

WASHINGTON'S 74TH ANNUAL

Governor's Industrial Safety and Health Conference

PRESENTS

The 2025 Governor's Lifesaving Awards

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Spokane Convention Center

Awards Presented by
Derek Deis



Washington State Governor's
Industrial Safety & Health
Advisory Board

Educating Washington's Workforce Since 1949



Washington State Department of
Labor & Industries

About the Governor's Lifesaving Awards

The Lifesaving Award is available to employees in Washington state who are covered by industrial insurance, either through the State Fund or a Self-Insured employer. The lifesaving action must have been performed while on duty.

The award is for personally performing urgently required hands-on action in a lifesaving effort. In the case of law enforcement persons, fire fighters, EMTs, healthcare professionals, or other similar type professionals, such actions must not be part of their normal duties, but must be above and beyond the call of duty.

A Humanitarian Award may be given when the victim didn't survive in spite of the lifesaving efforts.

Special thanks to the Governor's Lifesaving Awards Committee Members: Tina Bacon, Christy Clark, Dominique Damian, Robert Gallagher, Jessica Beltran and Dale Armstrong.

Awards Presenter



Derek Deis anchors evening newscasts with Kirstin O'Connor and Kris Crocker at KXLY 4 News in Spokane.

Previously, Deis served as a morning news anchor and sports director, having joined the 4 News Now family in June of 2009. Before that, he spent nearly five years as a sports anchor/reporter for KHQ-TV. He won an Emmy award for sports reporting in 2009.

Deis has also been a member of the radio broadcast team for Washington State University athletics since 2013. He hosts the pregame and postgame shows for WSU football and does fill-in play-by-play for WSU men's basketball and baseball.

A Moses Lake native and graduate of WSU's Edward R. Murrow School of Communication, Deis began his broadcasting career at KNDU-TV in the Tri-Cities in 1999. He also worked at KNDO-TV in Yakima for four years, before coming to Spokane.

Governor's Lifesaving Awards Recipients

*Congratulations to all the recipients of the
2025 Governor's Lifesaving Awards!*



Boeing – Paul Inman, Micheal Young, Nelson Tardie, Lyle Schadee, Derek Buckner, and Benjamin Rieman

During the normal course of work, the team was working with Paul Inman and noticed he did not look well. Paul started to fall to the ground but was caught by coworker Lyle Schadee. He called for help and co-worker, Micheal Young, began CPR and directed others to help. Derek Buckner called the Boeing Fire Department, Ian Mullins ran to grab an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), Ben Rieman directed the fire department to the site, and Nelson Tardie assisted with CPR. The AED indicated that a shock was required, which when applied, caused Paul to immediately regain consciousness. About three minutes after the shock, the fire department arrived to take over care.

This event happened just 22 days after AED's were installed in the building. Several of the workers had taken the American Red Cross First Aid/CPR/AED course just weeks before the incident. These men were calm, professional, directed others to help, and responded quickly to save Paul's life.



DSHS – David Kenney

Dave Kenney, a truck driver with the Consolidated Support Services Motor Pool team, saved the life of Lakeland Village Cook, Sam Julagay, when he began choking on a piece of hamburger.

Desperate for help, Sam turned to coworker Holly Macfarlane, who attempted the Heimlich maneuver but couldn't generate enough pressure to dislodge the food. Dave was nearby and saw Sam was in distress. He rushed to him and performed the Heimlich maneuver and after several attempts, the food was cleared and Sam could breathe again. Sam later shared his gratitude saying, "I feel like Dave saved my life. I'm so thankful for his quick thinking and calmness under pressure."



Humane Society for Southwest Washington – Laura Jean Skiles

The emergency occurred at The Elwood, a permanent supportive housing facility serving unhoused people. On the day of the incident, Laura Jean was managing a free Humane Society for Southwest Washington spay/neuter clinic on-site with their mobile veterinary clinic, organized to support the residents and their pets. She was stationed outside at a table when she saw a housing

manager running across the parking lot toward a commotion involving several visibly distressed residents.

With Narcan in hand, Laura Jean quickly moved in to help. She saw the housing manager administering CPR to an unresponsive male resident who appeared blue, unconscious, and without a detectable pulse. Laura Jean handed her Narcan to a bystander, who administered it while Laura Jean traded off doing compression with the housing manager alongside another resident who provided rescue breaths. Laura Jean recalls feeling the victim's ribs fracture during compressions, but she continued providing life-saving measures until the resident regained consciousness.



Holt Homes – Thomas Kinison and Jack Templeton

A call came in from a Holt Homes sales representative saying a customer walking along the path by a retention pond had spotted something in the bushes but was too frightened to investigate.

Without hesitation, Thomas Kinison (TJ) and Jack Templeton, responded. They found a woman lying on her side, unresponsive. Jack called 911 and relayed emergency instructions given by the dispatcher telling TJ to check her breathing. The dispatcher then instructed TJ to begin chest compressions. TJ immediately performed CPR and continued until paramedics arrived. Just before the emergency team arrived, the woman regained consciousness. This remarkable act of courage, composure, and teamwork saved her life. TJ and Jack's actions reflect not only their readiness and training, but also their deep sense of responsibility and compassion.



Pierce Transit – Dawn Nielsen

A Pierce Transit bus driver was making a turn when he heard a thump on the floor. He looked back to see a man lying on the floor between the ADA sections. He pulled over found the man was unresponsive. He called the communications center and supervisor Dawn Nielsen came to the scene. She said the man had no vital signs, so she started CPR. She gave him two rounds of Narcan and continued CPR until medics arrived. They were able to revive the man and he's alive today thanks to the quick and calm response by the bus driver and Dawn.



Pierce County – Karla Simms and Geno Sison

The victim was on the hillside of a retention pond using a manual puller to clear small scotch broom that could not be reached by excavator operator, Geno Sison. Geno was looking to ensure ground personnel were clear prior to swinging the excavator arm over. That's when he saw the victim lying face down on the ground. Geno immediately contacted another ground crew worker, Karla Simms, on the radio and told her to call 911. Remaining calm and professional, Karla was able to bring medics to the scene while staying in constant communication with the 911 operator. Meanwhile, Geno had climbed out of the excavator and rolled the victim over onto his back asking him if he was okay. The victim made a few noises but was largely unresponsive, so Geno started CPR until the medics arrived about 10 minutes later. With continued CPR and the use of a defibrillator, medics were able to stabilize the victim and transport him to Good Samaritan Hospital. He survived and the doctor credits Geno and Karla with saving his life.



Vigor – Enrique Garcia

An unfortunate event resulted in a person falling into the water near the Vigor Ship Yard. The person's work boots, tools, and clothing made it very difficult to stay above the water. Vigor employee, Enrique Garcia, was able to throw a life ring to the victim within seconds. Enrique also directed bystanders to use the life ring tether to help the victim get to a ladder and climb out of the water. The person was cold and tired, but uninjured thanks to Enrique's quick and focused actions.



WA State Parks & Rec – Tracy Anderson and Kyle Christensen

Ranger Kyle Christensen received a phone call from senior park aide Tracy Anderson regarding an emergency at Larrabee State Park campground. A male needed CPR and an AED. Tracy grabbed the AED from the welcome booth and Kyle notified the Washington State Patrol while on his way to the scene. Tracy and Kyle assisted a retired physician’s assistant on the scene to apply the AED pads to the patient and help with CPR. They were able to get the patient’s heart beating steady again until medics arrived. The patient was taken to a nearby hospital and survived the emergency. If it were not for the quick actions of Tracy and Kyle, the outcome may have been tragic.



WSDOT – William Calhoun

It was just another typical winter night patrol for Forks maintenance crew member, Bill Calhoun. He passed by an area he had patrolled many times before, but this time, he noticed something didn’t look quite right. He found a safe place to turn around and returned to the area to investigate where he discovered a vehicle rolled over an embankment. Bill called 911 and continued searching the area for signs of the driver or passengers. He heard a woman

who had been ejected from the vehicle, crying for help. It was unclear how long she had been out there exposed to near freezing conditions. He informed first responders of her whereabouts and stayed with her until they arrived on scene. Thanks to his situational awareness and quick action, medics were able to respond rapidly, potentially saving her life. Bill’s ability to recognize the signs of a serious incident, investigate further, and take decisive action reflects greatly upon himself and the Washington State Department of Transportation.

Humanitarian Award Recipients



Holloway Plumbing – Damon Koler

Rain City Fence – John Ayala

This year's Humanitarian Awards were submitted by Ruth Dalton's granddaughter, Melanie Roberts. The story was broadcast widely on local news outlets after the 80-year-old dog walker was killed in a carjacking. Plumber, Damon Koler, was on his way to a job site when he saw Ruth and the dogs being attacked in her SUV. He jumped into action grabbing a bat in his van and slid over the hood, swinging at the SUV, smashing the back window and freeing five of the dogs inside. Damon tried to fight off the carjacker, while a knife was being thrust in his face. He tried to give Ruth time to escape, but she was run over by her own car as the assailant took control of the SUV and fled.

John Ayala of Rain City Fence held Ruth in his arms until she stopped breathing, then performed CPR until paramedics arrived. Ruth suffered catastrophic injuries and was unable to be revived. Despite John reporting that he knew she was gone, he did his absolute best to give Ruth whatever chance of survival he could.

Damon said he inherited his company from a man that had cancer. He said the bat belonged to that man, the van's former owner, and he had just kept it in the van. "It was in my vehicle, there was a reason it was in there honestly, things happen in mysterious ways," he said. Damon is modest about the role he played in trying to save Ruth and that he doesn't feel like a hero. "Not at all. I hope anyone would have done the exact same thing I did," he said.