

For Immediate Release**#49-17****NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT HOSTS GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR 44
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) VOLUNTEERS**

December 4, 2017 – 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, December 4, 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. The graduates participated in a 5-week training course which began in October and met twice weekly.

“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 will be joining a proud group of New Yorkers who are ready and willing to help their friends and neighbors when we need them most.”

“In 2005, while living in South Florida, I experienced Hurricane Wilma. It was a very humbling experience that taught me firsthand the importance of community emergency preparedness,” said **Brooklyn CERT Graduate Gayelle Felix**. “Since then I have been engaged in all things emergency management. Upon moving to Brooklyn I heard about the CERT program and knew it was something I wanted to be a part of.”

During the ceremony, the 2017 John D. Solomon Award for Exemplary Service in Emergency Preparedness Education was presented to Patricia (Pat) Sallin, Team Chief of Manhattan 6 CERT. A member of CERT since 2006, Sallin was recognized for her extensive efforts to prepare the midtown east Manhattan communities for emergencies. She is one of the lead organizers of the 13th Precinct’s National Night Out Against Crime. Pat is committed to strengthening her team, making sure their training is up-to-date, encouraging her members to participate in emergency exercises and drills. Sallin emphasizes to her team the importance of getting to know their neighbors remaining aware of potential disasters in the neighborhoods, and understanding the potential needs of the elderly population in emergencies. The Manhattan 6 CERT team serves neighborhoods including: Gramercy Park, Kips Bay, Murray Hill, Peter Cooper Village, Stuyvesant Town, Sutton Place, Tudor City, and Turtle Bay. The Manhattan 6 team will be gaining two new member following the graduation. Of the 44 graduates 22 will be joining Brooklyn CERT teams, 18 will be joining Manhattan teams, one will join a Bronx team, and three will join Queens teams.

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in New York City



NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

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The New York City CERT program started in 2003 with 106 volunteers. The new Cycle 29 CERT graduates will join more than 1,300 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.

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