

# Rep. Neubauer: Honors Racine firefighters as First Responders of the Year

Posted on Tuesday, Oct 26, 2021

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

**RACINE** — Today, the Wisconsin State Assembly honored First Responders of the Year for districts from across Wisconsin as Hometown Heroes during the Assembly's floor session. Lieutenant Tim O'Brien, Lieutenant Brian Turczynski, Driver/Operator Jose Carbajal, Driver/Operator Matt Bodenbach, Private Ben Ratka, and Private Mike Nikolai of the Racine Fire Department were together honored as the 66th Assembly District's First Responders of the Year for their work to acquire and install 150 life preserver vests and 12 throw rings on Lake Michigan, and to educate the public around their use and water safety after a series of tragic drownings in Racine. Rep. Greta Neubauer (D-Racine) released the following statement celebrating the honorees:

"I am proud to honor these brave firefighters in the Capitol today as First Responders of the Year," Neubauer said. "After this summer's terrible drowning incidents, they asked, 'How can we make our community safer? How can we prevent tragedies before they happen?' And in response, they worked together and rallied the community, so that over 160 life preservers could be easily available on the lakeshore. They have also worked to educate our neighbors on how to use them and how to enjoy our beautiful lake safely.

"Tim, Brian, Jose, Matt, Ben, and Mike are true examples of the leadership, service, and heroism of our firefighters. Thank you all for your service to our community, today and every day. We are truly lucky to have you in Racine."