

# America Has Spoken, Greatest Unsung Heroes Revealed

Finalists Named in 6th Annual Volvo for life Awards

Celebrity Judges To Now Select Top Four Winners; Grand Award Winner will be Named March 19 in New York City

**F**or the past nine weeks hundreds of thousands of members of the American public have been casting their votes online to decide the country's favorite hometown heroes in the 6th Annual Volvo for life Awards. The polls are officially closed and the top three heroes in the categories of Safety, Quality of Life, Environment and the Butterfly Award, Volvo's youth category, can be revealed.

Heroes rising to the top of the voting pool include a man teaching thousands of teenagers how to be safe, defensive drivers, a woman refurbishing electronics for disadvantaged communities and a 10-year-old boy walking hundreds of miles to raise money for homeless children.

The final decision now rests in the hands of a distinguished panel of celebrity judges who are experts on conscience, care and character - Hank Aaron, Sen. Bill Bradley,

Maya Lin, Dr. Sally Ride, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Mae Jemison and Edsel Ford. The judges will now review the finalists' nominations to select the program's top three winners in the categories of Safety, Quality of Life and Environment and the Volvo for life Awards grand award winner, "America's Greatest Hometown Hero."

Alexandra Scott's parents, Liz and Jay, are judging the 4th Annual Alexandra Scott Butterfly Award child heroes. The Butterfly Award is in honor of Alex, a Volvo for life Awards winner from Wynnewood, Pa. who, before passing away when she was 8 years old from cancer, raised more than \$1 million for pediatric cancer research through lemonade sales and other fundraising activities. Alex's parents will select the winner from three finalists.

The nine Safety, Quality of Life and Environment finalists are

guaranteed to receive \$25,000 in charitable contributions from Volvo. The three category winners will receive \$100,000. The grand award winner will receive the added bonus of a new Volvo car every three years for life. The three Butterfly Award finalists are guaranteed a \$10,000 charitable contribution and the winner will receive \$25,000.

Since 2002, Volvo Cars of North America has identified more than 18,000 everyday heroes in its annual Volvo for life Awards, and has contributed millions of dollars to their causes. The program, launched in June 2007, called for individuals nationwide to visit [www.volvoforlifeawards.com](http://www.volvoforlifeawards.com) and vote for their favorite unsung hometown hero. America selected the following heroes for the 6th annual Volvo for life Awards:

Butterfly Award:

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Zach Bonner, 10 of Valrico, Fla., founded the Little Red Wagon Foundation, Inc., an organization that collects and donates backpacks filled with food and school items to disadvantaged children nationwide. In late 2007, Bonner completed a marathon walk from Tampa to Tallahassee, Fla. covering 250 miles over 23 days, raising money and awareness for homeless children along the way.

Blind since birth, 11-year-old Rocco Fiorentino, of Voorhees, N.J., is an accomplished Braille education activist and musician who works with the Little Rock Foundation, a nonprofit organization established by his family to provide resources for children, parents, therapists, and educators who are facing issues related to blindness.

Sixteen-year-old Dallas Jessup, of Vancouver, Wash., using her own expertise in martial arts and Filipino street fighting, wrote and produced "Just Yell Fire," a film for women of all ages illustrating simple self-defense strategies to defend against an attack, kidnapping or sexual assault. More than 325,000 copies of the film have been downloaded or distributed for free.

Volvo will fly the four category winners to New York to be honored at the 42nd St. Cipriani's during the Volvo for life Awards ceremony on March 19, 2008. At the event, Volvo and program judges will present a short film documenting each winner. The ceremony will be

hosted by actor Jay Sanders and will feature musical performances by various artists. Visit [www.volvoforlifeawards.com](http://www.volvoforlifeawards.com) to view hundreds of hero stories, including this year's finalists. ■