



Department of Justice

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JUSTICE DEPARTMENT HONORS TENNESSEE FIREFIGHTERS FOR RESCUING LOST BOY AND HIS DOG

WASHINGTON – The Department of Justice today recognized two Tennessee-based firefighters who led a seven-hour search that led to the discovery of a missing six-year-old boy and his dog.

Principal Associate Deputy Attorney General Ed O’Callaghan, Office of Justice Programs Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Matt Dummermuth, and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Administrator Caren Harp presented the Missing Children’s Citizen Award to Firefighters Aaron Woods and Michael Webb of the Blount County Fire Department in Maryville, Tennessee, during the Department’s National Missing Children’s Day ceremony. This award recognizes private citizens for extraordinary acts that lead to the safe recovery of missing or abducted children.

“The exhaustive search led by Mr. Woods and Mr. Webb as part of a broader effort to find this missing child epitomizes their dedication to duty and ‘others before self’ attitude,” said Administrator Caren Harp. “The Department of Justice applauds these brave firefighters, along with those law enforcement and Tennessee National Guardsmen who quickly mobilized and tirelessly searched to bring this boy and his dog home safely.”

After the Blount County, Tennessee, Fire Department was notified of the missing boy on April 23, 2018, the department organized a search of approximately 100 participants, including first responders from the local sheriff’s department, fire department, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, the FBI, and Army National Guard. The 22-hour-search spanned 2,000 acres of rugged, wooded terrain—on foot and by air—on and around Chilhowee Mountain and the Top of the World Community Recreation Center, where the child was last seen. Woods and Webb led a team of reinforcements to continue the search. After seven additional hours, the firefighters found the boy and his dog and ensured the boy received immediate medical treatment for exposure.

The Department also recognized 17 law enforcement officers for their investigations of child predators who sexually assaulted children, or created, viewed, and/or distributed child pornography. Harp also recognized Madison Dozier, a fifth grader at Reiley Elementary School in Alexandria, Kentucky, as the 20th winner of the National Missing Children’s Day poster contest.

Additional information about [National Missing Children's Day](#) is available online.

The Office of Justice Programs, directed by Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Matt M. Dummermuth, provides federal leadership, grants and resources to improve the nation's capacity to prevent and reduce crime, assist victims and enhance the rule of law by strengthening the criminal justice system. More information about OJP and its components can be found at www.ojp.gov.

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