



SAN FRANCISCO FIRE DEPARTMENT
Public Information Office

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Media Advisory

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For Immediate Release PST
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SAN FRANCISCO FIREFIGHTER TO RECEIVE GOVERNOR'S MEDAL OF VALOR



San Francisco Firefighter William A. Mulkeen made a rescue that all Firefighters dream about but rarely have the opportunity to make. The rescue of an elderly couple came literally weeks before he was set to retire from his lifelong career.

On January 1, 2011, at an early morning fire in San Francisco's Chinatown District, Firefighter William A. Mulkeen made a split second decision that resulted in saving the lives of an elderly couple that were trapped in their burning building.

While conducting fire operations on the roof of 520 Montgomery Street, the crew of Truck 2 observed two elderly people waving their arms and pleading for help from a 3rd story window with smoke flowing out the top.

With fire racing through the attic space of an exposure building, a bridging tie was placed on a 24' wooden ladder and sent over the alley to the roof of a 2 story building. With one end resting on the fire building parapet wall, the Firefighters crawled across the ladder at a 40 degree angle to the roof of the exposure building. As they carefully pulled the ladder towards themselves, the Truck Captain lowered the other end into the window where the 2 people were desperate to be rescued. Firefighter Mulkeen crawled across the ladder, 3 stories above the pavement, to the awaiting civilians. By this time, the two were overcome by smoke and, fearful of crawling across the ladder, became combative with their rescuer. Firefighter Mulkeen removed his Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) and turnout coat and grabbed the man and carried him back across the ladder. Firefighter Mulkeen then returned, entering the apartment through the window and, again was met by a combative victim. Without hesitation, he carried her to the roof of the exposure building.

On Thursday, September 13, 2012, Firefighter Mulkeen will be presented with the Governor's Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor at the State Capitol, located at 1303 10th St. in Sacramento. Governor Jerry Brown, Attorney General Kamala Harris and representatives from the San Francisco Fire Department will be present.

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