

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Board of County Commissioners

May 19, 2021



Okaloosa County EMS Crew Recognized for Humanitarian Efforts

Shalimar, Fla. – On Tuesday, May 18, 2021, two Okaloosa County EMS team members were presented with the Okaloosa County H.E.R.O. Award (Humanitarian Efforts Recognized by Okaloosa County) for their heroic actions earlier this year. Paramedic, George Lee and EMT, Devon Hare had begun stabilizing a patient suffering from a medical emergency when the ambulance doors flung open, following a commotion outside.

On February 26, 2021, a panicked couple, unfamiliar with the area, happened upon the ambulance while driving down Racetrack Road, in search of a hospital for their infant, who was not breathing. When the ambulance doors opened, a lifeless infant was handed over to the crew by a desperate father and distraught mother. The couple was pleading for the crew inside to help their child.

Lee, Hare and the firefighters assisting with the first patient's medical care took the infant and quickly initiated CPR while simultaneously caring for the initial patient. After a short duration of CPR, Lee observed a pulse and contacted dispatch for a second ambulance. Time was of the essence so the decision was made to transport both patients in one ambulance.

Hare hurried to the driver's seat to respond to the hospital. As they departed, the initial patient was able to communicate and advised the crew that she did not want to go to the hospital. Her concerns were addressed when they arrived at the hospital, the infant was awake and crying and the initial patient was transported back home.

"We are grateful for our EMS team who are quiet heroes who save lives by making educated decisions in emergency situations," said Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners Chairman, Carolyn Ketchel.

This crew maintained their composure, excellent patient care, good scene management and precise transport decision amid a high-pressure situation while showing sensitivity to the concerns of the initial patient.

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