

***Town of Weymouth  
Massachusetts***

Robert L. Hedlund  
Mayor  
  
75 Middle Street  
Weymouth, MA 02189



Office: 781.340.5012  
Fax: 781.335.8184  
  
TTY: 781.331.5124

# **Press Release**

## **Mayor Hedlund to Present Weymouth Resident, Jean-Paul LaPierre, with the Carnegie Medal**

Contact(s): Mayor Robert Hedlund,  
rhedlund@weymouth.ma.us, 781-340-5012

The Carnegie Hero Fund Commission and the Town of Weymouth are proud to recognize and present the Carnegie Medal to Weymouth resident Jean-Paul LaPierre on Nov. 3, 2021 at the Town Hall in Weymouth. The Carnegie Hero Fund Commission awards the Carnegie Medal to those who risk their lives to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others.

A mine disaster near Pittsburgh in January 1904 claimed 181 lives and moved industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie to create the Hero Fund after he learned that the victims included an engineer and a miner who went into the collapsed mine in a valiant attempt to rescue others.

The Commission's Deed of Trust established a \$5 million fund to recognize those "in peaceful vocations" who act to "preserve or rescue their fellows." Mr. Carnegie specified that each hero, or next of kin, be recognized with a medal, reciting the heroic deed it commemorated and carrying the Biblical quotation: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

The Carnegie Medal is given throughout the U.S. and Canada to those who enter extreme danger while saving or attempting to save the lives of others. With this announcement, a total of 10,256 Carnegie Medals have been awarded since the Pittsburgh-based Fund's inception in 1904. Commission Chair Mark Laskow said each of the awardees or their survivors will also receive a financial grant. Throughout the more than 117 years since the Fund was established by Carnegie, more than \$43 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance.

This quarter the Hero Fund will honor five Carnegie Medal recipients from New England out of the 18 announced in September. Commission President Eric Zahren will present the medals personally to those awardees and Mayor Robert Hedlund will host and participate in the presentation of the medal to Weymouth resident Jean-Paul LaPierre.

At 5:40 a.m. before the Oct. 13, 2019, Chicago Marathon, a man armed with a loaded handgun robbed, at gunpoint, several passengers on a crowded train headed for downtown. When the train stopped at the next station, nearly all the passengers disembarked. Following them, 54-year-old Jean-Paul LaPierre, a storage facility manager of Weymouth, learned about the gunman. LaPierre quickly followed the gunman, who was briskly walking to the next car in the train. Once aboard the second car, LaPierre pinned the gunman against a set of closed doors and pried the gun away from him. Another passenger took the gun from LaPierre and reset the safety on it. LaPierre secured the assailant until police arrived to arrest him. No passengers were injured, except for LaPierre who injured his arm in the encounter.

On Oct. 30, 2019 Mayor Hedlund recognized LaPierre's heroic deed with a proclamation, and on Nov. 3, 2021, he joins Commission President Zahren in Weymouth to present LaPierre with the Carnegie Medal in Weymouth.

**"I am honored to take part in presenting the Carnegie Medal to one of Weymouth's own. Mr. LaPierre displayed unrivaled bravery in the face of danger to save his fellow passengers, and we are extremely proud of and humbled by his actions." Mayor Hedlund commented.**

###