



Justice delayed and denied: Feds must give 9/11 hero's survivor her due

Editorials

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On 9/11, at the moment the planes hit the towers, [Richard Pearlman](#), an 18-year-old member of the [Forest Hills Volunteer Ambulance Corps](#), was delivering documents to 1 Police Plaza.

A call went out for anyone with medical training so Pearlman caught a ride to Ground Zero. He was last seen alive entering one of the towers to aid a heart attack victim. His body was found in the rubble, his briefcase in a police cruiser.

Pearlman's sacrifice is beyond question. But the [Justice Department](#) has denied his mother line-of-duty death benefits from a fund intended to compensate families for

just such losses.

This injustice must not stand.

The Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program ruled that [Dorie Pearlman](#) was ineligible on a finding that her son had not been acting in an official capacity. Shameful. There was no "official" that horrible day, just people racing to help.

The decision recalls the case of [Glenn Winuk](#), an attorney and volunteer EMT who rushed from his law office to Ground Zero and was found dead beside firefighters. His survivors, too, were denied on spurious grounds; only under political pressure and after multiple appeals did the government do the right thing.

Now Justice must do the same for Dorie Pearlman. Her case is under appeal, and [Fire Commissioner Sal Cassano](#) will confirm that the [FDNY](#) put out an emergency call for anyone with medical training - the call Richard Pearlman answered.

[The White House](#) has already honored her sacrifice in a ceremony for family members of first responders who died at the [World Trade Center](#). The fund must do the same.

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