



Press Release

May 10, 2024

**St. Lucie County
FIRE DISTRICT**

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Florida
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For Immediate Release

**Passerby Saves Choking Stranger
St. Lucie County Fire District Presents Citizen Hero Awards**

ST. LUCIE COUNTY, FL – On Wednesday, May 15, 2024, the St. Lucie County Fire District will recognize Anayeli Paz for her quick actions that averted a potentially life-threatening situation.

The presentation will take place in the Commission Chambers, at 3:00 pm, during the Fire Board meeting, held at the St. Lucie County Fire District Administration office, 5160 NW Milner Drive, Port St. Lucie, FL.

On April 18, Ana was driving home from work when she saw a car on the side of the road with a hand waving frantically out of the window. She said that she just felt like something was wrong, so she made a U-turn and went back. When she pulled up next to the car, it was obvious the person inside was choking. She was on the phone with her boyfriend and as she shouted for him to call 911, she jumped out of the car and into action. Ana unhooked the seatbelt, pulled the choking person from the vehicle, and began performing abdominal thrusts. After several attempts, the food was expelled.

“She was definitely in distress. I was so scared, but I dropped a pin to my boyfriend and ran to help her!” –Anayeli Paz

“This young lady felt like something just wasn’t right and she followed her instincts. Thank goodness she did, because the outcome could have been very different” –Assistant Fire Chief Brian Gonzalez

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