THE ASSOCIATION FOR RESCUE AT SEA

C-PORT Award

2018

Presented to:

Captain Julie Lindell of Sea Tow Great South Bay, New York

And

Captain Blake Gifford of Sea Tow Great South Bay, New York

On July 21, 2018, after getting a call for a boater out of fuel, Sea Tow Great South Bay dispatched Captain Julie Lindell and Captain Blake Gifford to respond. The two Captains were sent together on one towboat because the wind was so strong and the sea conditions were very poor.

When the captains were about half way there, the boater called to report that two of the passengers on the boat had gone overboard. Immediately Lindell and Gifford radioed for additional help and raced to the area where they spotted one of the men on the beach, but the other struggling to stay afloat in the 30+ mph winds and 4-5 foot seas.

Sea Tow Great South Bay sent another vessel with 2 captains and the Suffolk County Police launched a helicopter to the scene. As soon as Gifford and Lindell got close enough, Lindell immediately inflated her PFD and jumped into the water and was able to reach the man. She kept his head up and breathing for about 4 minutes despite the man weighing about 250 lbs more than her.

At that point a Suffolk Police Sergeant arrived and also jumped in the water to help Lindell with the man, leaving his vessel unmanned and adrift. A Sayville Fire Department boat was soon able to get all three of them on board their vessel and take them to awaiting ambulances inside Browns River.

With everyone safe, Gifford skillfully managed to get a line on the unmanned Police boat before it went on the nearby rock Jetty, which towed into Sayville. Lindell and the Suffolk Police Sergeant were shaken up, but ok. The man who initially went overboard fought for his life through the night but made it, and is alive and well today because of their heroism.

Also notable is that Capt. Gifford is just 20 years old and Capt. Lindell is 22 years old! Remarkable presence of mind and calm actions of these 2 young captains lead to a lifesaving outcome.