On September 9, 2013 an activated fire alarm was reported at Worthington Manor convalescent home. Sgt. John McCormack responded with East Berlin Volunteer Fire Department Truck 7 firefighters. An evacuation of the facility was necessitated and elderly residents were escorted to the parking lot as a refuge area. Sgt. McCormack assisted with traffic control at the parking lot driveway entrance while firefighters investigated the alarm. A 69 year old female resident collapsed in the parking lot during the commotion and Sgt. McCormack responded to assist Firefighters Asst. Chief Ray Pons, 2nd Lt. Derek Wnuk and Firefighter Kendall Houston who all went to the immediate aid of the woman. After a quick assessment the woman was found unresponsive, with breathing and pulses absent. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation was initiated by the firefighters while Sgt. McCormack applied the defibrillator to the patient. Sgt. McCormack delivered a shock from the AED as aggressive resuscitation was continued for several minutes by the First Responders. During another round of defibrillation and CPR the patient responded to the resuscitation and spontaneous pulses were found. Upon the arrival of EMS the patient had pulses and was being assisted with ventilations. EMS transported the patient to the Hospital of Central Connecticut where she was later discharged after a stay in the cardiac care unit. A review of the AED data recorder showed that the patient had been in a pulseless rhythm. Sergeant McCormack and fire personnel’s quick arrival, accurate patient assessment, AED intervention, airway management and efficient teamwork saved the woman’s life.

Sergeant John McCormack is awarded the “Life Saving Award” in recognition of his First Responder critical care management and successful resuscitation of this victim of witnessed sudden cardiac arrest.

Chief Paul Fitzgerald

May 7, 2014