



**For Immediate Release**

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**BROOKLYN ADDS FIVE 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 five Brooklyn graduates will be joining a proud group of CERT members who are ready and willing to help their friends and neighbors prepare for emergencies.”

“The CERT basic training was very rewarding. I decided to join CERT because it is essential to support your community during times of emergencies,” **Brooklyn CERT Graduate Richard Ruiz** said. “Now that I am a graduate, it is important that I continue to spread the message about the CERT program and prepare others in my community.”

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. Five of the graduates will join Community Emergency Response Teams in Brooklyn. In addition to the five CERT graduates joining Brooklyn teams, 11 will be joining Manhattan teams, 11 will be joining Bronx teams, and 17 will be joining Queens CERT teams.

Brooklyn 18 CERT received 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. Brooklyn 10/11 CERT was also among the two other finalist for the award. NYC Emergency Management also awarded 45 CERT members for completing more than 100 hours of volunteer service in 2018.

**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](http://www.nyc.gov).

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