving a teen who was run over by a car while riding his bike in Camarillo.

The boy was trapped underneath the car. When the firefighters arrived, he was unconscious, had stopped breathing and had no pulse. Joined by a Ventura County Sheriff’s detective, and a Los Angeles Fire Department captain who happened to be in the area, the firefighters lifted the car by hand so they could pull the boy out, start cardiopulmonary resuscitation, restore a heartbeat and maintain care all the way to the hospital.

The Sheriff’s detective, the LAFD captain received Lifesaving Award Medals.



Thirteen other people received Lifesaving Citation Medals or Lifesaving Award Medals for actions, including saving people who were choking, cardiopulmonary resuscitation saves and a drowning save. Lifesaving Award Medals are presented to VCFD employees and members of other public safety agencies. Lifesaving Citation Medals are awarded to members of the public.

The lifesaving award winners are:

Scott Dettorre
Emily Tipps
Humberto Quintana
Milo Bustillos
Mikayla Lutzke
Marquita Ellias
Nancy Hood
Dustin "D.J." Fierro
Brad Bosworth
Arturo Mendoza
Firefighter Garrett Prather
Ventura County Sheriff's Deputy Martin Nunes
Battalion Chief Nicholas Cleary
Los Angeles Fire Department Captain Jason Jamal
And Ventura County Sheriff's Detective Noe Magana

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