



For Immediate Release

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MANHATTAN ADDS 11 VOLUNTEERS TO LOCAL COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS (CERTs)

April 4, 2019 – New York City Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito, NYPD Auxiliary Deputy Inspector Phylis Byrne, and FDNY Deputy Chief James Brosi presided over a graduation ceremony for 44 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers. The graduation was held Monday evening, April 1, at the New York City Emergency Management Department headquarters in Brooklyn. The CERT graduates completed a training program in disaster preparedness and basic emergency response skills that included lessons in fire safety, search and rescue, traffic management, first aid and triage. After completing training, CERTs support their local communities by assisting City agencies that prepare for and respond to emergencies.

“CERT volunteers are an asset, not only to first responders but the entire community,” **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito** said. “These 11 Manhattan graduates will be joining a proud group of CERT members who are ready and willing to help their friends and neighbors prepare for emergencies.”

“My desire to give back led me to CERT. I have lived in NYC for more than 50 years and I have seen firsthand the hard work of our first responders. When individuals are prepared, it takes some burden off our first responders,” **Manhattan CERT Graduate Joseph Jansen** said.

This is the 33rd basic training cycle since the New York City CERT program launched in 2003. The graduates participated in a 10-session training course, which began in February. Eleven of the graduates joined Community Emergency Response teams in Manhattan. In addition to the eleven CERT graduates joining Manhattan teams, 11 will be joining Bronx teams, five will be joining Brooklyn teams, and 17 will be joining Queens CERT teams. NYC Emergency Management also awarded 45 CERT members for completing more than 100 hours of volunteer service in 2018.

Manhattan 11 CERT was recognized as a finalist for the Joanne Webb-Dixon NYC CERT Ambassador Award. A resident of the Melrose neighborhood in the Bronx, Joanne joined the Bronx 3 team in 2007, serving as deputy team chief until she passed away in 2017. Each spring, NYC Emergency Management presents the award in Joanne’s honor to the CERT team that shows exemplary service in preparing communities for emergencies through education and resiliency.

“The lesson in fire safety was really important because though I probably won’t be extinguishing fires, I’m able to share tips with my family and neighbors that may keep them safe,” **Jansen** said. “Something as simple as understanding the type of building you live in or closing a door during a fire can save lives. I joined CERT because I want to be part of the solution.”



Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in New York City

The New York City CERT program started in 2003 with 106 volunteers. The new Cycle 33 CERT graduates will join more than 1,200 credentialed CERT volunteers representing more than 50 teams throughout New York City. The 44 graduates received training from a number of the city’s highly trained emergency responders, including 13 FDNY instructors, 7 FDNY/EMS instructors, 7 NYPD instructors, and 9 NYC Emergency Management liaisons.

For more information about the CERT program, or if you are interested in becoming a CERT volunteer, call 311 or visit www.nyc.gov.

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