



**TEMPLE TERRACE
COMMUNICATIONS CENTER
NEWS RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Two pages)

TEMPLE TERRACE HONORS 2007 ‘FIRE DISPATCHER OF THE YEAR’

(TEMPLE TERRACE, FL. – 4/15/08) – Monica Bateman, a 10-year veteran of the Temple Terrace Communications Center, was named Temple Terrace’s 2007 “Fire Dispatcher of the Year” during an awards ceremony Tuesday at City Hall.

Bateman, 33, received the award from Assistant Fire Chief Ian Kemp, who praised her outstanding skills and service to the community. To be named “Fire Dispatcher of the Year,” Bateman had to exceed the emergency protocol requirements of the National Academies of Emergency Dispatch, which set rigorous standards for telecommunications professionals in fire, police and emergency medical services.

Bateman, who’s celebrating her 10th anniversary with the department, earned a 97-percent rating in handling emergency calls, officials said. Still, the award was unexpected, she said.

“I was very surprised, very excited,” she said. “It’s an honor.”

Bateman was a nursing student when she and her husband became friends with a Temple Terrace police officer. The officer suggested she might enjoy working as a telecommunications professional. She wasn’t sure, but as it turned out, he was right.

“I didn’t know anything about it. Nothing,” she said. “It was a total career change. But 10 years later, I’m still doing it. I enjoy it.”

Bateman said the job can be challenging, such as the time she talked a father through CPR over the phone when his baby daughter was not breathing. But, she realizes she’s making a difference in people’s lives.

“I love helping people,” she said. “Every day it’s a different call, a different situation.”

The Temple Terrace Communications Center is a primary 9-1-1 call center for Hillsborough County,

handling nearly 10,000 emergency calls per year and more than 30,000 annual calls for service. With a staff of 14 full-time communications officers, the Temple Terrace Communications Center consistently provides residents with quality service and outstanding response times.

This week, the communications center is celebrating *National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week* (April 13-19, 2008). The commemoration was established by Congress in 1992 at the behest of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials. The week is dedicated to honoring the individuals who provide 9-1-1 assistance to callers across the country.

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