



NEWS From -

Conference of Professional Operators for Response Towing

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Lifesaving Awards Presented C-PORT Honors Six Marine Assistance Operators

C-PORT (Conference of Professional Operators for Response Towing) presented lifesaving awards to a number of marine assistance operators at the 24th Annual C-PORT Conference Awards Banquet held on January 25, 2011 at Long Beach, CA. "We are pleased to have six lifesaving award recipients representing the Marine Assistance Industry," Tina Cardone, Executive Director stated. "It was a great honor to have Captain David McBride, Chief, USCG Office of Search and Rescue present the Distinguished Service and Meritorious Service Awards to these deserving individuals on behalf of C-PORT." Captain Gabriel Kinney, USCG (Ret) and President of AFRAS (Association For Rescue At Sea), was also in attendance to present an AFRAS Lifesaving Award at the banquet. "All of these operators are to be commended for their heroic efforts in serving the boating community," remarked Chris Shaffner, C-PORT Chairman.

Receiving the first AFRAS Award presented in conjunction with C-PORT were Roger Slade and his daughter Andrenika (Nika) Slade of Vessel Assist Port Hadlock. Capt. McBride on behalf of C-PORT also presented a Meritorious Service Award to the Slades. The Slades rescued a family from a small vessel that had lost power and was swamped due to high seas. Roger Slade maneuvered his vessel to leeward of the drifting boat enabling the small boat to drift down, beam to beam, while Nika Slade placed herself on deck to receive it. Nika was able to secure the stricken boat their boat's port beam. Roger was too occupied keeping station in the heavy seas to assist. The small boat was nearly awash. The passengers, a mother, two children, and an adult female friend, were in a panic, had no PFD's neither donned nor on board, and were clearly suffering from exposure in the high winds and the 55° water.



Distinguished Service Awards were presented to the following operators:

Richard Vitale of Sea Tow Shinnecock/Moriches responded to a mayday call for a vessel capsized on the bar outside Moriches inlet with two people in the water. There were 8'-10' breaking waves when Vitale crossed the bar with his towline rigged for throwing and entered the surf to get close enough to the two people to throw them the line. They caught the rope and Vitale towed them as gently as possible through the surf to the offshore side of the bar and getting them safely onboard his boat. (Accepting was Joseph Frohnhoefer III, Sea Tow Services International.)





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Daniel McAndrew of TowBoatU.S. Lake St.Clair responded to a mayday call for a vessel collision.



Upon arrival, McAndrew began to rescue the injured victims from the water pulling 8 people to safety on his vessel. These people were badly injured with a 12-year-old boy unconscious and almost lifeless. McAndrew's immediate response, First Aid, and calm demeanor are credited with being instrumental in saving the young boy's life. (Accepting was Brian Williams, Owner, TowBoatU.S. St. Clair.)

Kevin Freestone of TowBoatU.S. Big Pine Key responded to a call broadcast that a woman had been



bitten by a fish thought to be a barracuda and was injured in an unknown location. Freestone, knowing the area well, found the victim in water only about 16-18 inches deep. He trimmed his engines and reached the kayak burying his engines in the mud. USCG confirmed they did not have a helicopter in the area. Freestone, with the help of Lisa Thompson, now on scene onboard their shallow draft Carolina Skiff, carefully loaded the injured woman onto and transported her to the dock and a waiting ambulance.

Receiving Meritorious Service Awards were the following operators:

Doug Miller and Michael Crouch of Sea Tow Charleston responded to a call about a woman with a nearly severed leg at the femoral head location after being struck by a propeller. First to arrive was Miller who assessed the situation alerting USCG to the severity. He began to control the blood loss as Crouch arrived on scene. Being a licensed SC paramedic, Crouch led the procedure of applying a proper tourniquet made from simple "dock lines".

John and Trish Aydelotte of Vessel Assist Anacortes received a call to respond to a vessel out of fuel.



As they exited Deception Pass, they encountered extreme conditions with five to eight foot seas and winds of 15 to 35 miles an hour. Once on scene, Aydelotte made numerous attempts to pass the towline to the powerboat. Finally with the towline secured, Aydelotte took the vessel in tow. The vessels would not stay in step in the beam seas and were being blown onshore at a rapid rate. Aydelotte was able to safely maneuver the vessels through the seas and successfully moored the vessel.

C-PORT was founded in 1986 to act as a liaison between the marine assistance industry and public agencies and organizations involved with boating safety, marine assistance, marine salvage and other marine-related operations. The association was created in part to afford a means of cooperation with the government in matters of national concern; to provide an objective, self-regulating body for the marine assistance industry; and to promote the maintenance and expansion of the marine assistance industry. For more information, contact C-PORT at (954) 261-2012 or visit www.cport.us.