

# **Ross Dugan of New Bedford awarded the Madeline Amy Sweeney Award for Civilian Bravery**

On the eighteenth anniversary of terrorist attacks that took the lives of nearly 3,000 people, the Baker-Polito Administration today awarded the Madeline Amy Sweeney Award for Civilian Bravery to Ross Dugan, who helped four people escape from a fiery roadside crash in West Bridgewater on February 6, 2019.

Returning home from work in Everett to New Bedford at approximately 6:30 AM, Ross Dugan saw a four-car crash unfold before his eyes on Route 24 near to Exit 16A. He pulled over to determine if he could provide assistance to the occupants of the vehicles involved in the crash.

With the assistance of another stopped motorist equipped with a fire extinguisher, Dugan proceeded to pull four victims to safety from their vehicle which was engulfed in flames. The victims were ultimately taken to hospitals; Dugan suffered second degree burns to his face and hands.

“Ross Dugan’s quick and selfless actions helped others escape from an incredibly dangerous situation,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “Our Commonwealth is fortunate to be the home of brave people like Ross, who embodies the spirit of the actions taken by Madeline Amy Sweeney on September 11, 2001.”

“The Madeline Amy Sweeney award honors the courage of ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances,” said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. “It’s a privilege for us to recognize that her legacy lives on through the heroes among us like Ross Dugan.”

“Mr. Dugan’s selfless actions that day saved lives when every second counted,” said Secretary of Public Safety and Security Thomas Turco. “That remarkable bravery even at grave personal risk is the hallmark of the Madeline Amy Sweeney Award, one of the greatest honors the Commonwealth can bestow.”

“I am completely honored to recognize Ross for his heroic actions,” said Senator Mark Montigny, who nominated Dugan for this award. “His bravery and personal sacrifice saved lives and prevented what could have been a terrible tragedy for those passengers and their families. Ross’ humility is similarly inspiring and serves as a beacon we should all inspire to achieve.”

About the Madeline Amy Sweeney Award:

For 14 years, Madeline Amy Sweeney was an American Airlines flight attendant. She lived in Acton, Massachusetts with her husband, Michael Sweeney, and their two small children. On September 11, 2001, she was aboard American Airlines Flight 11, the first of two aircraft hijacked by terrorists and flown into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center. Before the plane hit the tower, Sweeney contacted the airline’s ground services crew to convey critical information about the hijackers and their actions on the plane that morning. It is for her heroism and the victims of September 11, 2001, that this award was created.