



MSA Honors Two Canadian Firefighters with the Fireslayer of the Year Award

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National Recognition Program Honors Firefighter Bravery

PITTSBURGH, April 25, 2007 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Two Milton, Ontario firefighters -- Andrew Brassard and Steve Ellis - are the first Canadians to receive the prestigious Fireslayer of the Year (FOTY) Award, presented annually by global safety equipment manufacturer MSA, Pittsburgh, Pa. Brassard and Ellis accepted the award last week during a special ceremony at the annual Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC), in Indianapolis, Ind.

Firefighters Brassard and Ellis earned the award as a result of their heroic actions on July 27, 2006, when they responded to a structure fire that destroyed the home of Beverly and Ian Grant. Although the Grants were out of town at the time of the incident, their son Matthew, 22, was sleeping in a basement bedroom. On the night of the fire, Matthew had been working on his SUV in the family garage. "When I decided to call it a night," he recalled, "I went downstairs and crawled into bed." The next thing Matthew remembers is sitting in the back of an ambulance and catching a glimpse of his house engulfed in flames.

"We received unconfirmed reports that someone was trapped inside the house," said Firefighter Ellis. The two firefighters received confirmation of the situation while en route. "As we turned on to the street we could see a column of smoke rising from the house," added Firefighter Brassard, "and we knew this was the fire we had always trained for."

Equipped with an MSA Evolution 5200 Thermal Imaging Camera (TIC), Brassard and Ellis searched the second and ground floors despite rapidly deteriorating conditions. Thermal Imaging Cameras enable firefighters to "see" through heavy smoke and darkness. With visibility in the basement near zero, Brassard began a hand search sweeping the floor with hand tools, while firefighter Ellis scanned the room with the TIC. It was Ellis who located Matthew, who was unresponsive. "I spotted him right away. The young man had covered himself with a blanket but his leg was sticking out. Through the camera, his leg lit up like a glow stick."

Matthew received treatment for smoke inhalation and minor burns. Two months after the fire, he continued to battle anxiety caused by the gravity of his near-death experience. "I just wanted everybody to know that I'm still here and happy to have a chance to get my old life back," he said.

MSA established the FOTY award in 2000 to recognize firefighters who display selfless dedication in the line of duty. "For us it's like the Nobel Peace Prize," said Milton Fire Chief Larry Brassard, "and to be the first Canadian department to receive this honor makes it that more special. We really want to thank MSA for sponsoring the award. It's a tremendous honor for our firefighters to be recognized in this way and for the work they do."

About MSA

Established in 1914, MSA is a global leader in the development, manufacture and supply of sophisticated safety products that protect people's health and safety. Sophisticated safety products typically integrate any combination of electronics, mechanical systems and advanced materials to protect users against hazardous or life-threatening situations. The company's comprehensive line of products is used by workers around the world in the fire service, homeland security, construction and other industries, as well as the military. Principal products include self-contained breathing apparatus, gas masks, gas detection instruments, head protection, respirators and thermal imaging cameras. The company also provides a broad range of consumer and contractor safety products through retail channels. These products are marketed and sold under the MSA Safety Works brand. MSA has annual sales of approximately \$914 million, manufacturing operations throughout the United States and Europe, and more than 40 international locations. Additional information is available on the company's Web site at www.msanet.com.

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