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Woodbridge Historical Commission Essay

First Responders exemplify absolute kindness, patriotism, and sacrifice. They are heroes, pure heroes. In a world where life is driven by money, it's hard to find people who truly care and love, no matter the money involved. Among many others, first responders are police officers, firefighters, and EMTs. These hard-to-find people, these heroes, are first responders. They protect, serve, and are quintessential heroes.

From the moment I took my first breath to now, in seventh grade, I've always lived amongst first responders. Not because they live in the same household as I do, but because they live in the same community. Anyone who even after knowing the slim divide between life and death, takes the extra step closer to the door of death, especially for others, are more than just strangers. They're not batman or superman, but being a hero isn't about wearing a cape or about the uniform you wear, it's about the heart. To me, first responders have a huge heart. Through their eyes, all they need is the satisfaction of helping others, not the recognition, as they often don't get enough. Through their eyes, all they need is the pleasure of knowing that serving and protecting the community through selflessness, kindness, perseverance, and bravery is all they need. That is exactly what they mean to me. During any predicament, any deadly scene, they're there and all it takes is a glance at them. They have grime-covered faces, but also with perseverance and bravery shining through. They have faces taut with worry, not knowing when disaster will strike. That's exactly how Alvin Williams felt when he tried to rescue two drowning

children. Unfortunately, "In his attempt to rescue the children, Williams was swept away and drowned along with the children." A first responder had given a life that day on September 6, 1979, and it was given for us, to keep us safe. The world had lost a gold-hearted man that day, but it opened the eyes of many to the recognition first responders deserve.

The funny thing is that those first responders are just average Americans. They have families, children, and their own lives, but what sets them apart is how they sacrifice and put in danger all of that for those in need. Not only do these men and women work as police officers, firefighters, EMTs, and nurses but they also manage to pay their bills, for their house, and their children, which is surprising in a society that doesn't give them the respect and recognition they deserve. Most of them work second jobs. They are always ready, ready to give, ready to love, and ready to sacrifice. These men and women are police officers who maintain order by protecting the innocent, many are firefighters who instead of running away, they run towards danger, and nurses and doctors who make a living ailing the sick--all men and women who show love, kindness, and empathy toward others. These people are all first responders. Another who gave his life to save and protect people is Joseph E. Murawski. A paramedic, "Joseph E. Murawski died in a recognized line of duty when he suffered a heart attack on June 17, 2007." He started experiencing chest pains and later went full cardiac rest, only shortly after finishing at the scene of an accident. His wife even later said that Joseph always took a negative and made it a positive. Even though his time on earth was cut short, he died knowing that he had made a difference and an unwavering imprint on Earth before he passed away.

Without first responders, our township wouldn't be the safe and secure place it is now. These people who seem inhuman, are really just people with a huge amount of courage and love in their hearts. They are the first in the scene to look danger in the eye and are there during

dangerous and draining situations. Not only are they selfless, but they are very kind and most importantly empathetic. Considering the society we live in now empathy is rare, but found in the hearts of many first responders. They are the perfect people to reach out to survivors and are perfect to provide physical and mental support. Constable John Joseph Dowling had risked his life and passed away for the benefit of the township. "It was well known that individuals whom he had arrested had threatened the life of the constable," and that was the reason he was attacked and why he passed away on October 18, 1898, for the community and for the township.

Along with first responders, family members have also sacrificed and continue to endure so much for us. It's a huge price to pay for being in a job that is full of violence and danger. First responders are my heroes, for they are real, and actually there for me. First responders are America's modern-day heroes who instead of leaving us with a grand exit, leave us with the memory of what quintessential role models are, a well-walked path to follow, and a legacy to remember.