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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO, FIRE COMMISSIONER NIGRO DELIVER
REMARKS AT THE FDNY MEDAL DAY CEREMONY**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Everyone today is a day we express our pride in the FDNY and our pride in these extraordinary recipients, these individuals who have done such amazing things and it's a day to really celebrate the valor, the heroism, the extraordinary acts, but also to celebrate all that makes the FDNY great. And to thank the family members too, this is your day also, to celebrate your loved ones who have done extraordinary things. I want to thank the leadership of the FDNY, Commissioner Nigro and First Deputy Commissioner Kavanagh and Chief of Department Leonard. I want to thank the union leaders who represent the men and women of the FDNY.

And it's a day to really reflect on over 150 years of extraordinary service. It's kind of amazing to think about – an unbroken chain, a 150 years of good people who came forward to serve this city and protect our people, one after one making that choice. And no matter what the crisis they confronted, being there when others needed them. When we use the term the Bravest, it wasn't something that someone just bestowed lightly one day, it was earned. It was earned and it was forged in countless fires and crisis. And people today live up to that term, those is this department earn it every single day.

So we honor the history but we build on it. This department today is doing things that those in the past would have thought unimaginable but they would look with such pride at the men and women who make up the FDNY today. And as we celebrate the valor, the achievement of these recipients, we remember those that we lost, especially those we lost most recently, Lieutenant Michael Davidson, and Lieutenant Christopher Raguso, and Lieutenant Chris "Tripp" Zanetis – all extraordinary men, exemplary. This city will always remember them as I know all of you will.

67 good men and women being honored today and all of them have an extraordinary story to tell. When you hear the stories you realize that not everyone could do this work, it takes a very special person, it takes a certain strength, fortitude, resolve, commitment. Only the best of the best do this work. And the very best receive these awards, these medals.

One story I want to highlight because it speaks volumes occurred just this last Halloween. It's situation when you think about, on day we look forward to a celebration, a day we look forward of families being together – just blocks away from here we had to confront one of our deepest

fears. There was an act of terror in the middle of what would have seemed like a normal day. Eight lives lost, 11 people injured and of course there was confusion and of course for all the people at that site on the West Side, there was fear. But in the midst of all that the bravery and the ability of the members of Squad 18 were on full display. And once again the members of the FDNY responded to an act of terrorism with acts of heroism. Led by Lieutenant Adrienne Walsh, the team quickly and expertly treated the wounded, undoubtedly saving lives. Today we say a long overdue thanks to Squad 18. And I want to offer a special congratulations to Lieutenant Walsh for her achievement and her team's achievement but it's also worth noting she is the first female firefighter in FDNY history to receive a medal, congratulations Lieutenant.

[Applause]

So I will finish by noting that all of you we honor today, you make everyone here very proud, you make everyone who has ever been a part of the FDNY proud, those who went before you, generations ago, they would be honored to know you. It's a day that we are very grateful for all of you and on behalf of 8.6 million New Yorkers I say a profound thanks and a hearty congratulations and God bless you all. Thank you.

[Applause]

Captain Mark Guerra, FDNY: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Next we will hear from our Fire Commissioner, Dan Nigro.

[Applause]

Fire Commissioner Daniel Nigro: Thank you. Good morning and congratulations to all the men and women whose brave actions we celebrate today. And a very special welcome to the families here with us, two families in fact, first the parents, the husbands, wives, children, and many more loved ones of our honorees. Your unwavering love and support make their difficult work possible and a big thank you and welcome to our FDNY family, the firefighters, paramedics, EMTs, fire marshals, and officers who have trained and mentored our medal recipients. So often you've been right by their side as they perform the outstanding heroic work we honor today.

Standing up here, surrounded by a sea of blue uniforms all here in support and admiration with banners everywhere celebrating our honorees, it is an incredible sight. And it reminds all of us that there is really no day quite like Medal Day. On this first Wednesday in June, each year we pause to honor the most remarkable acts of bravery of our department. Every single day FDNY members risk their lives to protect our city, responding thousands of times a day to fires, medical emergencies, hazardous incidents, and all manner of incidents that test their training and test their resolve.

Being a member of the FDNY is a great job, one we love, but it is by no means an easy job which is why we honor our members who went above and beyond, or more accurately, above, below, and past intense heat and smoke from raging fires to save lives. We honor our members who went to great heights and lengths to save their patients, acts of valor that put them directly in harm's way, and stressful situations that challenge their every skill. These moments of courage and bravery define our department and show our city that the FDNY will always be there to respond when called, and we will always do everything in our power to save lives and property.

Moments like when Lieutenant Mickey Conboy of Rescue Company 3 crawled to the second floor of a home fully engulfed in flames to rescue an unconscious young boy whose clothes had caught fire and after saving him returned to rescue a trapped man as well. Or when EMT Taylor Perez of Station 8 subdued a knife wielding individual before he could harm or kill himself or others, and then once the situation was under control he administered urgent medical care to his would-be attacker. The commitment of our members is extraordinary. These moments, when off-duty EMTs rush into gunfire to care for a police officer shot in the line of duty or when firefighters in Harlem rescued an entire family trapped by fire just before Christmas.

These were moments of truth, times when the lives of other were in peril and you acted. These incidents are why you all raised your right hands and swore oaths to protect life and property in our great city. They are why you continually train so hard to be ready when you are called upon to act. To our medal recipients, be proud of everything you've done to reach this moment. Not only the heroic act that brought you here this morning, but every moment of your career, every call, when you have made a positive impact on the lives of New Yorkers. And to every FDNY member here, be proud of your fellow members, know that we celebrate dozens of remarkable achievements today but it can never tell the full story of how much all of you mean to our city.

Thank you all for your dedication, your preparedness and commitment to this department and to our life saving mission. And thank you all for ensuring that the FDNY continues to be the best that it can be the greatest fire department in the world.

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