

Maine Fishermen's Forum Honors U.S. First District Coast Guard's Life-Saving Rescue

March 4, 2019



(L-R) OS3 Dejvis Levanaku, OS1 Zachary Madden, OSCS Michael Case, Maggie Raymond, AST2 Mike Kelly, OSC Geoffrey Potter, AMT1 Devin Lloyd, AET3 Brianna Chronister, Vessel Safety Examiner Kevin Plowman: Photo Credit: Mike Young

Last Saturday the US Coast Guard received accolades from the industry it serves, as the team responsible for rescuing the crew of the *F/V Aaron & Melissa II* was recognized during a special presentation at the 44th Annual Maine Fishermen's Forum.

On November 14, 2018 the 76-foot *Aaron & Melissa II* was fishing 60 miles off the coast of Rockland, ME when she experienced a catastrophic failure. Captain Gene Frye alerted the watch standers at Coast Guard Sector Northern New England that he and his crew – Chris Callow, Shawn Kempton, and William Martin -- were abandoning ship. They donned survival suits, boarded the inflatable life raft and awaited the response to their May Day call, as the vessel sank behind them. The water temperature was 50 degrees. Twenty-foot seas and 30 knot winds battered the raft.

Coast Guard Air Station Cape Cod launched an Ocean Sentry fixed wing aircraft and a Jayhawk helicopter and located the life raft.

Rescue swimmer AST2 Mike Kelly jumped from the helicopter into the turbulent sea, swam to the raft, and hoisted the crew to the Jayhawk. The fishermen were transported to the Brunswick Airport where they were met by emergency medical personnel. With credit to their own safety training, and the swift response of the Coast Guard, all four were in good condition.

The Maine Fishermen's Forum invited AST2 Mike Kelly, OS3 Dejvis Levanaku, OS1 Zachary Madden, OSCS Michael Case, OSC Geoffrey Potter, AMT1 Devin Lloyd, Vessel Safety Examiner Kevin Plowman, and AET3 Brianna Chronister, all from Sector Northern New England and Air Station Cape Cod, to the dinner banquet at the Samoset Resort, where the fishing community thanked them for the rescue.

"We are grateful for these brave men and women. On behalf of the Maine Fishermen's Forum Board, and the entire fishing community, we thank them for their extraordinary courage and commitment to the successful rescue of the crew of

the *Aaron & Melissa II*," said Maggie Raymond, Executive Director of Associated Fisheries of Maine, and member of the Maine Fishermen's Forum Board of Directors. The Maine Fishermen's Forum and Trade Show is an annual three-day event bringing together industry, management, marketers and researchers. It is also the venue for many annual meetings of associations representing Maine's species-diverse fishing industry.

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