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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Miami Beach Firefighters Save Nonagenarian from Senior Fraud**

— *Miami Beach Firefighters Ryan Yuhr and Armando Albaladejo were honored by the Miami Beach City Commission for exemplary public service* —

**Miami Beach, FL** – When two Miami Beach firefighters arrived at the home of 96-year-old Morry Sunshine on Jan. 11 to give him his first of two COVID-19 vaccinations, the nonagenarian shared that he was planning to withdraw \$10,800 from his bank account to send to his daughter, whom he was led to believe was being held in a New York City jail.

“I told them that just before they arrived, I had received a phone call from the NYC’s Public Defender’s Office to tell me that my daughter had been arrested and jailed for hitting another vehicle and injuring a pregnant woman,” Sunshine said in a letter to the City of Miami Beach. “During this conversation, I could hear my daughter screaming in background: ‘Daddy, help me!’ I promised to call him back because Fire Rescue was actually at my door.”

The story raised the suspicions of the two firefighters — Ryan Yuhr and Armando Albaladejo — who “urged me, very vigorously not to do that,” at least before doing a little more homework on the caller who claimed to be from the New York City Public Defender’s Office.

“It is, they said, a new way to scam elderly people,” Sunshine recalled being told by the firefighters. “I promised them I would take their advice and check it out.”

As the firefighters had surmised, the story didn’t hold up and Sunshine was spared from becoming a victim of elder fraud.

“Later, I learned that the phone number was not in NYC, but in Atlanta, Georgia,” Sunshine explained. “When I called my daughter’s cell phone, she was safe at home.”

Firefighters Yuhr and Albaladejo were recognized for their exemplary public service at the March 17 meeting of the Miami Beach City Commission.

“We were already proud of our firefighters for their work in getting 80 percent of Miami Beach seniors vaccinated against COVID-19,” Miami Beach Interim City Manager Raul J. Aguila observed. “Mr. Sunshine’s story illustrates that our firefighters are willing to go above and beyond the call of duty to protect vulnerable senior citizens from any threat.”

To report a suspected case of elder fraud, call the Miami Beach Police Department at 305.673.7900. You can also file a report with the Federal Trade Commission via the agency’s website at [www.reportfraud.ftc.gov](http://www.reportfraud.ftc.gov).

“Caring for another isn’t a thoughtless action,” added Deputy Fire Chief Digna Abello of Miami Beach Fire Rescue. “It comes from a place inside and not a book.”

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