

Awards hail Public Heroes across the GTA



Seven-year-old Arjunpal Khattria was hailed as a hero this week at the York Regional Police's Aurora headquarters after helping save his father after he fell down a well.

The incident occurred in the early hours of November 9 in Markham, when the boy knocked on the door of a nearby home seeking help in rescuing his father who was trapped in a well just four feet wide and almost 30 feet deep. The previous evening, Arjunpal was asked to stay in the car as his dad went out to check on a property. After falling asleep, he awoke to find his dad had not returned and he went out to look for him.

Arjunpal was saluted by the York Regional Police, Toronto Paramedics, emergency responders from across the GTA, and Members of Federal and Provincial Parliament for his bravery on Monday at the launch of the Public Heroes Awards campaign, hosted by the Intercultural Dialogue Institute of the GTA.

Also recognized for their community contributions were Chris Thind, who received the Public Heroes Youth Recognition Award from Toronto Paramedics for his service in the 1st Downsview Medical Venturer Troop, and efforts on the road to achieving his dream to be a paramedic.

There is no question that Chris' name is well deserved to be brought forward and we have no doubt he will continue to act as a role model for his fellow MedVents in the years to come as he continues to provide volunteer service to the residents of Toronto and beyond, said Toronto Paramedics.

Here in York Region, Newmarket's Cody Kaslove was recognized with the award for his considerable contributions to many facets of the community, including volunteerism in his church community at the local and international levels, work with the YRP's Community Safety Village, the Anti-Bullying Advisory Committee for the York Region District School Board, all with an eye of becoming an officer with the York Regional Police.

Toronto Police also recognized Lovejeet Bhatti, an alumna of the Youth in Policing Program, for her continuing involvement in the course.

Given the events of the past few days in Europe and over the last year in North America, we can understand the need for greater

social cohesion and for leaders within our communities to help emergency responders to find a better way to connect with our community," said Toronto Deputy Police Chief Peter Sloly. "[Youth] have a great role model in Lovejeet and the recipients here."

But, now it is time to salute the men and women of the police, fire and EMS forces these youth continue to support with the Public Heroes Awards. Nominations are now being accepted through March 12 for members of these services who have demonstrated altruism, dedication, and community involvement.

Winners from across the GTA will be recognized in a ceremony in Oak Ridges this April.

"We encourage everybody in the GTA to go to www.publicheroes.org to nominate a police officer, firefighter or paramedic for an award on those three basic criteria," said M. Fatih Yegul of the Intercultural Dialogue Institute. "These awards are just one way that we, as a community, can honour the excellent work police, firefighters and paramedics do each and every day."