



## Heroic Acts Save Lives

### AFRAS (Association For Rescue At Sea) Honors C-PORT Members with Lifesaving Award



C-PORT (Conference of Professional Operators for Response Towing) and AFRAS (Association For Rescue At Sea) celebrated and presented its distinguished lifesaving award at the 37<sup>th</sup> C-PORT Conference and Membership Meeting held November 6-8, 2023 at the Hilton St. Petersburg Bayfront, FL. The award was announced on Tuesday during the C-PORT Awards Banquet Gala. Presenting the award was AFRAS Vice President, Mr. Wayne Spivak, to Captain Carlos Galindo, Poseidon Marine Towing Corp, TowBoatU.S. Islamorada, and Captain Dan McClarren, JLK Marine, TowBoatU.S. Nanejomy and Cobb Island.

Tina Cardone, executive director of C-PORT commented, “Our association is thrilled to have two of its members receive this high honor.” This award represents over a decade’s long relationship between C-PORT and AFRAS. In 2010, AFRAS had expressed a desire to establish a program, in cooperation with C-PORT, to annually recognize a deserving member of C-PORT that has shown exceptional skill and determination to save lives during a rescue incident in the maritime environment. The Award is to be conferred on an individual or group of individuals who perform exceptional acts in attempting to save life. Instances where the rescuer places their own life at risk are given highest consideration.

Phil LeBlanc, C-PORT chairman, remarked, “C-PORT congratulates Captain Carlos Galindo and Captain Dan McClarren for their heroic efforts in saving these lives. Assisting boaters is what we do and we, as an industry, are honored to have C-PORT members recognized with such a prestigious award.”

The remarkable stories of heroism:



**Captain Carlos Galindo:** On Sunday, March 19 at 0940, TowBoatU.S. Islamorada dispatch heard a MayDay call. The caller indicated a boater had cut himself badly and was in immediate need of help. The caller did not provide correct GPS coordinates, so the Coast Guard requested a geographic location. The caller responded they were at Islamorada Hump, and you could hear the desperation in their voices.

Captain Carlos Galindo responded, following as the Coast Guard vessel made way to the reported location. At 3 to 4 miles from Islamorada Hump, Captain Galindo recalled hearing the engine running while the caller was talking to the Coast Guard on VHF radio. He immediately stopped his vessel and began to look around. In less than a minute, Captain Galindo spotted a vessel approximately 2½ miles south of his current location, navigating irregularly and suddenly coming to a complete stop. Galindo immediately made a sharp turn and headed south at best possible speed. Within 10 minutes, as he approached the vessel, Galindo noticed there was no one at the helm and a woman waving her hands was on the bow.

Once on scene Captain Galindo immediately contacted the Coast Guard and gave them the correct GPS position. An initial assessment of the situation found the male boater had accidentally cut his arm trying to cut a line from the starboard outrigger. Seas were 2-3 feet, movement enough to cause him to miss the outrigger and cut an artery. Galindo described the amount of blood on the boat as a “murder scene”. The gentleman was laying down on the bow and somewhat conscious.

Captain Galindo immediately jumped on the 24 FT Cobia with a tourniquet and tied it to the gentleman’s arm to stop the bleeding. Galindo sat him up and requested that he speak to him and to maintain eye contact, to keep him alert. Galindo advised both passengers that the Coast Guard will be there very soon. Coast Guard arrived within 10 minutes and immediately transferred the boater to the Coast Guard asset. From the asset he was transferred to Station Islamorada and then to Mariners Hospital where he was airlifted to Jackson Trauma Center Miami and stabilized.

Cited: Displaying the characteristics and traits of a true lifesaver without regard for his own safety, Captain Carlos Galindo has brought great credit upon himself, Poseidon Marine Towing, TowBoatU.S. Islamorada, and the entire marine assistance towing and salvage industry. Captain Galindo relied on his instincts and knowledge of the area, and chose to selflessly act without donning gloves, remarking there was no time. Captain Galindo is to be recognized for his acute situational awareness, keen judgement, and noble act. His leadership resulted in a life saved that day.



**Captain Dan McClarren:** At about 2200, as Captain Dan McClarren with his wife, Lin, onboard as crew, was departing from a 6-hour completed job, McClarren received an emergency alert on this phone from Charles County Fire & Rescue reporting a sinking vessel with persons in the water near Marker 13. Being a member of Nanjemoy Volunteer Fire Department, he was familiar with the time it would take for rescue to be on scene, and realized he could be the closest asset to respond.

Running full throttle and dodging crab pots, Captain McClarren reached the general vicinity of the casualty in about 15 minutes. While looking for the boat, he kept thinking he was seeing a small light flashing out in the river, but it wasn’t large enough to be coming from a boat or even a life jacket. He slowly maneuvered his vessel in the direction of the light and found two persons treading water while grasping the bow of their sinking 25-foot crab boat. The tide had pulled the boat well south of the marker. McClarren backed his vessel into position as Lin threw a ring buoy to them, followed by life jackets. McClarren got on the swim platform and reached a hand out to the woman, who went under. He caught three fingertips, and that was enough for him to get traction and pull her to safety. Meanwhile, Lin grabbed the man by his outstretched hand and held on until the woman was safe, and then he made his way to the swim platform. The sinking boat slipped beneath the waves. Onboard, the couple were given towels and water for the short journey to the dock. They were exhausted and grateful, estimating they were in the water for about an hour before McClarren arrived.

The light McClarren had seen was the woman’s cell phone flashlight. Miraculously, she had managed to keep her phone in her hands throughout the ordeal. Their boat had sunk so quickly they hadn’t been able to retrieve life jackets or emergency gear. McClarren transported everyone to a nearby boat dock, where rescue personnel and ambulances were waiting.

Cited: Displaying the characteristics and traits of a true lifesaver, Captain Dan McClarren has brought great credit upon himself, JLK Marine, TowBoatU.S. Cobb Island and Nanjemoy, and the entire marine assistance towing and salvage industry. Captain McClarren is to be recognized for his instincts, local knowledge, and keen judgement. His leadership resulted in two lives saved that day.