

For Immediate Release

#20-18

BRONX 3 COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) IS HONORED AT GRADUATION CEREMONY HOSTED BY NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Bronx 3 CERT team received the inaugural Joanne Webb-Dixon NYC CERT Ambassador Award at a CERT graduation held on March 26 at the New York City Emergency Management Department headquarters in Brooklyn. 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 35 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers and presented the award to the team.

A resident of the Melrose neighborhood in the Bronx, Joanne Webb-Dixon joined the Bronx 3 team in 2007, serving as deputy team chief until she passed away in 2017. Each spring, NYC Emergency Management will present the award in Joanne's honor to the CERT team that shows exemplary service in preparing communities for emergencies through education and resiliency. The Bronx 3 CERT team serves neighborhoods including Claremont Village, Concourse Village, Crotona Park, Morrisania, Woodstock, and Melrose. The Bronx 3 team gained one new member, Obeng Frimpong, following Monday's graduation ceremony.

"I recently volunteered at the service center in Harlem helping people from Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands who were displaced by hurricanes," said **Obeng Frimpong**. "That experience motivated me to join CERT. Now I know how people feel when they are affected by disasters."

"CERT volunteers play a vital role in how New York City communities prepare for and respond to emergencies," said **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito**. "These graduates join a proud group of New Yorkers who are ready and willing to help their friends and neighbors when we need them most."

"Preparedness is everyone's responsibility," said **Joetta Brown Team Chief for Bronx 3 CERT**. "When emergencies happen you just automatically react, but if you put some thought and preparation into it you'll be ready to meet all emergencies, big or small."

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. The graduates participated in a five-week training course. Of the new CERT graduates, seven will be joining Bronx CERT teams, 14 will be joining Queens teams, eight will be joining Manhattan teams, five will be joining Brooklyn teams, and one will join the Staten Island CERT team.

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in New York City

The New York City CERT program started in 2003 with 106 volunteers. The new CERT graduates will join more than 1,300 credentialed CERT volunteers representing more than 50 teams throughout New York City. The 35 graduates received training from a number of the city's highly trained emergency responders, including 20 FDNY instructors, five NYPD instructors, and eight 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/cert.

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PHOTO CAPTIONS:

BX 3 – Representatives of the Bronx 3 CERT team received the inaugural Joanne Webb-Dixon NYC CERT Ambassador Award from NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito. (From left) NYC Emergency Management Assistant Commissioner Herman Schaffer, Bronx 3 Team Chief Joetta Brown, CERT member Jeanette Brown, NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito, and CERT members Obeng Frimpong and Wali Abdun-Noor.

BX Class – CERT graduates from the Sotomayor Community Center in the Bronx, (from left) *rear*: Edwin Mejia, Hannah Linder, Rejxhis Prifti, David Lucas, Mary-Ann Brigantti, Melody Storgaard, Obeng Frimpong, Edwin Vasquez, Tom Haines. *Front*: Deanne Corinthian, Allen White, and Marianne Roncoli.

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