

In Memoriam

Honoring EMS personnel who made the ultimate sacrifice, not for family or friends, but for strangers

By Keri Losavio

Three hundred and forty-one FDNY firefighters and officers died in the line of duty on Sept. 11 while responding to the World Trade Center attacks. You'll find their names, ranks and photos beginning on p. 10.

Many paramedics and EMTs who worked as firefighters or police officers, who had full-time jobs in the towers or who voluntarily went to the scene also died that day. However, only eight providers were part of the official EMS response.



FAIRBEN

Twenty-four-year-old **Keith Fairben**, EMT-P, New York Presbyterian Hospital (NYPH) EMS, was in one of the first units assigned to the World Trade Center after the North Tower was hit. After caring for patients at Church and Fulton streets, he and his partner, Mario Santoro, proceeded into the South Tower. "Keith was fully aware of the dangers that existed and willing to put his life on the line to help others," says Jack Delaney, director of EMS,

NYPH. "He rose to the occasion."

Although he was a fun-loving prankster, according to Delaney, Fairben could switch gears easily and seriously focus on his assignments. He had worked for NYPH since Sept. 14, 1998.



LILLO

FDNY paramedic **Carlos Lillo**, 37, worked out of Battalion 49, Astoria, Queens. A New York native, Lillo received his paramedic training at Booth Memorial Hospital (now New York Hospital of Queens). He worked for FDNY EMS (and NYC EMS prior to the merger) for 16 years. On Sept. 11, Lillo was treating patients on Church Street, facing the North Tower. Manuel Delgado, EMT-P, FDNY office of medical affairs, remembers seeing Lillo crying as he treated patients on the street. "My wife is in there," Lillo told him. His wife, Cecilia, worked for the Port Authority on the 64th floor. He never knew she made it safely out of the North Tower.

Carlos and Cecilia met at a New Year's Eve party in 1997. At the time of the attacks, they'd been married for a little more than a year. "We spent three wonderful, beautiful years together," says Cecilia. "I wish we could have spent more."

"Carlos always had a smile on his face. He was atypical [for a paramedic]; you kind of get cynical in this job," says Delgado. "But Carlos never had anything bad to say about a patient. He was the quintessential paramedic: caring and thorough. He'd be the one you'd want as your partner."

what he did," says Cecilia. "I hope for all the paramedics out there, that because of Carlos and because of Ricardo Quinn [who also died], that they'll realize their job is as dangerous as that of firefighters and police officers."

Twenty-four-year-old **Yamel Merino**, EMT, worked for MetroCare Ambulance for more than three years. Dispatched from the Bronx as part of the 9-1-1 response, she was on West Street when the South Tower collapsed.

"Yamel never refused an assignment or request. ... It happened because Yamel was where she wanted to be, in the middle of the biggest attack in our country's history, helping strangers," says James O'Connor, MetroCare vice president.

Merino, the single mother of an eight-year-old son, was honored by the New York State Ambulance Association as its EMT of the Year in 1999 and MetroCare's EMT of the Year in 2000.

"Yamel was always the first one up and always ready to go," says Al Kim, MetroCare director of operations. "That was Yamel."



MERINO

Richard Pearlman, 18, volunteer, Forest Hills Volunteer Ambulance Corp., joined the corps as a dispatcher when he was just 14 years old. At 18, he joined the Senior Corps. According to Bryce Friedman, vice president, Forest Hills Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Pearlman was a good kid, and the volunteer ambulance corps helped give him direction and focus. He was studying for his EMT certificate.



PEARLMAN

On Sept. 11, Pearlman was delivering documents to 1 Police Plaza, as part of his day job working for an attorney, when the first plane hit Tower 1. He traveled to the World Trade Center in a police car and called his parents on the way. Photos taken on scene show him helping with patient care near the South Tower before it collapsed.

"If we could have a lot more like him, we'd have a lot stronger volunteer corps," says Friedman.

Forty-year-old **Ricardo Quinn** was a paramedic with Battalion 57, FDNY EMS, in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn. He worked for FDNY EMS (and NYC EMS prior to the merger) for nine years. The Army Airborne Division at Fort Bragg awarded Quinn a Certificate of Appreciation for his assistance in training their paramedic students. "He loved what he did," says Quinn's wife, Virginia. "He was proud to wear the uniform."



QUINN

Ricardo, who was well-known for his sand sculptures, met Virginia at Jones Beach when their two sons started playing together. "It was love at first sight," says Virginia. "He was warm and generous and a great father." They were married for 12 years and have a nine-year-old son together.

Quinn loved working with children. This past summer he had shoulder surgery. When he went back to work, he was on light duty and spent time teaching kids about public and fire safety.

Sept. 11, on his way into the South Tower via the Marriott Hotel lobby, Quinn witnessed his friend, Scott Beloten, EMT-P,

fingers cut by falling metal. Only after Quinn ensured his friend was being adequately cared for did he go on ahead to continue caring for others.



Mario Santoro, 28, EMT-P, New York Presbyterian EMS, was working overtime Sept. 11, covering for Fairben's regular partner.

"Mario was extraordinarily proud of what he did, extraordinarily proud of what the department did. He shared that with anybody and everybody who would listen," says Delaney. "He's made the department very proud of him."

According to Delaney, Santoro was very involved in his community, coaching basketball and football. He also spent as much time as possible with his wife and two-year-old daughter.



Mark Schwartz, 50, EMT, was EMT supervisor and assistant vice president for Hunter Ambulance and a member of the Metro New York Disaster Medical Assistance Team. His wife, Patricia, describes him as "a big teddy bear. He was everybody's friend." Sept. 19 would have been their 25th wedding anniversary.

Schwartz had been an EMT for 19 years, the last 14 with Hunter Ambulance. "It's still not real. When I'm at work, he's at work. When I'm at home, he's still at work—because work was his life," says Patricia.

But Schwartz was also proud of their two children. His 20-year-old son is following in his father's footsteps and studying to be a paramedic.

A task-force supervisor, Schwartz was on West Street in front of the South Tower walking toward the triage area when the tower collapsed. "I had spoken to him right before he went to the [Trade Center]. He had the adrenaline pumping. He was excited," says Patricia. "It was important to him to help people. He still had enough sense to call me, but helping was what he was supposed to be doing."



Thirty-year-old **David Marc Sullins**, EMT, had worked at Cabrini Hospital EMS for almost two years. His wife Evelyn says, "He was determined to become a paramedic. He was planning to enroll this spring."

On Sept. 11, Sullins was working a double shift. He was last seen in the South Tower, triaging a patient. His partner went back to their ambulance to get supplies, and then the tower collapsed.

"For patients in life-threatening situations, he would always say things to make them fight, to strive [to live]," says Evelyn. "For young patients, he carried toys in his trauma bag." He had Matchbox cars for the boys and Barbie figurines for the girls. Sullins leaves two sons, ages two and five.

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