

For Immediate Release
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**NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT HOSTS GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR 71
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) VOLUNTEERS
AND 17 TEEN CERT STUDENTS**

May 18, 2015 – New York City Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito, NYPD Deputy Inspector Phylis Byrne, and FDNY Chief James Leonard presided over a graduation ceremony for 71 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers and 17 Teen CERT students who participated in the first-ever Teen CERT workshop. The graduation was held Monday evening in the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) of NYC Emergency Management headquarters at 165 Cadman Plaza in Brooklyn. The CERT graduates have completed a 10-week 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.

“CERT volunteers are true leaders in our New York City communities. These graduates will be joining a proud group of New Yorkers who are prepared to help their friends and neighbors when we need them most,” said Commissioner Esposito. “We are also excited about graduating out first Teen CERT volunteers. These students are our future emergency managers, and it was an honor to have them learn basic response skills from the best responders our city has to offer.”

The Teen CERT students completed a one-day workshop in disaster preparedness and basic emergency response, learning skills such as basic first aid, subway safety and residential evacuation, terrorism awareness, and fire safety. They were trained by emergency responders from the NYPD, FDNY and NYC Emergency Management. The workshop was part of a pilot program that featured students from the Urban Assembly School for Emergency Management (USAEM), the first high school in the country dedicated to educating students about the principles of emergency management.

“With Teen CERT, we are thrilled to grow an already incredible partnership with New York City Emergency Management to give our students’ ambassadorship a more official capacity. In March, seventeen students spent a fun Saturday learning skills ranging from CPR and first aid to subway safety and extinguishing grease fires,” said Elizabeth Oliver, Partnership Coordinator at USAEM. “UASEM students are eager to give back, and our partnership with New York City Emergency Management continues to provide them with ample opportunities to do so in ways that are meaningful, authentic, and rich in learning.”

The graduation also featured the presentation of the annual New York City CERT Award for Excellence in Deployment and Emergency Response. This year’s award was presented to the

Manhattan 7 Upper West Side team. From providing tenant escorts and psychological first aid during the East Harlem explosion in March 2014, to distributing critical informational flyers during the Ebola response efforts in October 2014, the Manhattan 7 Upper West Side CERT volunteers have played an integral role in supporting the City's emergency response efforts during the past year. The team was also deployed to assist with the New York City Veteran's Day Parade, Five Borough Bike Tour, and snow measuring during the winter season.

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in New York City

The New York City CERT program started in 2003 with 106 volunteers. The new Cycle 24 CERT graduates will join more than 2,000 credentialed CERT volunteers representing more than 50 teams throughout New York City and will bolster the memberships of 10 teams in Brooklyn, 1 team in the Bronx, 10 teams in Manhattan, and 3 teams in Queens. The 71 graduates received training from a number of the city's highly trained emergency responders, including 17 FDNY instructors, 9 FDNY/EMS instructors, 8 NYPD instructors, and 11 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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