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PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION HONORS WAKEFIELD RESIDENT WITH MADELINE AMY SWEENEY AWARD**Lieutenant Governor Murray presents 11th annual award in memory of 9/11 hero recognizing selfless act of bravery that saved 30 lives**

BOSTON – Tuesday, September 11, 2012 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today presented Paul Antonino of Wakefield with the 11th annual Madeline Amy Sweeney Award for Civilian Bravery during a State House ceremony as part of the Patrick-Murray Administration's annual September 11 recognition of local heroes.

On April 1, 2012, Paul Antonino rushed into a burning apartment building in East Boston alerting tenants their home was on fire and to vacate the premises. He went from door to door and from floor to floor of the triple decker knocking and yelling "Let's go! Let's go! We've got to get out!" The fire started on the top floor that included tenants between the ages of 70 and 80, completely unaware the entire roof was burning above them. Due to Antonino's response and bravery, the 23 adults and 7 children who lived in the building escaped safety. The Boston Fire Department said at the time they couldn't believe everyone got out alive.

"Paul Antonino's bravery was in every way in the spirit of those first responders eleven years ago," said Governor Deval Patrick. "His was an act worthy of the Madeline Amy Sweeney Award."

"Amy Sweeney's quick action and bravery will never be forgotten," said Lieutenant Governor Murray. "In the aftermath of 9/11, the country came together as one and we were reminded of how valuable it is to help others and pay it forward. As we remember Amy's legacy, it is fitting that we as a Commonwealth recognize another extraordinary hero, Paul Antonino, who risked his life and bravely saved and protected others."

The Madeline Amy Sweeney Award for Civilian Bravery was created in the spirit of the heroism and bravery shown by Sweeney and other victims of September 11, 2001. The award honors individuals who demonstrate extraordinary bravery in an effort to save the life of another in danger. Sweeney, known as Amy, was a flight attendant aboard American Airlines Flight 11, which was hijacked on the morning of September 11, and later crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center. Before the crash, Sweeney conveyed critical information about the plane's hijackers to ground services. An Acton resident, Sweeney was survived by her husband and two children.

"Paul Antonino's selfless heroism last spring on Bennington Street is a perfect example for us to honor Amy Sweeney's bravery on Flight 11 that fateful tragic September day over 10 years ago," said Public Safety Secretary Mary Beth Heffernan. "As a mother myself, I join with all Massachusetts residents as we honor Amy Sweeney's selflessness and sacrifice bestowing her namesake award on this year's well deserving hero."

"Paul Antonino put the safety of others ahead of his own. His actions are in the spirit of Madeline Amy Sweeney's bravery, and it is fitting that he be honored in this way," said Mayor Thomas M. Menino. "On this 11th anniversary of the September 11 attacks, we should be mindful of the actions of Paul Antonino and Amy Sweeney as they continue to remind us of the importance of selflessness and service to others."

"Paul Antonino is the embodiment of a true hero. His selfless act of courage, with regard only for the safety of strangers, was extraordinary," said Senator Katherine M. Clark. "It was an honor to nominate Paul to receive the Madeline Amy Sweeney Award."

"It is a privilege to represent Mr. Antonino," said Representative Paul A. Brodeur. "His actions of running into a burning building, without regard to his personal safety, recalls the courage shown by Amy Sweeney on September 11, 2001."

Prior to the Sweeney Award presentation, Lieutenant Governor Murray, Governor Patrick and other officials also participated in a flag lowering ceremony that included the reading of all names of victims of September 11 with Massachusetts ties on the steps of

the State House.

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