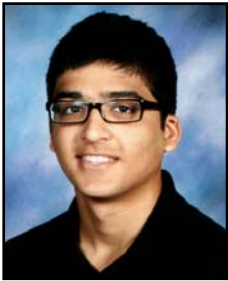


2011 Dana Christmas Scholarship for Heroism Recipients

This scholarship fund was created by the New Jersey Legislature in an effort to encourage community involvement and good citizenship.

It is being funded in its entirety by the PSEG Foundation.



Neil Mehta

Hometown: Wayne, New Jersey

Nominated by: Jasmine Mehta (sister)

Date of Act of Heroism: July 10, 2010

High School: Wayne Valley High School

Amount of Award: \$10,000

Sixteen-year-old Neil Mehta and his friend Bhargav were involved in a horrific car accident, caused by a deer suddenly crossing the road in front of them in rural southern New Jersey. The car flipped numerous times, landing upside down. Luckily, fighting through his own injuries Neil regained consciousness in time to crawl out of the car, then unbuckle and perform CPR on his dying friend. In the midst of his frantic efforts to save his friend's life, Neil discovered that he had lost his cell phone during the accident. He crawled back into the car that was leaking gasoline and unplugged his friend's phone to call 911. Emergency crews rushed Neil and Bhargav to the hospital and due to Neil's efforts that night and four subsequent brain surgeries, his friend survived the accident.



Tim Ghanny

Hometown: Montville, New Jersey

Nominated by: Andrew Caggiano (responding police officer)

Date of Act of Heroism: August 31, 2010

High School: Montville Township High School

College: Montclair State University

Amount of Award: \$10,000

Twenty-year-old Tim Ghanny, his parents and 82-year-old grandmother were at home when their house caught fire. Although Tim's mother alerted the family that the house was engulfed in flames, it was not until Tim and his parents were safely outside when Tim realized his grandmother was still in the burning house. He knew that his grandmother had trouble walking and without hesitation rushed back into the house, picked up his grandmother from her second story bedroom, climbed onto the roof and subsequently lowered her to the ground. If not for the quick and decisive actions of Tim, police firmly believe his grandmother would have not survived the fire which completely destroyed their home.



Paul Tarashuk

Hometown: Flemington, New Jersey

Nominated by: Barbara A. Manfredi (vice principal of Paul's high school)

Date of Act of Heroism: February 24, 2010

High School: Hunterdon Central Regional

College: Parsons, The New School of Design in New York

Amount of Award: \$10,000

Seventeen-year-old Paul Tarashuk was driving home and noticed an elderly woman turn off of his street and onto a major highway into oncoming traffic. Paul knew that the woman would either get killed or possibly kill someone else. Without time to think about his actions, Paul followed the woman onto the highway, trying to get her to drive her car to the side of the road. After chasing the woman the wrong way on a major highway, Paul was able to maneuver her car off the road and out of danger. Paul stayed with her until the police arrive, as she was scared and cold. Paul initially felt he was no longer needed, but as he saw the woman being put into the ambulance he remembered her pleading with him to stay with her, which he did until her family arrived at the hospital.



Kayla Irwin

Hometown: Toms River, New Jersey

Nominated by: Joseph Viscuso (family friend)

Date of Act of Heroism: February 2006

High School: Toms River High School East

College: James Madison University, Virginia

Amount of Award: \$10,000

During a family skiing vacation Joseph Viscuso's six-year-old daughter Sydney asked to ski with friends. Joe and his wife agreed as long as she used the ski lift with an adult. The resort was quite busy and the lifts were moving at a higher speed than normal. Unfortunately, the adult entrusted with Sydney let the kids use the lift by themselves. However, Sydney was fortunate to be paired with twelve-year-old Kayla Irwin. Upon jumping on the ski lift Sydney missed the seat, but Kayla held onto her arms and tried to get the attention of the attendants. No one could hear her due to the loud music playing. As the lift continued to rise up the mountain Kayla held onto Sydney without the security of the safety bar, and kept reassuring her until another skier could position themselves under the lift among the jagged rocks below. Once Kayla assured Sydney that she would be fine, Sydney let go and her fall was broken by a skier below. At this point both girls had risen over 25 feet in the air and were 120 feet up the mountain.