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Niagara Falls Firefighters to Share Top State Honor for Niagara Falls River Rescue

Duo jumped into Niagara River in May to save despondent man.

Two members of the Niagara Falls Fire Department who jumped into the raging Niagara River to rescue a distraught man seconds before going over the falls will be named co-firefighters of the year by the statewide association representing professional firefighters.

Capt. John Carey and firefighter Bart DeRosa will receive the distinction from the New York State Professional Fire Fighters Association at its convention at the Crown Plaza in Syracuse Wednesday evening.

“We are very proud to recognize Capt. Carey and firefighter DeRosa, who showed hours of bravery, poise and courage as they braced themselves for what became a selfless leap into the river to save someone,” said Mike McManus, NYSPFFA president.

On the on early morning of May 7, a downstate man stranded himself on a rock protruding from the rapids. Police officials had negotiated with him for more than six hours when he suddenly jumped into the river. Carey and DeRosa, stationed down-river in harnesses tethered to the shore, were able to go into the water and pull the man safely to shore 20 yards from the brink of the falls, preventing what would likely have been a fatal tragedy.

“This is an example of first responders remaining calm, vigilant and in command in stressful, cold and wet circumstances to prevent a tragedy,” McManus said. “We know the public is relieved to have first responders who are dedicated to personal and public protection.”

The Fire Fighter of the Year Awards, along with the Union Person of the Year Award, will be presented during a Wednesday evening program at the [Crown Plaza](#), 701 East Genesee Street, Syracuse. The awards portion of the program begins at 6:15 p.m. **On-site contact is Sam Fresina, NYSPFFA secretary-treasurer.**

The New York Professional Fire Fighters Association (NYSPFFA) represents 18,000 men and women working full-time as members of municipal fire departments across the state. NYSPFFA advocates on behalf of members who serve in 104 local unions, 41 counties and in the boroughs of New York City.