



NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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LIFE SAVING AWARD PRESENTED TO MUSCATINE FIREFIGHTER

Quick action saves life of woman during early morning apartment fire in April 2021



Firefighter Mike Collins (left) is presented the Life Saving Award by Muscatine Fire Chief Jerry Ewers (right) Wednesday (Aug. 11) afternoon for his efforts in saving the life of a woman during an early morning apartment fire on April 8, 2021.

MUSCATINE, Iowa – A Muscatine firefighter was recognized Wednesday (August 11) afternoon for his efforts in saving the life of a woman from an apartment fire during the early morning hours of April 8, 2021.

Firefighter Mike Collins was presented the Life Saving Award by Muscatine Fire Chief Jerry Ewers during a ceremony in the day room of the Public Safety Building Wednesday afternoon.

“Our role as leaders is to recognize and praise our talented staff and today I was honored to recognize and thank Firefighter Collins with the Life Saving Award in front of his peers and family,” Ewers said. “That’s a good feeling.”

Battalion Chief Gary Ronzheimer nominated Collins for the award while Captain Joe Timmsen and firefighter Chance Sutherland both noted in the incident report that if Collins had not heard the victim calling out, the circumstances could have been different.



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“His experience and actions as a senior firefighter along with his abilities, allowed him to locate the victim and save her life,” Ewers said.

The Muscatine Fire Department was called out at 5:30 a.m. on April 8, 2021, to a structure fire at 620 Sycamore Street in Muscatine. Smoke was coming out of two sides of the three story duplex and a fan was seen to be burning in one second story window as units arrived. Police had already evacuated one resident as firefighters initiated their attack on the fire and began their own search.

According to the incident report, the entry team stated that they could hear a victim calling out as they began their search of the second and third floors. Collins heard the woman call out and within seconds found the stairs going to the third floor that was adjacent to the second floor room where the fire was located. Collins called out to the woman and used the thermal imaging camera to locate the victim.

Despite the fact that the second and third floors were filled with smoke that reduced visibility down to six- to eight-inches, moderate heat, and without the aid of a charged line, Collins was able to quickly find the victim who was conscious in the back of the room. Timmsen assisted Collins in bringing the victim down the stairs and out of the structure. At the same time, Collins instructed another firefighter to maintain position and keep the fire in check on the second floor.

“His actions directly contributed to the survival of the patient,” Ewers said. “I truly believe that Collins acted within his scope and his actions and attentiveness saved the life of the victim.”

The victim was transported to Trinity Muscatine Hospital and treated for both carbon monoxide and cyanide poisoning.

Collins’ father, Mike, rose to the rank of lieutenant with the Muscatine Fire Department before retiring.



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