

Success Story

Erie County



Chris Collins
County Executive

Anthony J. Billittier IV, M.D., FACEP
Commissioner of Health

Department of Health

ME's office selected as NYSDOH Honor Roll award recipient

Congratulations to Karen Biel-Costantino and the entire staff at the Medical Examiner's Office for being selected as the 2009 ECDOH representative for the NYSDOH Public Health Works Honor Roll program. This team, along with many others, did an excellent job handling the response to the devastating crash of Flight 3407. The ME staff will be featured at a future date on the NYSDOH Honor Roll website at www.health.state.ny.us/prevention/public_health_works. The following is the wording which was submitted for this award.

On the evening of February 12th, 2009 a commercial airplane crashed in Clarence Center, New York, killing all 49 crew members and passengers and one person on the ground. The Erie County Medical Examiner's Office staff arrived at the crash site that night, and worked persistently for the next six days in the recovery effort until all of the human remains were collected from the site. The Medical Examiner's Office then began the arduous task of identification of remains and notification of family members.

The Medical Examiner's Office, under the administrative direction of Karen Biel Costantino, performed this Herculean task with great compassion, tenacity, and professionalism. They were able to conduct their work cooperatively with the various federal, state and local agencies sent to provide assistance. Throughout the event, the staff of the Medical Examiner's Office demonstrated their unwavering commitment and dedication to their work with the goal of reuniting the victims with their families.

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