

Press Release

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E9-1-1 Institute Honors Okaloosa County Communications Technician

The E-911 Institute in Washington, D.C., has named Nina Anne Hawkins of the Okaloosa County Department of Public Safety as a “Citizen in Action.” The Citizen in Action award honors someone who demonstrated exceptional bravery and heroism to save a life in a critical time using 9-1-1.

Hawkins brings an extensive background to her work in northwest Florida. She is a certified Emergency Medical and Emergency Fire Dispatcher for Okaloosa County Department of Public Safety. She previously worked as a 9-1-1 operator and dispatcher for the Fort Walton Beach Police Department for four years, a joint Communications Center in Missouri for five years, and for the University of Missouri Police Department for two years.

Her leadership and experience were crucial on the day when Kaela O’Neill, then six years old, called 9-1-1 from a cell phone. Her mother was having an asthma attack and was having trouble breathing. Hawkins maintained her composure while asking the child all questions that needed to be answered. Her calm and compassionate demeanor was obvious through the emergency, and remained on the line with the child until emergency responders arrived on scene and made contact with the mother.

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Gregory L. Rohde, executive director of the Institute, said: “Nina Hawkins is a leader within her organization, as shown by her willingness to work long shifts and to mentor less-experienced coworkers. Her capabilities were demonstrated again on the call that saved the mother of a six-year-old girl.”

The award will be presented at a March 13 ceremony in Washington, D.C.

About the E911 Institute. The E9-1-1 Institute (www.e911institute.org) is a not-for-profit organization which provides administrative and policy support to the Congressional E9-1-1 Caucus. The purpose of the E9-1-1 Institute is to promote public education and awareness of E9-1-1 and emergency communications issues and serve the Congressional E9-1-1 Caucus as a clearinghouse of information on E9-1-1 and emergency communications issues. Gregory L. Rohde, former Administrator of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, serves as the E9-1-1 Institute’s Executive Director.

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