

Praise and awards are heaped upon EMS workers

BY EMILY UDELL • EUDELL@COURIER-JOURNAL.COM • JUNE 4, 2009

Outstanding paramedics, EMTs and other EMS employees were lauded for their service at last night's annual Louisville EMS Awards Banquet.

Nearly 100 people attended the ceremony at Masterson's in Old Louisville, where agency employees were given accolades that included awards for excellence in teaching, being rookie of the year and giving "110 percent."

"I hear time and time again in this community of ours how much the citizens appreciate your service," Mayor Jerry Abramson said during brief remarks before the ceremony.

The mayor applauded the efforts of EMS workers responding to the derailment of a train car at the Louisville Zoo earlier this week that injured 22 people and to the ice and wind storms during the past year.

"The reality is that you make a difference," he said.

Col. Craig Rodgers, director of operations at EMS, also commended the employees for their hard work during the adverse weather events.

"Every single one of you stepped up to the plate," he said. "But not only that, you went above and beyond the call of duty."

EMS Director Neil Richmond said the agency's workers have met challenges that included the storms, hazardous materials situations and the zoo train derailment.

"It's really gratifying to see the service come together the way we do," Richmond said. "The system is really working well."

The awards recipients were: Lt. Jeff Kirby, Teaching Award; Todd Coy and Phil Collins, Medical Excellence Award; Sgt. Justin Scharrer, 110% Award; Lt. Bobby Thompson, Paramedic of the Year; Nathan Webster, EMT of the Year; Chad Jagers and Todd Kraemer, Crew of the Year; Maj. James Polk, Operations Officer of the Year; Jennifer Polk, Paramedic Rookie of the Year; Daniel Murdock, EMT Rookie of the Year; Angela Gazaway, Support Staff Award; and Maj. Heather Palmer, Director's Award.

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