



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OEM HONORS NYC COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS AT CEREMONY FOR EAST HARLEM BUILDING EXPLOSION VOLUNTEERS

86 CERT Volunteers Assisted the East Harlem Community Following the March 12th Building Explosion

April 10, 2014 — New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Commissioner Joseph F. Bruno today joined NYPD Captain Thomas Harnisch, Commanding Officer of the 25th Precinct, to honor 86 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers who assisted first responders and victims of the East Harlem building explosion on March 12 during a 12-day deployment.

“CERT members were an invaluable partner to first responders following the building collapse and a great help to the East Harlem community,” said Commissioner Bruno. “Their selfless volunteerism embodies the ideals of the CERT program to protect and serve the community in its time of need.”

Led by the local East Harlem CERT team, Manhattan 11, teams from both Manhattan and the Bronx initially assisted first responders with traffic management. When the Resident Service Center opened, 23 CERT teams from the Bronx, Manhattan, Queens, and Brooklyn assisted residents, provided psychological first aid, and served as interpreters for residents who needed language assistance.

During the recognition ceremony, Commissioner Bruno acknowledged the outstanding leadership of the Manhattan 11 CERT team and presented each volunteer with a certificate recognizing their service.

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in New York City

The New York City CERT program started in 2003 with 106 volunteers. Today, the City has 54 CERT teams and more than 1,500 volunteers representing all five boroughs. New York City CERT volunteers participate in a 10-week training program in disaster preparedness and basic emergency response skills taught by active and retired members of the Police and Fire Departments. After completing training that includes lessons in fire safety, search and rescue, first aid and triage, CERTs support their local communities by assisting City agencies that prepare for and respond to emergencies. CERT volunteers also work to educate their communities about emergency preparedness through OEM’s Ready New York campaign.

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

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