April 10, 2023

**Appreciation for 911 Call Takers During National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week**

Public safety telecommunicators at the Portland Bureau of Emergency Communications (BOEC) are the link between the community and fire, medical, mental health and law enforcement agencies. 911 telecommunicators often provide life-saving instructions over the phone and give first responders the critical information they need before they arrive on the scene. The work of a 911 telecommunicator happens behind the scenes and out of the spotlight.

National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week, from April 9 to 15, is an opportunity for these caring and talented call takers to be recognized for their dedication and professionalism.

"I’m so proud of how our call takers have persevered through changing and challenging times. Our call takers and dispatchers have risen to every challenge. I want to thank them for the life-saving service they provide to our community,” said BOEC Director Bob Cozzie.

“BOEC’s call takers and dispatchers are the unsung heroes of our public safety system. When called on to answer what’s often the worst moment in someone’s life, they do so with skill and compassion. I’m committed to supporting their critical first response work as Portland’s Public Safety Commissioner, because these call takers are literally our light in the darkness,” said Portland City Commissioner Renee Gonzalez, who oversees the Public Safety bureaus.

The Portland Bureau of Emergency Communications announces its annual *911 Award* winners:

**Telecommunicator of the Year:** This award recognizes a telecommunicator who demonstrates the highest level of commitment to the profession through dedication to continuous improvement, initiative in professional development, care of customers, investment in the center team, promotion of the Telecommunicator Code of Ethics, leadership by example, and who – by act or deed – makes an exceptionally noteworthy contribution, thus positively impacting the Telecommunications Center in a significant way.

**Supervisor of the Year:** **Josh Edinger**

This award recognizes the line supervisor whose efforts on behalf of the Dispatch Center demonstrate the highest level of commitment to its personnel and their excellence, professionalism, and success. The individual will exemplify leadership, integrity, trustworthiness, dependability, and forward thinking; will coach and encourage the strengths and skills in each employee, to assist in achieving each dispatcher’s personal best; will demonstrate initiative and creativity in policies, procedures and/or new programs; will enhance or improve the operation and morale of the center; will promote the Telecommunicator Code of Ethics on a daily basis through example; and will build and maintain a positive rapport with co-workers and customers alike.

**Coach of the Year: Erika Madrigal**

This award recognizes the Dispatch Coach whose contributions are instrumental in the excellence and success of those working within the Dispatch Center. This individual or team will exemplify leadership, integrity, trustworthiness, and dependability; will promote the Telecommunicator Code of Ethics through study and example; will mentor new employees with the commitment to their success; will set a positive and forward thinking tone within the dispatch environment; will use new and creative approaches to the ever-changing dynamics of the dispatch profession; and will seek out learning opportunities for themselves and the personnel whose success they have been entrusted to achieve.

**Outstanding Team Member: Chelsea LaBar**

This award recognizes any person employed by a telecommunications center who, by act or deed, makes an extremely noteworthy contribution – thus positively impacting emergency telecommunications within the agency, region, or state in a significant way. This award is meant to show appreciation to someone not at a dispatch console, but whose contributions to the team help with day-to-day operations.

**Champ Award: Kate Williams**

Also called the *“Hearts of 9-1-1 Award****,****”*this honor recognizes an individual, team or agency who, outside of the normal heroic duties of daily work life, goes “above and beyond the console” – and exemplifies the human spirit and generous, caring, compassionate hearts of our 9-1-1 community. As demonstrated through actions of selfless humanitarianism; devotion to others, through personal service; and giving of their time, efforts and talents – this individual, team, or agency proves that “9-1-1 hearts” extend to service beyond the job, touching lives and providing support through contributions to their community.

BOEC also recognizes telecommunicators in the categories of:

* **Critical Incident Award**: Any individual, team, center or centers, who by deed or act, make an extremely noteworthy contribution which results in the successful handling of a major incident or combination of incidents beyond the average or normal activity level.
* **Lifesaver Awards**: An individual, team, center or centers who exemplify commitment to service above and beyond the call of duty through innovative/quick thinking, initiative, excellent use of knowledge and skills seldom drawn upon, calm and controlled presence of mind, extraordinary individual or team effort – which results in the preservation of human life.
* **Stork Award**: Those who helped deliver babies.