



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Members of JGMFD Receive Recognition Awards

JOHNSTON, Iowa – The Johnston-Grimes Metropolitan Fire Department (JGMFD) recognized a few of their own on Wednesday, Mar. 10, 2021, at Fire Station 39.

This year, four life-saving awards were presented for doing an outstanding job of obtaining Return of Spontaneous Circulation (ROSC) and having patients survive and return to a near-normal life after suffering a cardiac arrest.

First Life-saving Award

Presented to Lt. Ty Wheeler, Firefighter Nick Pearson, Firefighter Tanner Townes, Firefighter Nick Stewart (not pictured) and Firefighter Travis Wuebker (not pictured)

In the early morning hours of Tuesday, Mar. 17, 2020, JGMFD was dispatched to a residence in Grimes for a fall victim. Crews at JGMFD and Polk County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) crews arrived on the scene and found an unresponsive victim in cardiac arrest. Crews immediately began high-quality CPR and Advanced Cardiac Life Support care. Crews achieved ROSC on the scene and transported the patient to the hospital with a pulse. The patient was found to have an undiagnosed heart problem that the hospital was able to successfully treat, and the patient has since made a full recovery.

Second Life-saving Award

Presented to Captain Matt Price, Lieutenant Randy Chumbley (not pictured), Firefighter John Sweeney, Firefighter Todd Borcherding (not pictured), Firefighter Kevin Long, Firefighter Tanner Townes and Paramedic Kelsey Rath

On Sunday, Jul. 19, 2020, the JGMFD was dispatched for a cardiac arrest. Once the crew arrived, they immediately took over doing high-quality CPR and applying the heart monitor. The crew initiated several defibrillations and obtained Return of Spontaneous Circulation (ROSC) before transporting the patient to the hospital. The patient was transported emergently to the hospital, where the hospital continued to provide care and provide further treatment. After several procedures and a hospital stay, the patient returned home without any cognitive impairment. Without these quick interventions and recognition of a shockable rhythm, this patient may not have had the same outcome.

Third Life-saving Award

Presented to Cpt. Tristan Johnson (not pictured), Firefighter Jeff Hawbaker, Firefighter Ginger McAndrew, Firefighter Ryan Wheeler, Firefighter Andrew Hooper (not pictured) and Firefighter Alex Headley

In the late-night hours of Tuesday, Sept. 15, 2020, the JGMFD was dispatched for an unconscious person at a residence in Johnston. Johnston Police Officers arrived on the scene and found a male subject in cardiac arrest and immediately began high-quality CPR. JGMFD personnel arrived on the scene and assumed cardiac arrest management by taking over high-quality CPR and providing Advanced Cardiac Life Support. While securing the patient's airway, one of the paramedics on the scene was able to locate an airway blockage caused by a not fully chewed piece of food and quickly remove the blockage. Shortly after completing this, ROSC was achieved. The patient was transported rapidly to the hospital and was able to talk in complete sentences with the crew before they arrived at the emergency department. The patient later made a full recovery.

This award is for members who provide critical life-saving care to a patient in either cardiac or respiratory arrest while on-or off-duty. This care delivers an outcome that allows the patient to leave the hospital in a normal state.

Fourth Life-saving Award

Presented to Cpt. Tristan Johnson (not pictured), Lt. Nic Hutchinson, Firefighter Taylor Smothers, EMT Stephanie Shepherd, Firefighter Andy Odell (not pictured) and Firefighter Jeff Hawbaker

In the afternoon of Monday, Nov. 2, 2020, a residence was found unresponsive in their backyard while mowing by a passerby who called 911 and initiated CPR. JGMFD and PCSO personnel arrived on the scene without delay. Crews immediately assumed providing high-quality CPR and Advanced Cardiac Life Support. The patient received several defibrillations on scene. The patient was rapidly transported to the hospital and started showing positive signs of improvement upon arrival. The patient later made a full recovery and was discharged from the hospital.

Two Company Citations Awarded

This award is presented to a unit whose performance was an equaled team effort in overcoming unusual difficulties or obstacles in completing a difficult task that has resulted in the protection of life and property.

First Company Citation Award

Presented to Lt. Randy Jones (not pictured), Firefighter Ryan Wheeler and Firefighter Andrew Hooper (not pictured)

On Monday, May 11, 2020, the JGMFD was dispatched to Devries Outdoor on Lower Beaver Road for a man pinned under a skid loader. JGMFD crews responded without delay and arrived on the scene to find a man trapped against a dirt berm with one leg trapped underneath the skid loader wheel. The patient was in extreme pain and was in desperate need of assistance. The crew of Engine 391 quickly stabilized the skid loader and then performed a bag lift extrication to get the patient out from underneath the skid loader while following all safety standards during the difficult operation. This crew was able to complete the extrication in under 5 minutes. This rescue's speed and efficiency can be attributed directly to this crew's dedication to training and technical skill proficiency. Due to their quick actions, the patient was able to make a positive recovery.

Second Company Citation Award

Presented to Firefighter Ryan Wheeler, Firefighter Brook Hansen and Firefighter Andrew Hooper (not pictured)

On Thursday, Sept. 3, 2020, Fire Station 39 received a call from a resident of Johnston stating they had a cat stuck in the wall of their home. This crew responded without delay and met with the homeowner, who stated their family cat had entered the walls, crawling around behind the drywall. This crew went out of their way to find a way to get the cat out of the wall by cutting a small hole in the drywall and pulling the cat out with our animal snare. After this was complete and the homeowner was reunited with their pet, this crew stayed on scene to clean up all of the debris, vacuuming up the dust from the ground with the department's portable vacuum.

Rookie of the Year

Presented to Firefighter Alex Aubert

Alex has been with the department for less than two years. He came to JGMFD with very little firefighting/EMS experience, but you would not know that about him when you see him with his crew in his station. Alex lives the JGMFD core value of selflessness daily by always being there for his crew, whether it is a shift day or off day, to handle tasks and assignments that do not receive glory or recognition. He always gives 100 percent to everything that he does and he always maintains a high level of integrity by always trying to do the right thing and standing up for what is right. Alex accomplished the difficult task of completing paramedic school while being a Rookie for JGMFD. Alex excels in his patient care ability and humbly always seeks feedback on his performance to ensure that he provides the best service possible to Johnston and Grimes's residents.

Firefighter of the Year

Presented to Alex Headley

His peers have described Alex as taking great strides towards better himself as both a firefighter and paramedic. Alex often takes on additional responsibilities and assignments without the desire to receive recognition or spread ill will within the department. He is adamant that he learns every aspect of the job to become proficient in the foreground yet maintains a humble persona, making it easier for fellow firefighters to train with him and learn from him. His peers have recognized Alex as being someone that they would trust as a leader or firefighter without hesitation. He embodies the value of preparedness through his desire to constantly improve and perfect his skills and can always be relied upon to be there for his brothers and sisters at JGMFD.

EMS Provider of the Year

Presented to Firefighter Joel Hoium

This award is given to a member with at least one year on the Johnston-Grimes Metropolitan Fire Department. It must be described as "the type of person you want working on you or your family members if you have a medical emergency." Joel is someone that can be relied upon to deliver high-quality EMS care while remaining extremely compassionate towards his patients, even during scenes that can be filled with emotion and frustration. Joel has been relied upon to be a mentor to new EMS providers, even though he is a relatively newer paramedic. He is selfless in his approach to providing the best care to his patients while also finding time to develop other department members.

Joel steps up to help out the EMS division by actively seeking additional responsibilities and helping with EMS committees.

Officer of the Year

Presented to Captain Matt Price

Captain Price has always strived to make JGMFD a place where people want to work and excel within their skill set. He knows how to put his ego aside by being willing to admit mistakes, and he works with his crew to learn from them. This helps to create a culture on his shift that allows people to feel comfortable enough to admit their weaknesses to grow and develop. Captain Price also has a great grasp of

empowerment and how it can benefit his shift. He stepped up in 2020 to take on a new challenge when the department was in need by becoming the EMS Service Director. Captain Price approaches all of the new challenges he faces with the JGMFD team in mind. He works tirelessly to ensure that everyone has a say in what our EMS services are doing and ensure people are empowered to change within that side of the department.

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