

News Release

For Immediate Release
March 26, 2012

LOCAL 793 OPERATORS HONOURED FOR BRAVERY AT ACCIDENT SCENE

OAKVILLE — Three members of Local 793 of the International Union of Operating Engineers have been honoured by the union for their heroic efforts at a construction site accident in Toronto on Oct. 11, 2011.

Kirk Winter, Ryan Blyth and David Tustin were named recipients of an award named in memory of Kyle James Knox, a 24-year-old crane apprentice who was killed when a drill rig collapsed at the site.

The three operators were responsible for helping in the rescue of Dan DeLuca, another Local 793 member who was injured at the scene.

Local 793 business manager Mike Gallagher presented the three men with plaques at meetings of the union held March 24 and 25 in the local's banquet hall in Oakville.

Gallagher also presented framed photos of Knox to his mother, Sherry, his sister Kendall, and girlfriend, Nicole.

DeLuca, who suffered severe leg injuries in the accident, was also in attendance.

Gallagher said the accident was a tragedy and the award is one way of honouring the memory of Kyle Knox. The award will be presented to Local 793 members who exhibit extraordinary bravery and initiative in rescuing another member, fellow worker, or a member of the public in a calamity.

Gallagher said the three Local 793 operators showed true courage in rescuing DeLuca.

“They took the initiative and acted quickly to do the right thing. On behalf of the executive board and officers of Local 793, I commend the operators for helping a fellow worker in his time of need.”

At the accident scene, Gallagher said DeLuca was trapped in an excavator after the liner and auger from the drill rig landed on his machine.

Tustin, a 39-year member, was first at the accident scene. He was operating a rubber tire loader at the site. He used the bucket of the loader to stabilize the liner and auger, allowing firefighters to place jacks under it.

Winter and Blyth were working on another site near the accident scene. Winter drove a mobile crane to the scene. The crane still had the counterweights on and two of the tires blew on route.

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At the scene, Winter used the crane to lift the auger and liner, enabling firefighters to extricate DeLuca. Blyth used an excavator to hold down the rear of Winter's crane so he could lift the auger.

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