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Awards presented to Munson responders

Responders recognized for actions taken Sept. 7 at Munson Army Health Center.

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An awards ceremony Jan. 18 in the Frontier Chapel recognized 41 people and two organizations for actions they took during and after the Sept. 7, 2016, incident in which a civilian employee attacked 1st Lt. Katie Blanchard at Munson Army Health Center.

Blanchard and her husband, Capt. Troy Hokanson, attended the awards ceremony.

Maj. Gen. Thomas Tempel Jr., commanding general of U.S. Army Regional Health Command – Central (Provisional), and Command Sgt. Maj. Tabitha Gavia, U.S. Army Regional Health Command – Central (Provisional), presented the awards.

For providing initial emergency interventions and follow-on support that directly impacted successful patient care and continued mission success, the Army Commendation Medal or the Commander's Award for Civilian Service were presented to Maj. Christopher Haese, Maj. Charlene Wilson, Capt. Alan Vaughn, Dr. Robert Bischoff, Kathy Budke, Donald Cook, Drusilla Cox, Tiffany Dipman, Dr. Michael Dlugopolski, Eva Husted, Jane Hutson Joseph McGovern, Cory Robinson and Connie Snodgrass.

For providing organization support, which allowed for the successful optimization of care and no decrement to mission accomplishment, the Army Achievement Medal or the Achievement Medal for Civilian Service were awarded to Maj. Joshua Mandeville, Maj. Monica Offenbacher-Looney, Maj. Dimitri Thomas, Maj. Sashi Zickefoose, Sgt. Victoria Bermudez, Barbara Campbell, Dr. Claudia Cleveland-Soter, Robert Crawford, Dr. Gregory Ellermann, Dr. Eric Gardner, Rebecca Johnson, Karen King, Lynnette Lagant, Michael Leo, Tammy McKenzie, Dr. Alma Molino, Tammy Robinett, Dr. Angela Rogers, Manuel Sims, Barbara Tesch and Mary Torgler.

The Fort Leavenworth Military Police were recognized for assisting during building evacuation and providing support for seriously injured patients while responding to the emergency incident.

The Fort Leavenworth Fire Department was recognized for providing support for seriously injured patients while assisting during building evacuation.

Tempel's commander's coin was awarded to Maj. Ernest Hafner, Capt. Joshua Howard, Capt. Holly Weaver, Brandy Coonce, Teresa McCrudden and Dr. Karen Winegarner for outstanding service following the incident.

In his remarks, Tempel said that in addition to being a group of highly skilled professionals, the organization was a family.

"The most impressive aspect of this event is not necessarily the number of awards presented in the wake of such a tragic event, but the spirit of everyone here," Tempel said. "I want Katie and her family to know that the comments I heard while presenting awards were questions of concern about Katie. They truly care."

Clifford Currie, 54, was charged Sept. 8 in U.S. District Court with one count of assault with intent to commit murder.

Currie allegedly threw gasoline or some other flammable liquid on Blanchard, and lit her on fire. Currie also allegedly assaulted Blanchard with a straight edge razor and scissors, according to the court's news release and the criminal complaint.

If convicted, Currie could face 20 years in federal prison and a fine of up to \$250,000, according to a news release from the office of acting-U.S. Attorney Tom Beall.

Other soldiers and civilians are expected to be presented higher awards for their actions during the attacks. The awards have been submitted and are pending approval.



PHOTO/ PRUDENCE SIEBERT, FORT LEAVENWORTH LAMP

Maj. Gen. Thomas R. Tempel Jr., commanding general of U.S. Army Regional Health Command — Central (Provisional), presents Munson Army Health Center employee Rebecca Johnson with the Achievement Medal for Civilian Service during an awards ceremony Jan. 18 at Frontier Chapel. The ceremony honored MAHC staff and first responders who responded Sept. 7, 2016, when 1st Lt. Katie Ann Blanchard, registered nurse at MAHC, was violently attacked by a civilian co-worker. Photo by Prudence Siebert/Fort Leavenworth Lamp

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