



Eighth Army Public Affairs Office

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Eighth Army Recognizes Heroic Act by Soldier's Spouse Who Rescued Teen in River Emergency

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea – Eighth Army is proud to highlight the heroic actions of Janice Cartagena, spouse of Staff Sgt. Norberto Berrios, who courageously rescued a South Korean teenager from drowning in the Anseong-cheon River near Camp Humphreys in the city of Pyeongtaek on April 15, 2025.



Military spouse Janice Catagena Bonilla receives an Award of Certificate from the mayor of Pyeongtaek-si alongside of her husband at Pyeongtaek city hall Pyeongtaek-si, South Korea, May 15, 2025, for rescuing a 16-year-old girl who fell from a bridge. The ceremony recognized Mrs. Cartagena's bravery and her contribution to the safety of the local community. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jason Palacios)

While walking her children to a nearby playground, Cartagena heard urgent screams coming from a nearby bridge. She quickly located a teenage girl in the river struggling to stay afloat. Without hesitation, she removed her belongings, coordinated with a bystander, and jumped into the frigid water to rescue the teen. Emergency responders later arrived on scene and brought both Cartagena and the girl safely to shore.

In recognition of her bravery, the Pyeongtaek Emergency Response Team honored Cartagena during a ceremony at Pyeongtaek City Hall on May 15. Additionally, her husband's unit, the 121st Field Hospital, 65th Medical Brigade, is coordinating a civilian award to formally recognize her selfless actions.

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"I wasn't trained for this, but the Lord sent me to be a light in the darkness," Cartagena said. "To the U.S. community here in Pyeongtaek: let's continue to be a light wherever we go. Sometimes, you don't need training—just a willing heart and faith."

Cartagena's quick decision and unwavering courage exemplify the strength and compassion of our military families, whose impact extends far beyond the gates of our installations.

For more information, contact the Eighth Army Public Affairs office at usarmy.humphreys.8-army.mbx.public-affairs-office@army.mil.

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